

**MARXIAN CONCEPT OF IDEOLOGY : A CRITIQUE OF
ANTONIO GRAMSCI AND LOUIS ALTHUSSER**

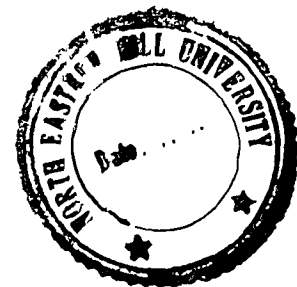
By

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DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
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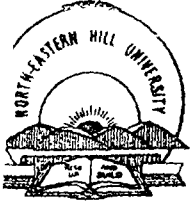
A Critique of

ANTONIO GRAMSCI

and

LOUIS ALTHUSSER

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This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "Marxian Concept of Ideology: A Critique of Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser" by Shri T.S. Girishkumar has been done under my supervision and is fit for submission for Ph.D. Degree. This work has not been submitted elsewhere for a degree to the best of my knowledge. In habit and character Shri T.S. Girishkumar is a fit and proper person to receive the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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In habit and character, T.S. Girish Kumar is a fit and proper person for the award of degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dated: 24. Nov. 90

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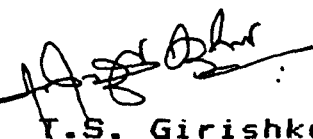
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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The dissertation, Marxian Concept of Ideology: a Critique of Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser has six chapters, namely, 1) Concept of Ideology: The Liberal Perspective, 2) Concept of Ideology : The classical Marxist perspective, 3) Antonio Gramsci on Ideology, 4) Louis Althusser on Ideology, 5) Gramsci and Althusser on Ideology, compared and contrasted, and 6) Conclusion.

In the first chapter, a historical survey has been made on the concept of ideology from Machiavelli to Ludwig Feurbach through Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, D'Holbach, E Condillac, Destutt de Tracy, Hegel and E Durkheim. Through them, the concept reaches Marx.

In the second chapter, the task of understanding the Marxian concept of ideology is attempted. From his thesis on Feuerbach to Capital, the way was through German Ideology and Grundrisse. For Marx, Ideology is necessarily a deception. It is false consciousness. For Marx, the problem of

the deception, the false consciousness cannot be solved by bringing solutions from without, external solutions. His enquiry into the solution from within leads him to the analysis of Capitalist mode of production. Here he finds the case of another, a stronger instance of ideological deception, which is unfolded in his voluminous work of "the theories of surplus value." Marx concludes that ideology is due to class structure, and everything is due to 'contradiction'. He advocates revolutionary practice as a remedy for this false consciousness.

The third chapter is on Gramsci. but before going to Gramsci, an understanding of Lenin becomes essential. Though the Neo - Marxists felt that Marx's theory of ideology is incomplete because he treats ideology only negatively, forgetting the positive aspect, it is Lenin who used the concept in its positive aspect first. Later, the Neo-Marxists like Gramsci and Althusser strongly felt the need of bringing in the positive connotation of the term ideology. Gramsci brings in the notion of a difference between 'organic ideologies' and arbitrarily willed ideologies. He argues that Marx has only used the term in the latter sense. For

Gramsci, ideology is an expression in the level of superstructure. As class contradictions will come to an end, the expression in superstructure will also come to an end. For Gramsci, even Marxism is an expression in the super structure, though he treats it as superior, because 'it is most conscious of contradiction'. However, Marxism too will vanish as contradictions disappear.

Althusser's structuralism comes as against Gramsci's historicism in chapter 4. For him, ideology is inevitable to any societies. No society whatsoever can have existence without ideology. He claims that it has material existence in the Ideological State Apparatus. But Althusser is inconsistent at many places, and he neglects one crucial Marxian concept. i.e., the idea of contradiction. And further more, he does not speak of another important aspect of Marxism, that is the concept of revolutionary practice.

In chapter 5, historicism and structuralism of Gramsci and Althusser are compared and

contrasted. Their merits and demerits are evaluated.

In the concluding chapter, the sixth one, Marxism is analysed in the light of Neo-Marxism. Towards the end, the possibility of incorporating value aspect in to Marxism is envisaged.

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CHAPTER - I

Concept of Ideology:

The Liberal Perspective

CHAPTER : I

CONCEPT OF IDEOLOGY - THE LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE

The present chapter aims at presenting in brief outline the growth and development of the concept of 'ideology'. In common parlance, the term "ideology" means an ideal, a set of belief or a set of ideas which guide, shape and inspire not only man's life, but also, his cognitive enterprise. In this sense, there can be social, political, religious and economic ideologies. Further, ideology is also used in the sense of a norm or a standard. In this sense, ideology stands for a set of ideas that shape and direct theoretical enquiry of man in general.

It may not be out of place to mention in this connection that every age has its own sets of ideas, concepts or categories in terms of which man thinks. In this sense, the set of ruling ideas or master concepts can be termed as ideology of a particular age. But all ideas or ideologies for that matter are not genuine and scientific. In other words ideas and ideologies can be classified into two types:

(1) False ideology

(2) True or scientific ideology

For Marx, traditionally, ideology has stood for false consciousness. He uses the term ideology in a technical sense: Ideology is a set of ideas which are false and aim at deceiving people. People can be kept ignorant so that domination becomes smooth. As a result, Marx does not accept any traditional ideology rather he is against all such ideologies. So Marx upholds the cause of ideology-free-thought and ideology-free-society. It is only with Lenin that the concept of scientific ideology emerged. According to Lenin and other neo-Marxists the concept of scientific ideology can be incorporated into the body of Marxian theory without doing damage. As a matter of fact, the concept of scientific ideology is very much in tune with Marxian thought.

The history of European thought can be treated as the history of emergence of scientific ideology as opposed to false consciousness.

Let me go into the history of ideology. Various thinkers from Machiavelli to Feurbach had implicitly used ideology as something that deceives people. My effort is to trace the Marxian concept of ideology through some and remarks of these thinkers. The term "Ideology" was first used by Destutt de Tracy at the end of eighteenth century. By the end of nineteenth century, the concept became fully developed, and many other thinkers started using it. Here apparently the concept of ideology is very new to human thought. But ~~an~~ a strict analysis of history it can be seen that the concept of ideology is not new to mankind. Rational men have always confronted the the problem - at least a subjective reflection - , the problem or question of intellectual legitimation of social domination. This was always disturbing human mind, particularly, in class societies. Thus it cannot be said that this concept is new to mankind. Nonetheless, a study regarding ideology appeared only with the disintegration of medieval society.

N Machiavelli (1469 - 1527) deals with the concept of ideology with reference to state craft in political observation and his analysis was

based on people from all walks of life; particularly, princes and common men. He studied their political behaviour closely. He says:-

"as man's appetite change, even though their circumstances remain the same, it is impossible that things should look the same to them seeing that they have other appetites, other interests, other stand points.....instead blaming the times, they should lay blame on their own judgements" (1)

While talking about domination, power and statehood, he brings the notion of religion and links it to power. He accused the people around him, particularly, the educated so called intellectuals as less freedom loving. Apparently, he is disgusted by seeing the way people take everything without even dreaming to question. Here he links religion with domination. Machiavelli says that people are ignorant because religion functions in keeping people ignorant. They are less freedom loving because the education is based on a different conception of religion. His criticism goes as follows :-

"Our religion has glorified humble and contemplative men, rather than men of action. It has assigned as man's highest good humility, abnegation and contempt for mundane things This pattern of life, therefore appears to have made the world weak, and to have handed it over as prey to the wicked, who run it successfully and securely since they are well aware that the generality of men, with paradise for their goal, consider how best to bear, rather than how best to avenge their injuries" (2)

Machiavelli had very clearly understood the nature of state and its power. When he talks about using force and fraud in the maintenance of continued existence of power, it became evident. Another reference to ideology can be found in Machiavelli when he talks about using force and fraud in state politics. He asserts that there is hardly a case of humble men acquiring power,

"Simply by the force of open and undisguised force"

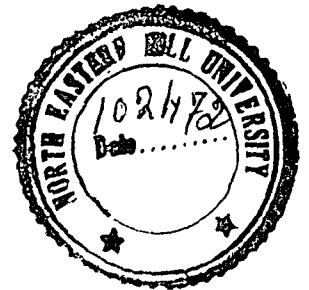
because this

"can quite well be done by using only fraud" (3)

Talking about princes, Machiavelli says that a prince can be anything in reality.

A prince or a ruler need not have all those supposed qualities of princes, etc.,

"but he should certainly appear to have them"
"His disposition should be such that if he needs to be the opposite, he knows how" because,
"every one sees what you appear to be, few experience what you really are."(4)



Machiavelli's pains and agonies as well as complaints about 'human incapability of thinking, however did not go waste. His compliments are really supplemented and complimented by the growth and development of Science. As scientific knowledge became popular good amount of men at least, started thinking in different directions; while the rest followed it slowly.

With the progress of science and scientific knowledge, the questions of obstacles in intellectual endeavour were raised.

Such doubts about obstacles in man's intellectual enterprise was first raised, perhaps by none other than Sir Francis Bacon. These doubts arose in his work "Novum Organon"(1620) and in Rene Descartes' " Discourse de la methode " (1637) Bacon and Descartes, both were experimenting up on a new methodology. Descartes came with a methode of doubt (modes doubt) as a method of knowing. Descartes doubts everything. To start with, he even doubted himself saying that there is no criterion to differentiate sleeping from being awake. However, Descartes was quick to get over his doubt and to conclude that since he is a thinking being, he cannot doubt his own existence. However, Descartes remained in a more philosophical and deductive level where as, Bacon went on to emphasize the roll of positive sciences challenging and questioning traditional approaches of medieval thoughts. He was criticizing the Aristotelian system of the formal logic. Bacon wanted to supersede Aristotle's organon by a new organon. He wanted to replace deductive approach with an inductive one. Bacon argues that real observational knowledge is not

possible so long as 'idols' or false notions obstruct human understandings. Such 'idols' or false notions prevent man from attaining or reaching true knowledge, and reality.

Bacon analyses such idols and he divides them into four classes or categories. He names them as:-

- 1) Idols of the tribe,
- 2) Idols of the cave,
- 3) Idols of the market place, and
- 4) Idols of the theatre.

Explaining the nature and function of these idols as obstructions, Bacon says that among these four, the first two, i.e., the idols of the tribe and idols of the cave are innate, it is not possible to eliminate them absolutely. Their function in human intellect is such that human understanding resemble a warped mirror,

"whose shape and curvature change the rays of objects, distorting and disfiguring them" (5)

Such distortions, according to Bacon, are having their roots in human nature itself and the kinds of error brought to human understanding by

the idols of the cave is the idiosyncrasy of each individual as determined by his education, character and general disposition.

Speaking about idols of the tribe, Bacon says that it is in the natural tendency of human being to accept what has been already laid down as established, without ever attempting to question them - or critically examining them. To quote Bacon,

"Although this idol is most seductive in Science and philosophy, it is also the mechanism of superstition" (6)

In fact Bacon was very much concerned with superstitions and idols both in philosophy and science.

"Superstition was the source of harmful distortions for scientific knowledge in so far as it subjected the mind to uncontrollable forces and sacrificed rational discussions for the sake of arbitrary whims" (7)

Bacon correctly realized the confusions prevailing in philosophy and theology and held it responsible as damaging the sciences. Bacon was arguing in favour of a clear cut distinction between philosophy and theology. At this point, one can see that Bacon is extending Machiavelli's concern with the social effect of religion from the arena of political practice to the realm of science.

Let us now turn to the third idol in Bacon, the idols of the market place. It is rather acquired by human beings. The idol is formed as the result of human interactions. (the term market place signifies human interaction) Bacon says that these idols arise in relation to language, for it is through language that human interaction takes place.

"for it is through discourse that man associates" (8)

Here Bacon identifies the crucial role of ideology. His recognition of the idol as originating from human intercourse through language is perhaps one of the first acknowledgement of ideology as being socially determined distortion. It also raises the notion of social determination of knowledge.

Idol of the theatre springs from the authoritative and dogmatic nature of traditional theories. According to Francis Bacon, traditional philosophies are full of false notions and dogmas. This tendency in human is analogous to fictions presented in a theatre, where plays create fictitious worlds. 'Kathakali', the abstract dance from Kerala is a typical example, where the performer creates illusion through eye movements and various 'mudras' based on 'Natya shastra' of Bharatamuni. Bacon advocates that knowledge must be liberated from blind obedience to the old. Anything that is unacceptable to reason must be rejected. So it becomes imperative on us to reject such idols from minds so that we can reach the truth.

Bacon speaks of two idols as relatively innate. This view of Bacon amounts to

inconsistency. Given this view of idols being innate, it becomes impossible to get rid of them. His view of mind as a mirror which distorts reality makes intellect incapable of comprehending the reality. However, the division of idol as into four types create an impression that Bacon is inconsistent on this point. But I wish to point out that it is not the case. Certain idols are easily eliminated and certain others are relatively difficult to eliminate. Further, Bacon does not seem to take note of the distinction between two sets of false notions in form of ideology. One set of false notions are the idols which ultimately run as ideology and the other set of false notions are those which spring from man's relations to the material practices. The latter type of ideology is socially determined.

Bacon's influence on seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophers is important. It is because of this that Marx called him as the

"Father of modern science and
english materialism" (9)

However, Marx does not spare him of his
shortcomings. Speaking of the shortcomings of
Francis Bacon, Marx says :-

"In Bacon, it's first creator,
materialism still holds back
within itself in a naive way
the germs of many sided
development . On the one hand,
matter surrounded by a
sensuous,poetic glamour, seems
to attack man's whole entity by
winning smiles. On the other,
the aphoristically formulated
doctrine pullulates with
inconsistencies imported from
theology." (10)

Bacon did influence most of the thinkers who
came after him ; particularly the 17th and 18th
century philosophers. Philosophers of the French
enlightenment period like Hobbes, Locke, Condillac,
Helvetious, Holbach, Diderot etc., bear the
Baconean mark of ideology. Condillac's "prejudices"
is analogous to Bacon's idols; Holbach and
Helvetious also used the term prejudice to stand
for false ideology. What is common in all these

thinkers is that they are all concerned with the source of prejudice and superstition.

For Hobbes, sense object contact is the only source of knowledge and there is nothing beyond sensation in reality. any claim to knowledge beyond material things is bound to be false; as nothing can be intelligible beyond material world. For Hobbes, there can not exist any idea of the infinite; the so called God. Hobbes claims that Fear and ignorance is the root cause of religious faith. He says that human capacity of knowing many things or finding solutions to many mysteries, questions etc. are highly limited. Because of this incapacity of knowing many things, man makes mistakes in the following way.

"Little or no inquiry in to the natural cause of things, yet from the fear that proceeds from ignorance itself, of what it is that has the power to do them much good or harm, are inclined to suppose, and feign unto themselves, several kinds of power invisible; and to stand in awe of their own

imaginations And
this fear of things invisible,
is the natural seed of that,
which every one in himself
calls religion" (11)

Hobbes implies that religion is not rational. It is fear and ignorance which make people to accept religion. And this religion in the hands of rulers and priests enables them to continue their domination. Therefore, we can say that in Hobbes religion is used in the sense of false consciousness.

At this point, one can find that the conclusion that Hobbes draws from what may be called as modern empiricism is much more concrete and drastic than what Bacon arrives at. It seems to me that this is the reason why later Marx spoke about Hobbes saying that he,

"Shattered the theistic
prejudices of Baconian
materialism" (12)

But still Hobbes believes that man needs religion for peace and stability. He joins the views of Machiavelli and says

"that man needs monarchs and religion so that common happiness and peace could be reached through ignorance and fear"

and goes to show that

"absolute power is not only reasonable, but also justified by scripture." (14)

Thus though Hobbes recognizes religion as rooted in fear and ignorance, he does not advocate for the abolition of religion like Marx did later. Hobbes strongly felt that religion must exist, as it is necessary for human good - the common good of men. Though the bee stings it's honey is sweet - this was his attitude.

Those thinkers who followed Hobbes, particularly the French enlightenment thinkers have completely neglected the plus point of religion and they have attacked religion and priesthood vehemently. Commonly, they all have seen religion as the root of false notions and superstitions etc. only.

Helvetious (1715 -1771) and Holbach (1723 -1789) gave very strong and powerful theories about 'priestly deceit'. They have rightly pointed out that priests wanted to keep people in ignorance, so that they can continue to be rich and powerful. They have seen an 'unholy' alliances of conspiracy between priests, who were extremely conscious of themselves. As the only remedy to this situation, Helvetious and Holbach finds 'education'. They say that the priestly deceit can only be destroyed by spreading of education. Holbach starts his intellectual enterprise of understanding, by a theory that man is unhappy. For him the reason for human unhappiness is

"Because he misunderstands nature. His mind is so infected by prejudices that one may think of him as ever condemned to error Reason, guided by experience must attack at their source of the prejudices of which mankind has been victim for so longTruth is one and necessary for man it is necessary to unveil it to mortals The chains which tyrants and priests forge are due to error..... ignorance

and uncertainty are due to
errors consecrated by
religion....." (14)

Thus Holbach feels that man is unhappy because he misunderstands nature. Religious prejudices are implanted in human mind to deceive him. But Holbach maintains that reason is capable of fighting this false consciousness. Helvetious speaks of virtues. He makes a distinction between virtues of prejudice and real virtues. He says that virtues of prejudice belongs to petty saintly people. By using these virtues of prejudices they keep people ignorant so that they can be made to serve their interests and needs. The virtues of prejudices imply ideology.

The theory of priestly deceit or priestly conspiracy very clearly indicates that what is behind these blindfolding of people religion. Behind these, power politics were the real objectives. Machiavelli and Hobbes identified and spoke of the function of religion as legitimizing what is not, i.e., social domination. But they

justified it for the sake of their prince, the sovereign. But now the unholy connection of religion and politics becomes better understood as the concept of ideology developed further. And slowly, the relation was acquiring a negative and critical stand. One can see this understanding in both Helvetious and Holbach, and their bitter expressions are perhaps the best examples. To quote Holbach,

"The dogma of the future life accompanied by rewards and punishments, is looked at after many centuries, as the most powerful, or even as the only motive capable of restraining men's passionslittle by little this dogma has become the basis of every political and religious system, and today it seems as though one could attack this prejudice without breaking absolutely the bounds of the society. The founders of religion have used it for getting credule sectarian members; legislators have looked at it as a restraint capable of keeping their subjects under the yoke Nobody can deny that this dogma has been most useful for those who gave religion to the nations it is the foundation of their power, the source of their riches, and the permanent cause of the blindness and terrors in which

their interest wanted mankind
to be nourished. It is because
of it that the priest became
emolous and master of kings ...
....." (15)

Here, Holbach clearly identifies the connection between the role of religion and politics. The whimsical bigotry of ideology by religion and the continued existence of ideology became very much important and necessary for kings. By and by, the kings started depending on the priests and by and by the priests were assuming more importance. Thus ideology, religion and priestly deceit became indispensable for the rulers. Holbach and Helvetious thinks in lines of remedy to this false consciousness - ideology. They thought that education could change the situation. They both prescribes, what may be called as 'virtues of education'. They felt that educated men can not be deceived, because they can not be enticed in to the questions of celestial rewards. They will neither need them, nor will they care about them. They thought that education can make a big difference, because only such citizens, the educated people can make

"A vigilant virtuous, enlightened and just government, which seeks the public good, with good faith, has no need of fables, or lies for governing reasonable subjects." (16)

Helvetius also prescribes education as a remedy against false consciousness.

However he goes a step ahead. He indirectly speaks of the state apparatus and various other institutions in the society which indirectly, or directly influence or control education. Helvetius says that

"Since education everywhere is closely associated to the prevailing form of the government, it's principles can not be reformed without also changing the state." (17)^o

They have no doubt whatsoever in the efficacy of education. But this unlimited confidence of them has invited criticism from none other than Marx himself. Marx says that

"that circumstances are changed by men and that it is essential to educate the educator himself. This doctrine must, therefore, divide the society in to two parts, one of which is superior to society." (18)

Marx says that these philosophers have committed mistakes in their understanding. They could not understand man's real problems and thereby could not find proper solutions to it. Due to this mistake, they make exodus to external agents to comprehend the problem as well as solve it. In their confusion, what actually they have done is that they have substituted education for religion vaguely. They have put faith in omnipotence of education, further they have tried to discover a saviour in education, a new 'messiah' in education, and expected to solve the problem of ideology in one stroke. This process divides society in to two parts. If there is education, then there are educators. But how to educate the educators? These thinkers have not said anything on this.

However, Marx does not overlook their contributions. Marx does appreciate the struggle of

the French enlightenment thinkers against three powerful sources of ideology. They are Religion, Political institutions, and the Metaphysics of the 17th century. When Holbach and Helvetius were fighting against religion and political institutions, there was another thinker who was fighting against some thing else. It was Condillac, who was fighting against the metaphysical prejudices of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Malebramere. (19)

Their criticism had gone a long way in laying a strong foundation for the concept of ideology. Their attack on the concept of ideology, though the concept was yet to become explicit had tremendous influence on thinkers like Hegel, Bruno Bauer, Feurbach, and even on the dialectician Marx himself. Even with all these, a concept of ideology in the Marxian sense has not emerged.

The first person to use the term ideology explicitly, Destutt De Tracy (1754 - 1836), Engages himself in his intellectual endeavour in this back ground. When we look at the concept of Ideology that Tracy presents, on the face of it, we fail to comprehend any direct relation between Tracy's ideology and the idols of Francis Bacon. Nor is

Tracy's ideology has reference to the religious prejudices of the French enlightenment thinkers. We find that Tracy is concerning himself of the busy endeavour of synthesizing a new science. And he calls this science of ideas "ideology" (20). Tracy's science keeps a different objective. This science wants to trace and establish the origin of ideas. In his main concern of establishing the origin of ideas, he could not take care of religious and metaphysical prejudices. In effect, religious and metaphysical prejudices were set aside. Though Bacon and Condillac exerts certain influence on Tracy's ideology, it does not emerge as a corollary to Bacon's or Condillac's thought. In fact, it emerges as the opposite, it emerges as the science.

Any system of education becomes the foundation of education and moral order of society. Similarly, a science of ideas which is based on observation and which is free from prejudices must become the foundation of education and moral order. Reason plays an important part in Tracy's concept of ideology. He says that reason is the main source towards happiness. By Tracy's time, the French revolution had left it's impacts in human

societies. He saw the disturbances as un wanted. After the revolution, they wanted people to establish peaceful societies. He believes that his book will be a contribution towards the cause of human peace. Tracy even says that his book should be taught in academies (21). Here we can find an analogy between the 'ideology' of Tracy and the 'omnipotence of education' in Helvetius and Holbach. When Helvetius and Holbach glorified education and argued that education is the remedy to all problems, Tracy advocates that his 'ideologues' are a solution to human problems. Tracy's enthusiasm rather equals these two thinkers.

Tracy's theory of origin of ideologies have some definite positive connotations. His ideologues is a rigorous science of ideas, which overcomes all metaphysical and religious prejudices. Further, it is expected to serve as a basis of education.

It may not be out of place to mention the first mentioning of ideology in the negative sense. This negative sense of ideology came from a source which nobody would have expected, it was none other that Napoleon himself who used the term ideology in it's negative sense for the first time.

It all happened when some intellectuals became reluctant to approve of the despotic needs of Napoleon. Reacting to this situation, Napoleon called them 'ideologists' with a derogatory meaning that they were unrealistic and doctrinate, and that they have no knowledge of politics.

After its first usage in the negative sense, it again took long for the negative meaning of ideology to be converged to its positive meaning. However, during 19th century, the emergence between ideology and its negative aspect became sort of completed. For a very long time, ideology did not have much significance either as a science of ideas, or as an unrealistic indoctrination. Finally, many thinkers started using the term.

Auguste Comte, a positivist [1798-1857] gives his theory in the line of Francis Bacon, which was set up two centuries before him. The striking similarities between Bacon's struggle against the idols and Comte's struggle to create a new science is of great importance, and interest. On the one hand we see that Bacon's struggle against the idols

that prevents human intellect from comprehending the reality and to create a science based on observation, and on the other hand in Comte we see another struggle of creating a new science which is based on empirical observations which could discover natural laws. To quote Comte:

"the theological and metaphysical states of any science possess one characteristic in common _____ the predominance of imagination over observation. The only difference existing between them under this point of view is that in the first, the imagination occupies itself with supernatural beings and in the second, with personified abstraction". (22)

Comte claims that he had discovered a law. He had discovered it from the historical study of human intelligence. Comte finds three different stages in human intelligence. All his conceptions and theories pass through these three stages. The first stage is the theological or fictitious, where all explanations are in terms of supernatural etc. as man becomes little more

scientific, he enters the second stage. The second stage is metaphysical or abstract, where passion for abstraction and speculative explanation becomes a preoccupation. Again man progresses in to the third stage, which is real scientific one. The third stage is scientific or positive. Comte says:-

"Our conceptions and theories pass through three different historical stages, the theological or fictitious, the metaphysical or the abstract, and the scientific or positive". (23)

For Comte, With the discovery of his new law the first stage, and the second stage, the theological and the metaphysical era respectively, came to an end. Now, the new era of scientific, the era of positive philosophy has started. He further says that although positivism has emerged, only physical sciences have entered in to the new era.

Social sciences are yet to enter the new era. Implicitly, Comte suggests that social sciences must transform themselves into social physics.

In the previous two era, the era of theological and metaphysical, both theological and metaphysical theories failed to restructure human societies in such a way that they could secure social welfare and human societies could become a happy one. They failed to secure permanent social welfare. Comte argues that in the new scientific era of positivism, positive philosophy would reorganize human societies, and provide permanent social welfare. In fact Comte is so sure that positive philosophy is the only alternative, and the only thing which can secure permanent social welfare. He believes,

"that ideas govern the world,
or throw it into chaos
in other words, that all social
mechanism rests upon opinions".
(24)

We find a difference between Bacon and Comte here. Bacon's criticism made a distinction between progress in science and innovations in civil society, and applied his theories of idols to the former. Comte did not make any such distinctions, but on the other hand, he combines both, so that his critique becomes both metaphysical and political in character.

However, it will not be wrong to call Comte radical with respect to Bacon. Bacon is very careful about innovating political ideas. He feels that it could be dangerous. Bacon does not want to take chances, he does not want to change the social structure where the king rules. But Comte is not skeptical of changing the social structure_____ rather he feels that the society is in a disorderly state and it is anarchic. He wants to reorganize the society completely. At this point we can find that Comte is completely agreeing with Hobbes' chief preoccupation with commonwealth. To quote him,

"The positivistic philosophy befriends public order by bringing back men's understandings to a normal state through the influence of its method alone_____ it dissipates disorder at once by imposing a series of indisputable scientific conditions of the study of political questions". (25)

Comte's positivism develops and finally culminates in Vienna Circle. The difference between science and metaphysics had developed in to a grave opposition which finally started treating ideology as meaningless 'imagination and arbitrary metaphysical speculation which obstruct the knowledge to reality like the concepts of idols in Francis Bacon. For the French enlightenment thinkers, ideology was priestly deceit, and in positivism it becomes imaginary and irrational in character. But in both cases, ideology appears as an autonomous agent, which operates independently, and which misleads man's cognition to reality. The name what Marx gives 'external agent' is worth remembering here. They have thought of ideology as

something external, operating externally with the evil desire of stopping man from reaching truth.

The German idealist Hegel [1770 - 1831] was also involved in the discussion of ideology in a different manner. Hegel was facing a dichotomy. On the one hand, Hegel thinks and wants to prove that the subject of philosophy and theology are the same. For him, the subject matter of both is the question of the absolute. They both deal with the relationship between the infinite and the finite. On the other hand, Hegel is aware of the negative character which concrete and historical religion acquires. It is on the basis of this awareness that for the first time in the history it was said that the transmission of christianity is responsible for man's alienation from himself. Here, Hegel wants philosophy to come to the rescue of religion by explaining the dialectical evolution of the opposition between the finite and the infinite.

Ludwig Feurbach [1804 -1872], was the most important of the left wing of Hegelians who radically criticized the ambiguities in Hegel. Feurbach calls Hegel's God as psychological

projection of perfection. It is due to this psychological projection of perfection that man becomes alienated from himself. Man thus becomes alienated, because, with the idea of God, he becomes alienated from his goodness, as all goodness becomes that of God. Under such situation, de-alienation consists in only one thing, in overcoming, or getting rid of God and religion.

Religion, for its existence, depends on promises of celestial rewards, promises in heaven, notions of eternal happiness etc. But once man turns into earthly happiness, religion could be surpassed. Feuerbach believes that God is only a reflections of man's essence and once philosophy has discovered his real nature, there will be no need for this projection.

Previously, religion was thought of as priestly lie. The priestly deceit was completely based on imagination, and it has no base whatsoever. As against this, Feuerbach says that religion is the essence of man, human essence. Only thing, the relationship is being inverted, and explanation of which gets its locus shifted from

supernatural to man. This is an important contribution of Feuerbach. Now religion is no longer arbitrary, but it has a concrete base. This particular phenomenon of shifting the locus of religion from arbitrary to concrete made tremendous impact on the emergence of the concept of ideology. Thus we can see that with Feuerbach, criticism of religion takes new dimensions. To this extent, we can treat Feuerbach as the last link between traditional religious criticism and the concept of ideology.

Feuerbach, in spite of of his important contributions is not without problems. Later, Marx criticized him for making his conception abstract from historical process. Marx says that Feuerbach does the abstracting mistake of fixing

"the religious sentiments as something by itself".

Marx accuses him, saying:-

Feuerbach "does not see that 'religious sentiment' is itself a social product, and the abstract individual whom he analyses belongs to a particular form of society"
(26)

Marx says that Feuerbach does not see the 'dialectical relationship' in which man and religion exists.

With Marx, all fields of intellectual endeavours had a "break". Practically every field of knowledge broke away from traditional ways to the new, Marxian way, which popularly is known as scientific way. This break could be seen in all areas of study as human understanding itself changed into scientific understanding. Our concept of ideology also undergoes changes with Marx. Ideology surpasses the critique of religion and catches up with more proper understandings. With Marx, ideology came to assert it's negative and critical character. This does not mean that religious criticism is done away with. The importance of a critique of religion can not be underestimated in Marx. He had made it very clear in the famous passage which speaks of religion as the opium of the people.

"the criticism of religion is pre-requisite of all criticisms". (27)

But at this point Marx was still a Feuerbachian and is yet to produce his theory of ideology. Marx's theory of ideology subsumes not only religion, but all forms of disturbances and obstructions. Finally when Marx came up with his critique of ideology, he not only emphasized a negative connotation of the term, ideology, but also introduced a new force of critique in his definition, with reference to historical contradiction in society.

In this chapter, We have made an attempt to look at few thinkers very briefly. From Machiavelli to Feuerbach, we have traveled through Bacon, Helvetius, De' Tracy, Napoleon, and Comte. We were trying to comprehend the underlying currents of ideology in these thinkers. In our endeavour, we came across phenomena such as idol, prejudice, religion, and ideology itself. what was common in all of them was, they were almost always seen as psychological distortion at the level of cognition. They fail to find the crucial connection between mental distortion and the historical development of man's social relations. All these previous

thinkers have accounted ideological distortion by passions, superstitions, individual interests, religious prejudices, or man's necessary self alienation. But they have never related ideological distortions to another important and crucial phenomenon, which is historically necessary social contradictions. As a result, ideology, and reason had appeared as un-historical phenomena, and we can see that ideology and reason as struggling against one another at theoretical level. It is due to this confusions that education is thought of as a remedy to ideological distortions. On the other hand, the struggle between reason and religious prejudices was thought as having something like a universal character or it was misunderstood as the human nature. Up to the period of enlightenment, prejudices were seen as having upper hand. From then on, reason would bring progress and happiness by liberating from prejudices. Though all these thought structure took place, man and society was always treated as something static. Marx later analyses this situation as "history was conceived of as succession of stages, it's institution artificial fetters, which reason finally manages to get rid

off. Thus history was supposed to have arrived at its plenitude.

It is the crucial contribution from Marx which became successful in showing the precariousness and historical relativity of bourgeois society, and due to this, the connection between the concept of ideology and the questions of social contradiction inherent in that society. Thus with Marx, the concept of ideology became newly and differently formulated and the new formulation of the concept of ideology has shed all forms of psychologisms. Therefore, it can be said that with Marx concept of ideology came of age.

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CHAPTER - II

Concept of Ideology:

The Classical Marxist Perspective

CHAPTER : II

CONCEPT OF IDEOLOGY : THE CLASSICAL MARXIST PERSPECTIVE

The origin of Marxian thought can be found in the French enlightenment period but Marxian concept of ideology goes much beyond. Both philosophy of consciousness and the new scientific rationality can be said to be having a common origin. Both originate from a common idea, that object should not dominate men. But then, they both took different directions and they both grew. The philosophy of consciousness grew and developed into what could be called as 'ontological idealism'. The scientific rationality grew and developed into what may be called as 'mechanical materialism'. We find that Marxian thought makes careful attempts of integrating both and meticulously tries to overcome their shortcomings. In fact, Marx draws ideas from both. From philosophy of consciousness Marx draws the idea of active subject which becomes concrete historically. From the new scientific rationality, he receives the idea of material reality which is historically erected by man. Since this material reality is historically made by man, the material reality should change as man's practice changes. We

can see in Marx the interest in material reality and more than that, the passion for changing that reality by revolutionary practice<1>.

Marxian thought is far from being simple. It is a complex organic structure, which has many ingredients in it. Particularly, it has many opposites existing together in it such as idealism and materialism, philosophy and economy, science and revolution, etc. The complexity of Marxism became more so owing to Marx's intellectual evolution. The historical changes of emphasis in his intellectual evolution, and the lack of further theoretical elaboration of some points are all increasing the subtlety and complexity of Marxian thoughts. Thus, interpreting Marx becomes very difficult. Perhaps no other theory in the history of the world could have faced the problem of interpretation as Marxism has. However, due to this nature of it, Marxism has been interpreted variously. The concept of ideology too, is not an exception.

However, in Marx, the concept of ideology is not well defined. Even a question can be asked, whether a uniform theory of ideology can be

excavated from Marx? It seems, it is not an easy task to answer this question in few lines. However it is possible to make a systematic construction of the concept of ideology from the writings of Marx, particularly from his analytic precision of the concept of surplus value, his works of Capital or labour contract. Of course, Marx's sketchy remarks on ideology is of tremendous value.

We have already seen that there are various methodological positions taken to understand Marx. One tradition in Marxism depends entirely on the philosophical Marx (this division in Marx will be dealt with later, particularly in the chapter on Althusser, which is chapter IV of this dissertation), and they rely on the works of his youth. This group of thinkers depends on The German Ideology for constructing a theory of Ideology in Marx. As for the later work of Marx, they don't approve of His latter works favourably. They either consider the later economic works of Marx as irrelevant, or treat it as a dangerous reversal of previous achievements of Marx. (2)

Some positivistically inclined scholars argue that, Marx is an economist and a social scientist

They depend only on post-German ideology works of Marx. They advocate the epistemological break in Marx, and this point too will be seen in detail in the fourth chapter. They lay much premium on the 'intellectual evolution' of Marx, and draw a distinction between Marx before 1845, and after 1845. Since The German Ideology was written during that period, they argue that it is bound to be ambiguous. For them, it will not be right to treat German Ideology as best of Marx's examples, and a concept of ideology can not be developed from that work of Marx. However, they claim that Marx's idea of the origin of ideology is much changed in his later writings. (3)

I wish to point out that these Marxist traditions make a fundamental mistake. They treat Marxian theory of ideology to be a static one. I wish to point out that one of the most important things in Marxism is its dynamic character. Thus it will only be consistent, if one accepts the intellectual development in Marx. In this intellectual evolution of Marx, the concept of ideology is also subject to change. One can see that the nucleus of ideology is maintained through out the intellectual evolution

of Marxian concept of ideology. Perhaps it can be very easily shown that Marx had not completed his conceptualisation of ideology by 1845. Thus, it can safely be said that Marx did not break from the essentials of ideology.

One can find two main period in Marx as for the development of the theory of ideology is concerned. The first period starts with "The thesis on Feurbach" and the "German Ideology". This period lasts till 1858, during which a strong basis of the concept of ideology is laid down. In this period in Marx, the resolution of the opposition between subject and object was taking place. It is during these periods that Marx clarifies his concept of history and society in general. The second period in Marxian concept of ideology starts with "Grundrisse". In Grundrisse, Marx attempts the concrete study of Capitalist Social relations. In the second period, the term ideology itself disappears but the concept was definitely operating implicitly. For the second period, a new context developed. The new context developed was relevant to the concept of ideology because the new context was the resolution of the opposition between essence and appearance. However, the

concept of ideology had a continued existence between these two periods; and this accounts for the continuity between these two phases.

In the first period, the concept of ideology was much concerned with the polarity of subject and object. Thus, consciousness and reality were separated as two water tight compartments. To the mind of Marx, this dualism was irrational. Marx wanted to end all dualism which separates consciousness from reality. At the same time he wanted to maintain the independence of consciousness from external being. The dualism in Immanuel Kant, that of Consciousness and Being, had already been brought to criticism by Hegel. Marx is aware of the idealist standpoint of the activity of the subject in opposition to modern materialism. It is from this idealist idea that Marx develops his criticism of Feuerbachian materialism. Marx accuses that Feuerbach sees material reality

"in the form of object or of contemplation, but not as sensuous human activity, practice, not subjectively".(4)

On the other hand, Hegel goes to another extreme. Hegel took subjective activity too far, to the extent that it had become the speculative construction of material reality consequently loosing all objectivity external to the subject.

Consciousness and reality are objectively separate. Speaking of their unity, the unity between consciousness and reality occurred within thought. Being had been identified with thought. Feurbach had identified the difference between subject and thought. He gave the view of their relation by affirming the external character of the object with respect to the subject. From this idea, Marx develops his criticism of Hegel. Thus, Marx uses Hegel's ideas to criticize Feurbach, and Feurbach's idea to criticize Hegel.

Marx had his differences with both materialism and idealism. In materialism, Marx had to reconcile with the fact that reality should not be conceived as a given object which does not include the subject activity. On the other hand, idealism was reducing Being to thoughts. So, Marx had to reconcile with idealism with the fact that

Being cannot be reduced to thoughts. Materialism gives primacy to matter. It treats consciousness a reflection of external reality. whereas, idealism does the opposite. Idealism makes reality a product of consciousness. Materialism puts consciousness and reality into two watertight compartments by splitting the two into two different worlds. Marx has to face these two opposite views to build his theory of ideology, as he advocates that consciousness and reality are related, but they are not just one thing. Thus he speaks of the basic unity between them.

Here we can see that Marx is making an attempt to bring out the plus points of both idealism and materialism together. Infact he is trying to integrate both idealism and materialism and he does this inter-rating of idealism and materialism by developing sharp criticisms. He makes his criticism very effective by opposing one with the other.(5) However, Marx's chief endeavour is to criticise idealism. He is not mainly opposed to materialism as such. But he is opposed to idealism as such. He wanted to prove that consciousness and material conditions are related in a definite manner, and they are not independent.

Thus his main attack is on idealism though he accepts its contributions. Marx says that

"Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men in their actual life process.

.....men,
developing their material production and their material intercourse alter, along with their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life".(6)

Consciousness does not come into existence from without. Consciousness is not arbitrary. Man's thoughts are necessarily related to and conditioned by the historical reality of society. It is rather a product of historical reality. Consciousness cannot be treated as autonomous from man's forms of existence. In Marx's approach to consciousness, this is one of the most important contribution to his materialistic assumptions. Marx says:-

"Consciousness is, therefore from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as man exist at all".
(7)

Consciousness is neither abstract nor arbitrary. It is like a language which owes its origin to basic human necessities. Man needs to have co-operation with other men for his survival. it was for this reason consciousness was limited to immediate surroundings in the beginning, which, however, is a limited consciousness. With advancement of the division of labour, consciousness may go beyond this limit and may tend to believe that it is pure, autonomous and emancipated from empirical realities. But even this belief is conditioned by the stage reached by social relations. One can see Marx repeatedly asserting this idea. To quote him:-

"The mode of production of material life conditions, the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness". (8)

Marx says that Man's social, political and intellectual being etc. are determined by mode of production of material life. Therefore, the idea that man's being is determined by his consciousness is essentially wrong. Marx favours the priority of being overconscious against idealistic thoughts which dissolves beings into consciousness.

For materialism, consciousness is eventually reducible to its material base, because consciousness is nothing but a mere reflection of external reality. Given this conception, the ideology would be reality that deceives passive consciousness. If conscious existence is understood to be consciousness, it would imply that conscious existence is a mere reflection. Material, external reality is looked upon as a totally different world, which ultimately conditions consciousness from without. Thereby it would come to the point that consciousness is only secondary phenomenon which does not require any serious attention. For Marx, this relation seemed still different. While criticizing Feuerbach and old materialism, Marx argues that Feuerbach's conception of sensuous world is simply confined to mere explanation of it. Marx says,

"He (Feuerbach) does not see how the sensuous world around him is not a thing given direct

from all eternity, remaining ever the same, but the product of industry and of the state of society, and indeed, in the sense that it is a historical product, the result of the activity of a whole succession of generation".(9)

Here, when Marx implies that consciousness cannot be anything other than conscious existence, this implication is to be taken in old materialism's background. To old materialism, men were just productions of, that too, passive productions of circumstances and education. During this period Marx was engaged in working out his general theoretical frame work, the summary of which could be found in the famous preface of 1859. thereby his theoretical formulation laid emphasis on the change of perspective with respect to idealism and Feuerbach's criticism of religion. So far, a clear awareness of the difficulties that science faces in its attempts of understanding reality is not evident. However, the focus has to be shifted from religion to actual material life.

Since the focus has been made to shift from religion to material life, now material life has to be analysed. Understanding of the relationship between consciousness and reality now depends on concrete analysis of material life. A scientific study of material condition means a study of capitalist mode of production.

Marx's criticism of Feuerbach carries the following points. Feuerbach treats objective reality as a pure datum. Marx says that the objective reality what we talk of is a historical production of man's practice. Infact, reality includes man's productive practices, and this way, man's productive practice has an objective character. Therefore, the subject object relation is a relation mediated by practice. the subect object relation is neither a simple contemplation of external objective reality, nor is it a relation of ideal creation of reality. When Marx says that the subect object relation is a relation mediated by practice, he introduces the concept of practice to solve the problem of relation between subject and object.

Speaking further about practice, Marx says that

"all social life is essentially practical"

and

"all the mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their

rational solution in human
practice and in them
comprehension of this
practice". (10)

Here Marx is found to be laying tremendous and significant emphasis on the concept of practice. He says that practice is the real basis of all social activities. His interest and the importance he attributes to practice is evident from what he says when he expounds his premises of materialist method in German Ideology. He says that his premises are

"the real individuals, their activity, and material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity". (11)

He says that practice is an activity. But he does not use the terms practice and activity as

synonymous because all activities are not practice. Through his first thesis on Feuerbach, Marx shows his recognition that the philosophy of idealism has developed the active side as against materialism. But in doing that idealism has done it abstractly. Thereby idealism fails to include real activity, the sensuous activity. By this, Marx draws a distinction between the activity of consciousness as done by idealism and practical activity.

Explaining the concept of activity, Marx goes into a bit of the history of activity. What could have been the past activity? Activity of any sort presupposes human existence. So the first activity of man must have been to secure his existence. In other words, man has to produce for his existence. Therefore, the first activity in relation to nature is that which aims at producing means of human material subsistence. Marx says,

"the first historical act is the production, is the means to satisfy human needs, the production of material life itself." (12)

To produce the means of subsistence means to produce food, shelter, clothing etc. The only way to produce these things is to mix man's effort and labour with nature. Thus the first appearance of practice was in the form of labour. Through labour, man was transforming the world, with the aim of reproducing material life.

Though in the beginning, practice appeared in the form of labour which was purely physical, yet it acquired a new connotation later. From merely slogging with nature, man learns to use his intellect in place of mere physical force.

"men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness" .
They begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence". (13)

Thus the concept of practice started

acquiring yet wider connotation. As man began to use more of his reason and as he began to distinguish himself from animals, practice became a purposive action. Animal action is purely bent on instincts, but for man, the reason in him makes his action a purposive one. Then practice becomes not something opposed to consciousness, but conscious activity. Activity without purpose becomes purely blind.

"What distinguishes the worst architect from the best of the bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour - process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement."
(14)

Speaking further about practice, Marx adds new insights to it. True that through practice nature is transformed, but what about man? He talks about the effect it has on man. He says that when nature is transformed through practice, along with it men themselves get transformed. To quote him:-

"Practice should be understood not merely on the production of the physical existence of man, but also as an activity expressing their life."(15)

Marx talks about the inner relationship between practice and human life itself. By producing for his physical existence man does not remain stagnant. Changes in man's productive activities corresponding changes in his life. Marx can be seen surpassing a distinction that Aristotle made earlier. Aristotle makes a distinction between "praxis" and "poiesis". By 'praxis', Aristotle means immanent activity. And by poiesis, he means of such activities whose end was external. Marx surpasses this distinction when he unifies both to make practice become an activity which produces an external object and

simultaneously expresses the subject itself. Therefore, what men are, becomes a coincidence of their practices. Therefore, practice can in no way be opposed to man's other aspects. Practice is his specific way of being. Practice is neither appendage to a theory nor even application of a theory, and in short, not any kind of external determination. Infact, man's totality depends on practice, as practice eventually determines man's totality. So, practice is not simply productions of man's material means, but eventually practice produces the totality of man, and his entire social life.

Marx talks of two kinds of practices. He says that

"the production of life appears as double relationship". (16)

Speaking about productive practice, It can not be just an isolated individuals endeavour. Man is a social being. Thus productive practices will be based on some definite modes of co-operation.

Men has to co-operate with another men on some basis. This modes of co-operation implies individual's interaction. Thus it will come to the point, that work has to be divided. and thus division of labour takes place. Therefore, practice becomes an internal activity whose external expression will be production of material and social life. When the basis of production of material life is co-operative interaction of individuals, the production of material life becomes only social. But this does not mean that practice can be totally identified with labour. To make this point clear, Marx talks about two kinds of practices. One, is labour itself, and another, revolutionary practice. Let us go into the details of these two practices.

We have already seen that labour appears as the first practice as man tries to produce his material subsistence. The labour is the most basic expression of man's reproductory practice. Though labour is the most basic, labour has some particular features. To quote Marx:-

"As soon as the distinction of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, Exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him, and from which he can not escape". (17)

Individuals interacting one another on the basis of a definite mode of co-operation find the need of assigning definite works to each. This amounts to division of labour. Division of labour further leads to a condition where the forms of co-operation becomes fixed for each individual. Therefore, practices also become fixed. Thus, practice would start appearing as fixed upon men, slowly becoming as external power over individuals. Marx says,

"This fixation of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations, is one of the chief factors in historical development till now". (18)

Thus due to division of labour, man's own product turns into an objective power. Slowly, it gets out of control and start behaving as dominant over men. From this background, Marx builds up his analytical enterprise of understanding and interpreting society. He says,

"men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from `the past".
(19)

Thus the important thing is that the famous saying 'man makes his own history' has to be understood in the context. It may appear that man is rather free to make his history. But the fact of the matter, is otherwise. Man has no real option in choosing circumstances, they are thrust upon him, in other words, individual is born into a set of circumstances which shapes him, and control him. Ironically, and also importantly,

these circumstances are by no means external agents, they are what men themselves produce, by means of their practice.

Freedom and Necessity are two important concepts in Marx. Necessity is that which binds man; enslaves man. Freedom consists in overcoming necessity. Labour, therefore is an initial condition to freedom. Through labour man satisfies his needs and liberates from nature. But labour in itself is not liberating. On the contrary, labour becomes bondage, when it takes place under specified social conditions. Labour by itself does not react against, it can only be carried out under commands of social relation of production. what labour can really do is mere reproductions of relations of dominations and labour as such can not contribute anything towards human emancipation.

Therefore, to attain human freedom, labour must become free of relations of productions dominates. Hence the only alternative left is to change the circumstances. These circumstances or social relations must be so transformed that they become another set of relations that are not

relations of domination. To bring out this change, we require another kind of practice. It is the revolutionary practice that could change existing social relations. Marx says that history up to this time is the domination of this alien power on man, which man himself had produced. Unless revolutionary practices are brought into, individuals will continue to be enslaved by this alien power which dominates. Marx says:-

"It is just as empirically established that by the overthrow of the existing state of society by the communist revolution..... this power which so baffles the German theoreticians, will be dissolved....."

..... all round dependence, this natural form of the world - historical co-operation of individual;s, will be transformed..... into the control and conscious mastery of these powers". (20)

We have seen earlier that a change in the circumstances will bring a corresponding change in

the life of individuals. So a change in man becomes coincident of the practice of transformation of social relations of production. Marx adds,

"the coincidence of changing circumstances and of human activity or self changing can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionary practice". (21)

Revolutionary practice can simply be not practiced, It is not arbitrary. Even if man wishes for it, it can't take place. It depends on the productive practices. Marx believes that people have won freedom to the extent productive practices have permitted. Here Marx's criticism to Stirner is significant. Marx says that,

"he" (Stirner) "imagines that people up to now have always formed a concept of man, and then won freedom for themselves to the extent that was necessary to realize this concept.....". (22)

On the contrary, people have won freedom only up to what productive practices so permitted. explaining this point further, Marx shows that all past revolutions were necessarily restricted owing to the nature of man's productive practice, until when the productive practices themselves got changed drastically through industrial revolution. The revolutionary expansion of capitalist productive practices are such that they enable revolutionaries to strive for total freedom. Before this time, in all previous revolutions, the practices of a revolutionary class had to exclude the majority as there was not enough to satisfy all needs. The result, the conquering class had to be narrow minded, and under such circumstances, a communal conscious mastery over the structure provided by practice was impossible. Thus all previous struggles towards revolution was not successful. But with industrial revolution capitalism expanded, and situation became conducive to a total revolution.

The prime objective of revolutionary practice is to abolish all dependence on the objective power which dominates men. To achieve this

independence of man, revolutionary practice produces a system in which man controls social relations instead of relations of productions controlling man. But then, there will be new problems to deal with. The existing system must have done lots of wrongs which would demand immediate care and attention. Talking about the existing power, Marx says that the existing power

"must necessarily have rendered the great mass of humanity propertyless; and produced at the same time an existing world of wealth and culture, both of which conditions presuppose a great increase in productive power..... and, on the other hand, this development of productive forces..... in an absolutely necessary practical premise.....". (23)

Therefore, such conditions would make the revolutionary class aware of the situations and thus, perhaps for the first time they will make efforts to change the external power, so that it could be controlled by the whole community.

Circumstances determine reproductory practice, and circumstances force it over individuals. Revolutionary practice, on the other hand is conscious of the role that circumstances play, and aims at transforming these circumstances so that they can no longer dominate. Reproductive practice is carried out under given specific social relations and it has as many complexities as division of labour demands. For revolutionary practice, these very relations becomes their object of activity.

Reproductive practice does not question the social framework in which it operates by itself, and it accepts the domination passively. On the other hand, revolutionary practice questions and rebels against the domination and seeks to change it. However, the object of revolutionary practice is social totality and by no means any part of it.

However, it can not be mistaken that the relationship between revolutionary practice and reproductory practice is analogous to relationship between freedom and necessity, or free activity and necessary activity. Revolutionary practice and reproductive activity are not opposed to one another, in a contradictory manner. Nonetheless, revolutionary practice cannot be reduced to the result of reproductive practice. Revolutionary practice is not an automatic production of these conditions. Revolutionary practice can arise only when certain practical premises are given. It is neither arbitrary, nor absolutely prefigured. Revolutionary practice is a sort of media between freedom and necessity. The repressions of domination of material conditions over individuals forces them to join hands together in the form of 'unions', and co-operative tasks of getting rid of such dominations by replacing it with domination of individuals over material conditions. But all these depend on man, as it is up to the people to accomplish this task. For this precise reason, Marx says that communism is not

"a state of affairs which is to be established, but the real movement which abolishes the present state of things". (24)

Perhaps this expression of Marx is much significant to day in the light of the changing situations in Europe. Though most of the media reaction expressed a feeling that the very edifice of Communism is crumbling down in Europe, it is obvious that such expressions are not based on any understanding of Marx, Marxism, or Communism. On the face of it, there had always been tendencies in the minds of many people of letters to identify Marxism with some version of Communist movement which is immediately familiar to them. Such tendencies had always done injustice to Marx. The fact that some form of Communist movement does not succeed is due to two reasons. First, the objective material conditions might have not sufficiently matured for Communism, and secondly and most importantly, an established so called Communist form of government tends to stagnate and drift away from the Marxian spirit. When it becomes a state of affairs that is established instead of a movement,

it becomes contradictory to Marxism. There can't be a situation where all human problems are solved, for all time to come.

I wish to point out that the open Marxian system must be preceded by a closed one, till all contradictions wither away from societies. However, the failure of some Communist government (if at all any one really could call them failure) cannot be accounted for mistakes of Marx, or even Marxist. It could only be due to either one, or both of the reasons mentioned above.

The fact that social conditions which are independent of man's will and is dominating man is a production of man himself, becomes an interesting situation. Due to this fact, the constitution of social reality becomes a socially contradictory reality. To quote Marx:-

"the division of labour inside a nation leads at first to the separation of industrial and commercial from agricultural labour, and hence the

separation of town and country,
and the conflict of their
interests". (25)

In post industrial revolution where the division of labour creates a further division. This division is that between commercial and industrial labour from that of peasants; the agricultural labour. This is also a division between mental and material labour. And this division creates separation further among individuals co-operating in every branch of production. Ultimately, this division creates separation between country and town.

The multifarious phases of development of division of labour is accomplished in many different forms of ownership. This implies another division, the division of conditions of labour, as a division of capital and labour. This further implies the opposition between private interest and communal interest. In short, this divides man into two category, two classes. Thus the emergence of two social classes in capitalism is due to division of labour.

These classes are related to one another in the form of antagonism. As the result of this, freedom of one class becomes necessarily oppression of the other. Their antagonistic relation results in necessarily opposed interests. Their class interests thus become opposed. Now the conditions under which men carry out their productive practices are the conditions of the rule of the class which they belong to, whose class interests are antagonistic to one another. Marx says,

"The society has hitherto always developed within the framework of a contradiction___ in antiquity the contradiction between free men and slaves, in middle ages that between nobility and serfs, in modern times that between bourgeoisie and proletariat". (26)

Marx says that all developments, changes have a common aspect. He identifies this common aspect as contradiction. Marx gives the example of three epochs - Slavery, Feudalism, and capitalism. The historical transition from slavery to feudalism was based on the framework of the contradiction between free men and slaves, From feudalism the transition

was based on the contradiction between the nobility and the serfs, from capitalism to communism, the transition would again be based on the contradiction between bourgeoisie and proletariats.

Just because human practice has crystalised into objective relation and structure, and into an objective power, it doesn't mean that contradiction would emerge or arise. This objectified power is a necessary result of man's productive activity. This power which man produces dominates and controls man instead of man controlling this objectified power. The division of labour too is a result of man's productive practice. But the result of division of labour was not consciously intended. The development of productive forces control the division of labour. Thus man has lost control over the relations of production as well as the factors conditioning the division of labour. The necessary consequence of the limitations of productive forces has been this; only the needs of a few could be satisfied, and it had to be at the cost of the majority. Obviously, the few, whose needs are satisfied, will be the dominating class; and at whose cost this is done will be the dominated class. This phenomenon amounts to two

other Marxian concepts, namely, oppression and exploitation. In short, division of labour eventually results in division of society into two classes, who are antagonistic to one another. Thus, the phenomenon of class distinction necessarily excludes the dominated class, who are the majority, from all sorts of developments.

The contradictory character of social reality was brought by restricted productive forces and division of labour. It is on this basis which Marx approaches the concept of ideology. After his work, 'The German Ideology', in 1859, the intellectual evolution in Marx resulted in reviewing his investigations of past years. Here, Marx speaks of two important concepts. On the first place, Marx says that no questions on consciousness can be arbitrarily explained. Consciousness must be explained from contradictions of material life.

Secondly, he says that Man cannot solve those contradictions in consciousness which he is unable to solve in practice. To quote Marx,

"mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation". (27)

Thereby, that which cannot be solved in practice cannot be solved in consciousness. Marx even goes to the extent of saying that the task of solving any contradiction arises only when either the material condition of its solution already existing, or such conditions are forming to exist. Other than these two cases, the question of solving contradictions simply doesn't arise at all.

It is interesting to know of what happens during this period of time. On the first place, man became conscious of the emerging contradictions. Secondly, he has not yet tried, or he is only in the process of solving these contradictions in practice. At this time, human mind, which has become aware of these contradictions cannot be at rest. Mind may attempt to solve them on its own:

and thus contradictions give vague and distorted solutions in the minds of men. Here Marx says that,

"the phantom formed in human brains are also necessarily, sublimates to their material life process". (28)

Another important aspect in man's inability to solve some contradictions in their reproductive practices. Through man's reproductive practices when he is unable to solve these contradictions, there results distortions. The contradictions may project themselves as ideological form of consciousness. Here ideology comes in action by becoming solutions to such contradictions that man is unable to solve in practice. Therefore, these solutions to contradictions that man is unable to solve in practice will be nothing but projections of man's incapacibilities.

Here ideology plays a crucial role, the negative role. Such contradictions ought to have been solved in practice. Infact, as it was

mentioned before, there cannot be any solution to contradictions other than by way of practice. But then, ideology attempts to solve them 'ideologically'. Such attempts at solutions through ideology are infact negations of contradictions rather than affirmations of them. This also accounts to concealing of contradictions. And thus, ideology plays the crucial role of concealing and necessarily negating contradictions. What Poulantzas says in this context is worth remembering. Poulantzas says:-

"ideology has the practice function of hiding the contradiction and of reconstituting on an imaginary land a relatively coherent discourse which serves as the horizon of agent's experience....". (29)

Thus, ideology hides the reality of contradictions, and build up an imaginary world of imaginary entities that are smooth and comforting on man's imaginations, befitting to his passions and gives him the feeling of having solved his

problems or the feeling that everything is fine or in order.

This role of ideology amounts to inverting reality and Marx speaks of this inversion of reality time and again. But Marx doesn't say that this inversion - the negation of real contradictions - arbitrary. This inversion is not arbitrarily produced by consciousness. Marx says that,

"If the conscious expression of the real relations of these individuals is illusory, if in their imagination they turn reality up side down, this in its turn is the result of their limited material mode of activity". (30)

Thus ideology is not arbitrary. This projection of falsehood has a concrete ground. It occurs because man's productive practices are limited. This limitation of productive practices do not envisage a scope of solutions in practice. In other words, productive practices are not

sufficient enough to produce a solution to this contradiction in practice. Thus, negations of contradictions by ideology is a sublimation in the consciousness of man of the limitations of productive practices.

Consciousness does not invent ideology. It is not a pure invention of consciousness, which distorts reality. Nor is that ideology a deception of passive consciousness by an opaque reality, which is objective. Marx affirms that ideology arises from what he calls as "limited mode of production" - the "limited material mode of activity" which is actually responsible for both, it creates contradiction on the one hand, and a distorted projection of reality in the form of ideology on the other. In this way, the limited material mode of production unites consciousness and reality in one phenomenon.

Marx finds the origin of ideology as some kind of practice, namely the practice of limited mode of production which is the origin of both contradictions as well as ideology.

However, man has to know reality. Ideology has to be done away with. To do away with ideology can not be done through any form of mental activities, because it would not be possible as the origin of ideology is something else. What is possible is the removal of the source itself, that is to change the limited material mode of activity. Marx says that ideology can not be

"dissolved by mental criticism
..... but only by the
practical overthrow of the
actual social relations which
gave rise to this idealistic
humbug.....". (31)

Thus, the only way is to overthrow the actual social relations which gave rise to ideology. Marx says that overthrowing can be done by another type of practice, namely, 'the revolutionary practice'. Revolutionary practice is the only thing that can overcome ideology at its roots. Revolutionary practice can do this by solving real contradictions as contradictions gave rise to it. To quote Marx:

"the real, practical dissolutions of phrases, the removal of these notions from the consciousness of man's will be effected by altered circumstances, not by theoretical deductions". (32)

Thus, ideology can be eliminated by only changed circumstances. 'Theoretical deductions' or mental critiques are no way of solving them. However, it doesn't mean that Marx implies to do away mental criticism. He implies that mental criticism is not a sufficient condition of changing circumstances. Probably it could be expressed in this way, though mental critique is a necessary condition to overthrow existing social relations, it is not a sufficient condition. We cannot forget that Marx himself is producing a theoretical critique to the concept of ideology.

Marx's attack of mental criticism is directly aimed at the German philosophers, whom Marx calls German ideologists, who attempt to liberate man by criticizing and then dissolving ideas. They say that man is bound by various things. But the chains that bind men are unreal. These chains of

men are only illusions of consciousness. Therefore, rational reflections and mental criticisms can free consciousness from their illusions and ultimately free men of their chains. This had been the mistake of German ideologists. They fail to understand the reality of material relations and they fail to comprehend that ideology originate from the nature of material relations. By verbal combats, they hide the real chains, the real contradictions which arise in practical life. Marx criticizes them of this mistakes. Marx says:

"It has not occurred to any one of these philosophers to inquire into the connection of German philosophy with German reality, the relation of their criticism to their own material surroundings". (33)

Marx says that not even one German philosopher thought of going into the relationship of German philosophy and German reality. They fail to relate their criticism to their own material surroundings. They have all arbitrarily philosophized, and they all became simply 'ideologues'.

Productive practices are not carried out in isolation. They always are carried out under certain conditions. Since capitalism is a class society, the condition in which productive practices are carried out are conditions of definite class dominations. In a given class, there is always definite conditions of class domination. In a class society, it is obvious and natural that the ideological concealing of reality, the hiding of social contradictions are serving the interest of dominating or ruling class. Ideology is understood to be playing more than just one role. Ideology is not just the result of division of labour which objectifies practice into contradictory classes. More important is that ideology is a condition for the function in multiplying the systems of class domination. Ideology hides contradictions and explains away the questions of subordination of the dominated class, and projects domination as the reality of nature in the sense that since that is only natural, the dominated ones are only unfortunate.

Thus by explaining away the contradictory relations of classes and class domination, ideology achieves the role of creating a condition for the

functioning and reproduction of class domination. This role of ideology becomes successful in projecting a vision that everything is fine in the society. Individual relations and social group relations seems perfect and harmonious. Due to this all OK signal of ideology, men carry out their reproductive practices without any interruption. They are made to think that tears and sweat and hunger they have inherited and they are born to be dominated.

Thus ideology makes men think that these are no problems. Everything is fine and all are happy. Ideology legitimizes class structure, and not only that, it legitimizes the whole of social structure. Thereby ideology gives this impression to individuals that social structure and class structure are indispensable for their reproduction. For example, ideology would be successful in making people believe that their can not be any factories without an owner. There must be the owner, who is by virtue superior to the workers of the factory. Since a factory cannot function without the controlling factor, the owner, workers will be rendered jobless if there is no

owner. Thereby, it becomes the duty and only prudence for the workers to protect the ownership at any cost. In this sense, ideology is seen as serving the interest of the dominant class. In other words it becomes necessary for the ruling class to advocate the supremacy of ideology. The class existence depends on the existence of ideology. Marx says that classes are compelled

"to represent its interest as the common interest of all the members of society, that is expressed in ideal form: it has to give its idea the form of universality and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones". (34)

What Lenin said is again worth remembering. Lenin said, that 'whatever an intellectual speaks, it is the bourgeoisie who speaks'. Lenin's analysis of this intellectual bourgeoisie relationship has this expression of Marx in its background. Ideology intellectually legitimises the existing social conditions and structure. Further ideology intellectually makes the class interest appear as every one's interest, and make them

appear as the only real and rational ones. ideology universalises class interest, by way of legitimising it intellectually.

Thus, apparently the dominating class represents all individual's interest. In the beginning, the class preparing for revolution represents the interest of all non ruling classes, bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie of non-ruling groups. But then, soon the proletariats develops their own class interests. As a result of emergence of proletarian class interest, contradictions begin to appear between the bourgeoisie, the dominating class and proletariats, the revolutionary class. However, here too ideology comes for the rescue of the bourgeoisie. Marx says that with the help of ideology, bourgeoisie appears to be

"not a class, but the representative of the whole society". (35)

For Marx, ideology is a distorted consciousness. This distorted consciousness has two

negative functions in Marxian concept. On the first place, ideology negates and conceals contradictions and secondly, it hides contradiction in the interest of dominating class. Marx says that this had been the business of ideology through out history. In pre-capitalist societies, class differences were justified by giving philosophical theories of hierarchical conceptions of the world. In capitalism, class differences are concealed by way of reconstructing a world of freedom and equality in consciousness. Thus, in both the periods ideology was concealing social contradictions and legitimising them. Thereby, Marx calls ideology as "false consciousness".

When Marx says that ideology is false consciousness, this expression of Marx must not be mistaken. When ideology is false consciousness, it doesn't mean that non-ideological consciousness is true consciousness. They are not related in the way of truth and falsehood. Non ideological consciousness may be true consciousness, or it may still be false consciousness. There may be consciousness which doesn't conceal contradiction and to that extent non ideological, But it may be serving the interest of dominating class. Insofar

as they are serving the interest of the ruling class, such consciousness cannot be called as true consciousness, though they are non-ideological. Therefore, when ideology is termed as false consciousness, the feeling that may arise in mind of non ideological consciousness as being true consciousness is not right. Non ideological consciousness is not necessarily true consciousness.

An understanding of ideological distortion cannot be confined to a given situation in which ideology emerges. An ideological distortion is also not an immanent attribute of consciousness. Ideology has a historical character. As contradictions, ideology is also historical. There can be also a situation of a non -ideological consciousness becoming ideological. Quiet possibly, a consciousness which is not concealing contradictions but serving the interest of the dominating class could easily be extended to also concealing contradictions from simply; serving the interest of the ruling class. If I am allowed to make degrees of differences in various ideologies, then I would say that the latter could be more harming and dangerous.

However, ideology can not be understood arbitrarily. ideology has to be comprehended and judged with reference to context, it has to be understood in the context of actual social practice and referred to the concrete evolution of contradictions. Originally, at the beginning of a mode of production external conditions that control relations of production are temporarily not existing. since the external conditions are absent, the contradictions typical to such modes of productions are also temporarily absent. Marx says that ,

"it is only when the contradictions enter the seen that man can realise the one sidedness of the conditions under which they produce".(36)

Thereby, there is no question of any one becoming aware of the one-sidedness of the condition under which man carries out his productive practices until contradiction arises. When contradiction arises, as a result of objectified labour which becomes alien to man and controlling man, man becomes aware of

contradictions. If man becomes aware of contradictions, the domination of the ruling class will be questioned, and everything will result in the cessation of class domination and class distinctions. For the bourgeoisie, this can not be allowed to happen. Thus he would need something to keep men from knowing the reality, from becoming aware of the contradictions. It is at this juncture that ideology can be seen appearing as concealment of contradictions.

Before the appearance of contradictions, the consciousness of the ruling class could not be class consciousness. Their consciousness was based on, corresponding to the forms of intercourse. Here, the ruling class consciousness could not be ideological. Contradictions and ideology appear from the very beginning of the mode of production, but they affect the former dominant class, defeated but still struggling to survive. These contradictions are different from the contradictions of the new mode of production. With new mode of production, new specific contradictions appear and concealing them, new ideology comes into existence. To quote Marx

"the more the normal form of intercourse of society, and with it the conditions of the ruling class, develop their contradiction to the advanced productive forces, and the greater the consequent split within the ruling class itself, as well as the split between it and the class ruled by it, the more untrue, of course, becomes the consciousness which originally corresponded to this form of intercourse....". (37)

For Marx, ideology is not only historical, but it is also evolutionary. Ideology is just not a historical phenomenon, it is beyond it in the sense that its very character also changes as contradictions evolve. This has to be. Under changed circumstances, contradiction changes in to new, complex and sharper ones. Ideology has to keep pace with the contradictions to be ideology at all. Owing to the very character of ideology as concealing contradictions, this cannot be otherwise. Marx says that the sharper the contradictions, the more ideology

"descends to the level of more idealizing phrases, conscious illusion, deliberate hypocrisy". (38)



This deception may be cleverly and calculatingly produced by one individual or it may even be projected by some who themselves believe it wrongly. However, Marx is not quite interested in finding out whether it is individual deception or a necessary deception induced by reality. Marx is concerned of the unity of consciousness and reality through practice. Nonetheless, this union between subject and object, consciousness and reality is also historical and evolutionary. It also evolves through different configurations.

The complexities of subject object relationship become further crucial owing to their nature of domination. Sometimes the subject is seen to be dominating the object, and some other times, the object is seen to be dominating the subject. A.Schimidt says that from the subject object relation it is possible

"to detect that as the subject dominating some times and the object at certain other times, just as the proportion between labour and material of nature vary in the products of labour". (39)

Schimidt's contention is that depending upon the variation of materials of nature in the products of labour, the relation of subject object domination also varies. That is how we find the subject dominating some times and the object dominating some other times.

Ideology or ideological distortions become more intensified as the contradictions become more complex or sharp. Marx calls such augmented ideological distortions as 'deliberate hypocrisy' for the subject. As the contradiction becomes more and more acute, it destroys the prevailing 'apparent harmony' of the society. If the feeling of 'all fine' is shaken, the dominated or repressed class will tend to ask questions which the dominating class cannot afford. Therefore, it becomes imperative on the part of the ruling class somehow to maintain the continued existence of ideology. They have to exhaust all their instruments of oppression and even the state itself. There may still be a point, where calculated lies and emotional exploitation must be needed. Therefore ideology becomes deliberate hypocrisy for the people. To quote Marx:

"The more their falsity is exposed by life, and the less meaning they have for consciousness itself, the more firmly they are asserted, the more hypocritical, moral and holy becomes the language of this normal society". (40)

Thus, by progress in life, ideology's falsity may get exposed slowly. Thus the once all meaningful ideological jargons may appear to be less and less meaningful. Thereby ideology slowly might develop the tendency of losing its significance. Here, Marx says that the more ideology becomes less meaningful, the more firmly and deliberately they become asserted and imposed. Ideology will start appearing to be more moral, and it will take the help from institutions of religion, and become more holy etc. Marx, satirically calls the society as "normal" society. The society, which appears to be and wants to continue to appear "normal" does all sorts of things of any extent to conceal the contradictions that are intensifying.

However, Marx says that ideology is not arbitrary. It is neither a pure invention which has

no relation to reality, nor it is an objective deception which reality imposes on subject. Ideology is produced jointly by subject and object, through a kind of subject-object participation.

As we have seen before, for Marx, consciousness is not arbitrary. Consciousness is in fact determined by material reality. Marxian analysis and understanding of ideology is also not arbitrary. At this point, Marx takes the concept of ideology in conjunction with the relationship between consciousness and reality. This conjunction has become a source of confusion to many, and even Marx is not very clear sometimes. As a result of this confusion, sometimes an understanding of ideology mean as something that refers to various forms of consciousness, forms of theories and intellectual representations corresponding to certain economic base. From this ideas, 'ideological superstructure' came into existence as many interpreters have favoured this notion. Nonetheless, in majority of cases, ideology stands for particular aberrations of consciousness which conceals reality; contradictions. These two could be treated as only two sets of meanings and

understandings of Marxian concept of ideology. Even the interpretation of ideology as ideological superstructure could be seen as an interpretation which enriches ideology by giving new dimensions to the concept. However, one should not confuse between these two meanings. In fact, we can find that Marx himself makes distinction between them though not explicitly. However, Marx has never used the term 'ideological superstructure'. Marx makes reference to another type of superstructure in his 1859 preface. Marx refers to

"legal and political
superstructure"

and to the

"forms of social consciousness"
(41)

But when Marx makes reference to these superstructures he does not call them 'ideological superstructure' and he never uses the term at all. But Marx calls them by different names. He calls them

"a superstructure of distinct and peculiarly formal sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of lives". (42)

or as

"idealistic superstructure".
(43)

Marx is talking about consciousness at structural level. Here it can be said that by consciousness at structural level Marx is including all types of consciousness. Though all consciousness is socially determined, not all of them are concealing contradictions. Since not all of them are concealing contradictions, all of them do not have the characteristics of ideology, and so all of them are not ideological. So every society has idealistic superstructure, and not ideology. Ideology is particular kind of consciousness that conceals contradictions. Not all societies have contradictions. Consciousness survives social contradictions. So consciousness at structural level becomes idealistic superstructure even for class less societies. But the questions of ideology

is relevant only in societies which have contradictions, and contradictions can only be found in antagonistic societies.

Nonetheless, in the idealistic superstructure of the societies,

"the ruling ideas are the ideas of the ruling class". (44)

But then just because the idealistic superstructure is full of ideas of the dominant or ruling class, idealistic superstructure does not become ideological. For Marx, mere class origin is not a sufficient condition to make a consciousness ideological. We have already seen before that Marx in his historical treatment of ideology and contradictions identifies that originally some forms of consciousness of the ruling class corresponds to the forms of intercourse and so they are not ideological. Marx makes this point very clear when he took to critique political economy.

There are definite differences between ideological superstructure and ideology. Just because the ideological superstructure belongs to the dominating class, they need not be ideological. The class character of ideological superstructure alone does not make it ideological. Similarly, all distortions and erroneous representations of reality are also not ideological, because all distortions are not necessarily concealing contradictions. But this does not mean that the idealistic superstructure does not have any ideological ideas. In fact the idealistic superstructure of a dominating class in class antagonistic society is a mixture of both ideological ideas and non ideological ideas. In fact, Marx makes this point very clear in his criticism to Storch in his theories of surplus value. Marx says that Storch is lacking in his concept. His concept of material production is incomplete. Storch does not conceive his material production historically. Marx accuses Storch by saying that Storch

"deprives himself of the basis on which alone can be understood partly the ideological component of the ruling class, partly the free spiritual production of this particular social formation".
(45)

And Marx is very clear about his conceptions of idealistic superstructure. He says that idealistic superstructure can be said to have two parts. One part contains the ideological elements which conceals contradiction. The other part is non ideological. However, this only indicates that ideology is existing in the idealistic superstructure as a sector, within another sector.

When all forms of consciousness was given a superstructural character certain difficulties were poised in understanding them. Even by making the distinction between ideological ideas and non ideological contents as existing in the idealistic superstructure, the problem is not fully solved. Idealistic superstructure has a definite and distinct character as different from the character of juridico - political superstructure. To quote Marx ,

"The political superstructure emerges out of the need for regulating the class conflict". (46)

Class domination can not simply be carried out without the help of juridical structure. Social institutions and instruments of oppressions regulate and protect property and trade. The state is a representative of none other than the dominant ones, though the state appears to represent all members of the society. State is the real power of the dominating class which does the division of labour. Marx says

"The state is nothing more than the form of organisation which the bourgeoisie necessarily adopt..... in the form in which the individuals of a ruling class asserts their common interests". (47)

State thus necessarily becomes an instrument of exploitation in the hands of bourgeoisie. Because state is nothing other than a conscious organisation of bourgeoisie. Through the existence of state, the ruling class people can conveniently disguise their common interest as public interest. Thus, state becomes the largest and most effective instrument of oppression and existence of ideology.

For Marx, the state has tremendous unity. A state has various base consisting of various types of dominant class. But all these different ruling classes have enormous unity, and they successfully channelise their common interest to one point; the pinnacle of state.

We have seen before that the idealistic superstructure consists of different ideas. These ideas may even be conflicting. Among the non ideological ideas, there may be some ideas which are not serving the needs of the dominating class. They are not in the interest of the ruling class. Chiefly, the idealistic superstructures consist of ideas in the interest of the ruling class, but some ideas may be not in the interest of them. The existence of such ideas are definitely disruptive to the interest of the bourgeoisie. There are the ideas which become instrumental in doing away with class domination one day. It is in this sense that Marx says that the seeds of its own destruction is always within the same system itself.

In 'German Ideology', Marx is accusing philosophers of inverting reality. He says that

German philosophy is "descending from heaven to earth" as these philosophers make various attempts to explain man's practices from ideas. This is inversion, because ideas are to be explained from man's practice, and not practice from ideas. Their inversion has given independent ontological status to ideas which could effectively conceal contradictions. Ideas appear as if they could rule over material life. In this way, the problem of mankind are given to these wrong ideas, where as the focus should have been on contradictions, which are practical.

This inversion of reality has given rise to a number of illusions. Marx must have found that there is not much difference qualitatively between common people under illusion and the active members of the class. Because the active members of the class, though they engage themselves in exploitation and deception, are themselves subject to deception, because they are wrongly convinced that they are doing right, as they are 'born superior' and born to rule. Perhaps the latter deserve more sympathy than the former. But however, the real culprit of deceptions are these philosophers. Who knows; but deliberately disguised their thoughts and knowledge for the sake of convenience.

Most of Hegel's critiques, and even Feuerbach himself made their efforts of understanding religion by way of analysing and understanding the earthly core material aspect - of religion. Such efforts have finally resulted in reducing religion to human essence. Feuerbach can be seen as a real champion of this reduction. Marx doesn't approve of this criticism, though he gratefully acknowledges their contributions. Marx develops his criticism from a different source. Marx develops his understanding of religion from a actual material relation of life to its corresponding religious consciousness. By this; Marx started his analytical enterprise from the other end of traditional analysis. For this reason, he accuses ideologists of turning reality upside down. This criticism by Marx really was a turning point in all intellectual enterprises that was to follow in the years to come. But even here, Marx's critique of ideology is not done completely. Marx has only briefly outlined his critique of ideology - a general theory of ideology. His concrete analysis and critique of the concept of ideology was only to follow later; particularly in his two voluminous works which had three volumes each: The Capital and his Theories of Surplus Value.

In Marx, the essential elements and fundamental principles of ideology is laid down when he approaches the concept of practice. Practice later became one of the most important and crucial concept for Marxists, particularly the Neo-Marxist revolutionaries. It may be worth remembering the words of that veteran and pioneering revolutionary, Cheguere as he said about revolutionary practice - "One must grow tough without ever loosing his tenderness". However, such new connotations were only added later by various champions, but for Marx, right now, the approach to the concept of practice is with a specific purpose. Marx was resorting to practice to solve the problems in subject-object relationship and the related ones. However, he approaches the concept of practice only in a general manner. He was trying to make the point that from erstwhile philosophies, historical practice was the point of departure. His analytical enterprise led him to the conclusion that man's reproductive practice leads to the condition of domination of material conditions over man himself, and the only way of overthrowing that condition of material domination is through another type of practice, the revolutionary practice. In that way, Marx becomes interested in man's productive practice that alienates his labour

power from himself, which ironically takes over man as its slave. Marx's analytical precision did not take long to show him that this necessary alienation of man is due to the nature of the mode of production, and this mode of production is capitalist mode of production. Thus the question of de-alienating man, of human emancipation consisted in overthrowing the very regime of capitalism, and obviously, capitalist mode of production along with it. We have already seen before Marx criticising many philosophers for doing the mistake of running to external agents to solve and explain problems. Marx had maintained through out his scientific claim that if there is a problem, then the problem has to contain its solution too. Therefore, the ways and means of overthrowing capitalistic mode of production can only be excavated from capitalism itself. Therefore Marx started studying the capitalistic mode of production into its subtleties. His enquiry was concerning the specific material conditions which will over throw capitalist mode of production. With this a new era started in Marx with his writings of the 'Pre-capitalist Economic Foundation', the Grundrisse.

We can find Marx centering around the concept of capital in Grundrisse, which of course later led in to the voluminous work of Capital itself. However, Marx's interest in the new concept of capital can not be called new at all, because it is simply a continuation of what he has started in The German Ideology, though the programme he assumed in German Ideology grows into new insights and directions. In German Ideology Marx identifies an objective power which alienates man owing to the typical nature of the mode of production, and in Capital Marx completes this analytical enterprise, and speaks about the various forms that this alienating objective power assumes. In German Ideology Marx recognises that capitalism can only be overthrown through revolutionary practice, but he leaves the discussion incomplete. In German Ideology he doesn't go into the questions of how revolutionary practice can actually be brought. But in Capital, he completes this task. In Capital, Marx studies of the conditions in which revolutionary practice could arrive.

Thus three volumes of the Capital becomes very important for the revolutionaries. The three volumes of Capital are having definite and specific inner connections. Marx himself speaks about his

analysis of the three volumes of the Capital and their inner connections in a letter he wrote to Engels. To quote Marx:

"At last, we have arrived at the phenomena which serve as the starting point for the vulgar economist: rent originally from the land, profit (interest) from Capital, wages from labour. But from our point of view the things now look differently. The apparent movement is explained.

.....since these three [wages, rent, profit (interest)] constitute the respective source of income of the three class of land owners, capitalist and wage labourers, we have, in conclusion, the class struggle into which the movement and the analysis of the whole business evolves itself....".(48)

Marx says that from the alien and objectified practice he arrives at the solution to the problem, the revolutionary practice in which "the whole business revolves itself". In Capital, Marx begins the analysis of "Commodity". Commodity is the concrete and historical form of practice, which goes under various transformations. It transforms

into money, money becomes capital, in Capital it becomes surplus value, which essentially leads to class conflict, class struggle and revolution.

Commodity appears to be a very simple thing, and it deceptively gives the feeling that it is easily understood. But when we try to comprehend commodity, it starts unfolding various complexities. Therefore, understanding of commodity becomes a very difficult task. Marx says:

"Commodity appears at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood"

but when we study it closer,

"its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing....." .(49)

Marx's study of labour and its product proves a very important point. Though they appear very simple, it becomes very complicated to understand them, because, labour and its product are very complicated. The alienating force, the objectified practice of man disguises itself and

makes a very appealing appearance. But then it effectively conceals its true character: hides its real character. A thing becomes commodity owing to the fact of value relation. Apparently, the value relations seem to be relation between things. But a case study shows that it is wrong. It is not relation between things, but it is social relations between men. All theses make the relations of production very complicated.

Man's social relations were objectified in class and personal dependency even in pre-capitalist era. Take the case of Feudalism for example. In feudalism also, the social relations of men were objectified in class and personal dependency. But then these relations did not appear as relations between things, they appeared just as personal relations. The labour was in the natural form of labour, which Marx calls as

"typical of production of commodities". (50)

But then, this natural form of labour which

was in feudalism became disguised when it came to capitalism. In fact, both in capitalism and in feudalism, labour becomes compulsory. The only difference is that, in feudalism it really appears also as compulsory, and in capitalism it appears as voluntary. In feudalism, there was always the feudal lord who forced men to work at his whims, and any refusal could mean death. Here the force was purely physical, and the compulsion of workers are evident. The whole scene changes when it comes to capitalism. It says that in capitalism there is no compulsion to work. It appears as though a man is free whether to work in a factory or not. On the face of it, there is no compulsion. But, if one does not "choose" to work in a factory, then his subsistence and existence becomes at stake. He owns no land to cultivate, and he can do nothing else. Thereby, in actuality, the man becomes compelled to subject himself to the exploitation of the capitalist. In reality, he has no choice. The difference between capitalism and feudalism is this, in feudalism, the compulsion becomes physical, and direct, in capitalism the compulsion owes to the typical circumstances and indirect, but it is most effective.

In capitalism, labour is not the only thing that gets disguised. There is yet another and most important thing that gets disguised, that is "Surplus Value". To quote Marx,

"Surplus value itself doesn't appear as the product of the appropriation of labour time, but as an excess of the selling price of commodities over their cost price....". (51)

For example, a labourer should work for only time "X" for his subsistence. But in actuality, he is made to work for time "Xt" at the cost paid, say "Xc". Here, "Xc" becomes the worker's wage for only time "X". The difference between time "X" and time "Xt" is so much that time "Xt" is so many times more than time "X". Similarly the cost difference is many times more. The cost difference, "Xtc" minus "Xc", is surplus value. In fact, the difference "t" actually belongs to the labourer, but it is made to appear as profit of the commodity, and goes to the pockets of the capitalist. The so called profit is a production of the extra time labour "Lt" of the worker, for which actually he is not paid by the capitalist. In fact,

it is surplus value, that is made to appear as profit. Here surplus value extracted from workers has been so cleverly disguised. The difference between surplus value and profit conceals the origin and nature of profit. Speaking about this concealment, Marx says that it conceals the true nature of profit

"not only from the capitalist, who has a specific interest in deceiving himself on this score, but also from the labourers". (52)

Marx says that when surplus value becomes disguised as profit, it involves a necessary deception. He says that the way surplus value is disguised as profit, the deception doesn't exclude any one. On the first place, it deceives the labourer who becomes the real loser of this disguise. Secondly, it deceives the capitalist though this deception is in his favour. Nonetheless, The capitalist also doesn't know that what he calls as profit is really surplus value. Thirdly and worst, it deceives the thinkers, particularly economists, who fail to comprehend

the historical nature of relations of production and the reality of material conditions. Speaking about this deceptions, Marx says that

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"Confusions of the theorists best illustrates the utter incapacity of the practical capitalist, blinded by competition as he is, and incapable of penetrating its phenomena, to recognise the inner essence and inner structure of this process behind its outer appearance".
(53)

Marx argues that the inner essence and inner structure became deceptively disguised in the outer appearance and theorists as well as capitalists and not to speak of workers, all are equally deceived. However, surplus value existed in pre-capitalist era also but it was then not disguised at all. Rather, it was clearly marked off. There was difference between necessary labour and extra labour that a Serf did for his Master, in Feudalism. The extra labour were very clearly marked off.

The confusions between necessary labour and surplus labour has another base. This "wage form". For Marx, the expression "Value of labour" is meaningless. Marx says that

"Wages are not what they appear to be, namely the value, or price of labour power". (54)

It is ridiculous to tell about value of labour. In other words it is as good as talking about value of air and water etc. Marx calls labour as

"phenomenal forms of essential relations". (55)

Therefore, wage form assumes an important role in confusing between necessary labour and surplus labour. Because it is the wage form, or the labour that had been paid for which conceals the distinction between necessary labour and surplus labour.

Marx's analysis of capitalist mode of production is done on the basis of various forms of practice of men. Practice depends on the essence for its appearances. In fact, practice makes its appearance as different form of essence. The relationship between essence and appearance becomes very interesting here. Marx says that it will be wrong to understand that essence is the only reality or appearances are necessarily illusions. For Marx, both carry valid aspects of reality. He says that reality is the unity of essence and appearance. though appearance conceals the essence it also plays another role. Appearance manifests essence. Marx says,

"the final pattern of economic relations as seen from the surface, in their real existence and consequently in the conceptions by which the bearers and agents of those relations seek to understand them, is very much different from, and indeed quite the reverse of, their inner but concealed essential pattern and the conception corresponding to it". (56)

Thus, appearance is not mere illusions. The fact that appearance manifests essence proves that point that appearances are also real. But this reality of phenomenal forms cannot be also treated for reality, because they are an inverted reality. Inversion at the level of phenomenal forms are also not arbitrary inversions: because this inversions is due to another type of inversion at the level of essence, where man's social relations remain inverted. Thus, the inverted phenomenal forms are due to the inversion at the level of essence. The whole thing is related to another factor, the factor of capitalist mode of production and relations of production typical of the capitalist mode. Due to the division of labour, Labour becomes objectified and beyond the control of man. This objectified labour becomes alienated from man, thus alienating man from what rightly belongs to him. Further, objectified labour becomes instrument of oppression in the hands of capitalist, as this alienating objectified labour later belongs to capital. This results in the formation of an anti thesis; where objectified practice becomes an anti thesis to living practice, which is thesis. Speaking about the strength and vivacity and

truthfulness of the inversion, Marx affirms that it is not a

"Supposed one existing merely in the imagination of the workers and the capitalists". (57)

Explaining further about inversion and the relation of inversion between essence and appearance, Marx says that

"A further development of the inversion of subject and object that takes place already in the process of production....., even in the simple relations of productions this inverted relationship necessarily produces certain correspondingly inverted conceptions, a transposed consciousness which is further developed by the metamorphosis and modifications of the actual circulation process". (58)

Thereby, Marx concludes the reason for the existence of surplus value; that is due to the inversion in the essence. The relations of production in capitalist modes of production is an inverted relationship; and due to this, through division of labour, labour becomes objectified and alien to man and oppresses the worker. This objectified labour becomes capital and surplus value in disguise of profit. The concept of ideology is present through out the analytical enterprise of Marx, in his analysis of division of labour, alienation, repression of workers, exploitation by bourgeoisie, capital and surplus value. His analysis of the relations of production in capitalist mode of production and the analysis of essence and appearance, all are having very strong presence of the concept of ideology, though Marx does not use the term ideology. Ideology is the projection in human minds of man's practical inabilities, and it is their practical inabilities that produces phenomenal forms. Reproductive practice produces and projects inverted appearance into consciousness which spontaneously produce phenomenal forms.

Externally, ideological consciousness becomes fixed, which conceives the essence, the essence which is inverted social relations. Ideology remains fixed as it neither invert, nor negate anything. Phenomenal forms are real, because phenomenal forms themselves are not inverted; they are inverted because the essence is inverted. As for the phenomenal forms are concerned, they truly manifest essence. Ideology does not neglect phenomenal forms nor invert them. Ideology gives autonomy to these inverted relations. Ideology gives autonomous and independent existence to these inverted relations where as they do not have it in reality. What ideology precisely responsible is for a kind of fetishism, as ideology separates appearances from its real connection with the essence, thus fetishizing them.

The role of ideology as Marx finds in German Ideology was that of concealing reality, the reality of contradiction in societies. Here he was concerned with German Philosophy, as Marx found German philosophy standing on its head, upside down. Instead of explaining ideas from concrete material conditions, that is social relations,

German philosophy was explaining social relations from ideas. When Marx reached Capital, he turns from German philosophy to common agents of economic relations. In the new direction, Marx explains ideology of common workers and capitalists. He says that

"the distorted form in which the real inversion is expressed is naturally reproduced in the view of the agents of this mode of production". (59)

Ideology conceals a contradiction; which is a general inverted and contradictory reality. In capitalist mode of production, this inverted and contradictory reality becomes the subject of Marx's analytic precision. From this analysis, Marx finds out a new role for phenomenal forms, their new role as mediating between ideology and contradictory reality. Ideology conceals the contradiction in the essence, but neither negates nor conceals phenomenal forms. Phenomenal forms on the other hand, is real.

This doesn't mean that phenomenal forms are just one form of distortion which exclude ideology as a product of external 'given circumstances', which is deceptive. It is only as man is engaged in his productive practices phenomenal forms are produced. It is ridiculous to treat ideology as some kind of deformation upon reality.

Thus, Marx's analysis of the concept of ideology is complete. It all originated from his concept of necessity. Necessity is that which is opposed to freedom, and to come out of necessity, man must know the character of necessity. On the first place, by necessity, Marx means natural compulsions etc. under which man's freedom becomes limited. Thus a knowledge of necessity was the first step towards winning freedom. Thus, labour became the practice which could overcome necessity. by mixing his labour with nature, man overcomes

necessity. But then, man, as a social being doesn't labour alone. Labour in co-operation with other individuals gave new dimension to labour, which is division of labour. With division of labour, man's activity became fixed within a particular mode of production, and there came another new dimension to labour, which is objectified labour. Objectified labour became alienated from man, and man became alienated from his own product. Further, objectified labour became capital, and assumed the role of exploitation in the hands of capitalist. Capital gave rise to another form of ideology, surplus value being disguised as profit. Thus, through out the history of man, ideology played the role of blindfolding man, restraining him from knowing reality, and concealing reality and contradictions in societies.

However, removal of ideology as false consciousness was essential towards winning freedom of man. For Marx it is unscientific to think of bringing a solution from out side, so he set forth studying the specific material conditions.

As a remedy, Marx brings in the idea of revolutionary practice. Revolutionary practice

changes capitalist mode of production, the condition in which ideology is produced. To quote Marx,

"Once the inner connection is grasped, all theoretical belief in the permanent necessity of existing conditions collapses before they collapse in practice". (60)

Ideology had been seen as concealing contradictions. Now, contradictions of whatever form it may be, have common origin. For Marx, all forms of contradictions originate from another contradiction, the contradiction in a class society. When society is divided into two classes of antagonistic nature, there must be contradictions. The classes can not be related to one another other than through being antagonistic, because their structure demands so. Advantage of one class will be necessarily disadvantage of another. Welfare of one will be necessarily oppression of the other. Thereby, the contradictory nature of these two opposite classes lead them to class conflict and class struggle. From this,

another practice emerges, as solution to all problems, the revolutionary practice.

Revolutionary practice becomes the only remedy to ideology and ideological deception. Revolutionary practice would change the very condition in which reproductive practice projects ideology. The capitalistic mode of production will be replaced with communist mode of production, where labour will not be objectified and alienated from man.

In later Marxism, the term ideology has two meanings. Ideology in one meaning is false consciousness and ideology in other meaning is called scientific. In so far as ideology conceals reality, conceals contradiction, ideology is a definite stumbling block in man's progress through history and man's efforts to reach his emancipation. Here ideology has purely negative function, and it functions as false consciousness.

On the other hand ideology as having positive connotations are called scientific. Ideology as

scientific functions in the positive way as a class consciousness of the proletarian, the revolutionary class. Here, ideology refers to a system of opinions, system of values and knowledge which are connected with the proletarian class interest; the revolutionary class consciousness. However, distortion is not the essence of the concept of ideology. Ideology based on scientific premises which are conducive to revolutionary practice could be called as ideology, positive or scientific ideology, and on the other hand, ideology based on some non-scientific premises which conceals reality, reality of contradictions and serving the interest of the bourgeoisie can be termed ideology of false consciousness.

Lenin explains the concept of scientific ideology further. Lenin says that whether or not ideology becomes scientific is determined by the specificity of class interest which conditions knowledge. This allocation of a cognitive value is sometimes supported by a distinction between ascendant and descendant classes. This allows ideology with a positive sense; ideology of the revolutionary class, the proletarian ideology becomes scientific.

As far the Marxists are concerned, Ideology has been understood in both pejorative and approving manner. It is thus that we find expressions such as, "ideology is false consciousness" and "revolutionary ideology is the back bone of revolution" co-existing in the Marxist frame work. On the face of it, though it may look alike a contradiction, it is far from being it, in reality. What is crucial to Marxist thinking and doing is the analytical plank of historical relativism. In other words, ideology in so far as it represents counter revolutionary tendencies are false consciousness and ideology conducive to revolutionary goals are called scientific. In other words, scientific ideology becomes a particular set of ideas which are related to the central concern of the Marxists, namely, the strategy of and for revolution.

The very nature of class societies are contradiction, class antagonism. Classes are opposed to one another in every thing. One class will be dominating, and other class will be dominated. In such societies, the dominant ideology will be that of the dominating class. Their class

interest and class struggle also will manifest in their respective ideologies, as opposed to one another. Scientific ideology as against false consciousness must emerge at this point, rather scientific ideology must evolve into existence. Evolution of scientific ideology is a process through man's continuous and purposeful striving for greater and more reliable control over his natural and social environment and, for the progressive correction of "falsehood" of various kinds in his theoretical understanding of objective process. However this is not to agree with the positivist claim that there exist some correct methodological principles of scientific procedure external to human consciousness, and as human being investigates empirical world, the more he does it, the closer man gets to the truth. Contrary to this claim of the positivists, Science or human knowledge develops and advances in a very much different manner from their understandings. Knowledge comes to man through a social process, through man's interaction with natural and social circumstances. Thus human knowledge is more evidently related to man's consciousness of himself and the world. Thereby man's attainment of scientific knowledge is not from any external source; where as it is through purposeful activity.

Sooner man realises the true nature of ideology as false consciousness, and he will want to cast away this weight from his shoulders. Thus on knowing that ideology is false consciousness, man will also know the true nature of reality. Now to actualise the objective possibilities thus realised also becomes the task of nothing other than purposeful activity, Praxis, which assumes a very crucial and important role in Marx, the question of revolutionary Praxis.

Thus, Praxis becomes the pivotal point. Thus in Marx we find that ideology as false consciousness is done away with, yet another type of ideology, ideology as scientific, though the latter is totally different from the former from in it's meaning, scope and application.

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CHAPTER - III

Antonio Gramsci

on

Ideology

CHAPTER III

ANTONIO GRAMSCI ON IDEOLOGY

So far in our treatment of ideology we have been centering around its negative connotation only. Marx had been primarily concerned with ideology as false consciousness, and the intellectual endeavour of both Marx and Engels was to envisage concrete social conditions where it becomes possible for man to get rid of this age old malady of false consciousness: that which fills human imagination with spurious phenomena by concealing the true nature of reality, which is contradiction.

In later Marx, we find the solution he gives. To eliminate ideology as false consciousness, Marx advocates practice. Thus all understandings point to one direction, revolutionary practice. It is here that two great revolutionaries and philosophers assume importance, and they are Mao-tse-tung and the thinker in question here Antonio Gramsci.

Marx himself suggests that revolutionary practice depends much on yet another type of

ideology, which may be called as scientific ideology or revolutionary ideology. It is at this point that ideology starts assuming its positive connotation, as operating in a constructive manner, to a definite constructive goal. When we read Neo-Marxists and their understanding of the concept of ideology, it is in this positive sense that they approach and treat the concept of ideology. However, for all practical purposes in our day to day world, ideology is used in the positive meaning only.

Hence it may be proper to point out that the concept of ideology had undergone a drastic change in the manner of an evolution, an intellectual evolution. To my mind this evolution of the concept of ideology is an integral part of the Marxist concept of historical necessity. Ideology could not have remained in its negative meaning only; it had to move forward in time and evolve itself. Or else it would have been a dead concept. However, I shall return to this point later in the ensuing chapter.

The road to Antonio Gramsci from Marx can not be taken as a straight one. From Marx, when we go to Gramsci, at least we have to go via another

veteran dialectician, Vladimir Illivich Lenin. It, however does not mean that I am under estimating the importance of Plekhanov or Bukharin, on the other hand, I was attributing only relative importance for my purpose, which is precise. Thus an understanding of Gramsci calls for a brief explanation of Lenin, the first Communist, if I am permitted to call him so.

For both Lenin and Gramsci, history is very important. They understand history as a kind of evolution. It is an evolution of social formations; in the sense that one form of society gives rise to another, another and yet another. Such process is often called a historico-natural process, because it is only natural. For history to evolve; the evolution is spontaneous with the progress in time. This evolution may be called as n upward movement of history with the progression in time.

For Lenin, socialism is inevitable. Socialism is inevitable not due to any reason external to capitalism, on the other hand, socialism is inevitable by virtue of the very laws of capitalist development. In other words, the seeds of

destruction of capitalism is contained in capitalism itself.

In Marx we have seen that revolutionary practice as a remedy to ideology as concealing reality. Lenin also is found of speaking of practice. But though Lenin is found recognising the importance of practice, practice in Lenin stands qualified. Here practice is a conditioned practice, which is conditioned by or determined by economic structure. The economic structure of the society ultimately becomes condition to practice. Man's consciousness too is not different. Man opens his eyes, looks around himself, sees and learns about the world, and over and above, becomes aware of things in a definite, given, socio-economic conditions. These conditions vary in definite strata of society, that is, it differs from class to class. Class structure of a society is primarily due to economic structure. Therefore, we can say that practice and consciousness are instruments of what may be called as structural determinism. Thus one can see economic determinism at the root of all other things.

Here Lenin treats science as an exception. To Lenin, science is indetermined. He says that

socialism and class struggle are arising from different premises, neither of them deriving one from the other. Science is produced outside class struggle; Lenin sees science as the inevitable outcome of development of philosophy. It is the result of intellectual evolution of philosophical and economic theories. thus science is not determined by anything else.

With the growth and development of science the role of consciousness in general also changes. By and by consciousness becomes no longer mere reflections of economic structure. Lenin says that the spontaneous consciousness of the working class reflects bourgeois ideology. Lenin says that the bourgeois ideology

"is older than the socialist ideology, so it is more developed, and possesses more means of dissemination". <1>

The presence of bourgeois ideology in the working class consciousness has also a logical character. It is logically necessary for the

bourgeois ideology to be present in the consciousness of the proletariat for all that bourgeois ideology is worth. This is precisely what makes it bourgeois ideology; otherwise it may be nothing.

Making a difference between base and superstructure, and finding the place of ideology in superstructure, it can be said that superstructure plays an important role in determining working class consciousness. True to its nature, bourgeois ideology mediates in the negative sense. It functions as concealing reality to working class and diverting the true nature of problems or contradictions into spurious directions. Bourgeois ideology stands in between proletarian consciousness and reality. On the other hand, science (Scientific ideology) mediates in a positive sense. It not only makes working class aware of reality, but also removes the hang over of ideology of the bourgeois. It is science that liberates the working class from their spontaneous consciousness.

We have seen earlier that science doesn't arise in connection with class struggle, nor its

objective is class practice. It may be so with relations of production. Yet we see the role of science, strangely enough, appearing as determining revolutionary practice. As a result, practice continues to be determination of some external elements. This is very clear in two of Lenin's works. In the book "WHAT THE FRIENDS OF PEOPLE ARE" we see practice as the instrument of economic necessity. In his later work What is to be Done? practice appears as the instrument of consciousness, whether it appears as bourgeois ideology, or it appears as science.

We can see that Engels is treating the concept of ideology in the polarity of base and superstructure. But though Engels is treating the concept of ideology within the polarity of base and superstructure, this particular treatment of Engels does not innovate the basic negative meaning which he and Marx gave to the concept of ideology in the "German Ideology". Though ideology appears as a reflection of economic relations in consciousness, Engels spontaneously asserts that this relation appears inverted. To quote Engels:

"this inversion, which, so long as it remains unrecognized, forms what we call 'ideological outlook', influences in its turn the economic basis.....". <2>

However, this treatment of Engels was definitely a step towards progress in the evolution of the concept of ideology. The way preference was given to the concept of ideology was moving closer to a tradition which was soon to stop treating ideology with its inverted character. This happens due to the fact that the relationship between base and superstructure refers not just to distorted forms of consciousness; but to all forms of consciousness. All products of thoughts, valid or invalid are determined by the base. In the superstructure, there were proletarian ideology, as there were bourgeois ideology; no matter which one was more prominent or popular; because, prominence or popularity can only be for some limited time if it is contrary to historical forces.

Lenin synthesises this double movement at the level of superstructure. He started using the concept of ideology with innovation, ideology as

a set of cognitions and theories which expressing the class interest. In his work, "What is to be done?", one can find the abundant usage of "socialist ideology" as against "bourgeois ideology".

As a result ideology came to represent class interests. Ideology representing class interest could be called as class ideologies. Now the very nature of class ideology is that they should not have any inherent characteristic which makes it a necessary inversion, particularly so in case of working class. How can a working class ideology, which represents the interest of the proletariat have an inherent character which necessarily makes it an inversion, which produces an inverted consciousness, of an inverted world? It will be logically inconsistent.

With this particular expression of ideology, by now ideology equipped new meaning. Now the concept of ideology can be seen as encompassing both meaning; it encompasses distorted consciousness as well as true forms of consciousness. As a result of this, by itself,

ideology does not have any negative meaning now. The question of falsity of bourgeois ideology is not due to anything intrinsic in the concept of ideology. On the contrary, its falsity is due to the bourgeois origin of the concept of ideology.

Here, Lenin makes two important contributions. On the first place, he expresses a particular development which over-stresses the polarity of base and superstructure. Secondly, he also makes an implicit expression of a political practice which goes to give credibility to the theory - practice polarity. Later the question of theory and practice drew much attention from Gramsci.

It is at this point that Antonio Gramsci gets attracted to the concept of ideology, and he takes up the analysis of the concept of ideology for this precise purpose, despite Gramsci's opposition to the positivist interpretations of Marx and his concept of ideology. Gramsci finds that ideology as a superstructure is compatible with ideology as a class ideology. When ideology makes a transition from ideology to class ideology, ideology was

undergoing drastic evolutionary change; a kind of reconstruction in its meaning and connotation. Due to the move from ideology to class ideology, it loses its original negative meaning which Marx and Engels gave in German Ideology, and acquires a new meaning which is positive; in the sense that ideology stands to make working class conscious of contradictions instead of concealing it as it was done earlier.

For Marx, as we have seen that ideology stands for concealing contradiction in the interest of bourgeois. But, one may ask the question; as to what makes an ideology valid or invalid? Could it be said that a mere class origin can be treated as the criterion of evaluating ideology?

It seems different to me. What might make an ideology valid or invalid is not due to its origin in such and such class, but the fact that to which class interest a particular ideology stands for and functions. It is the class interest an ideology represents and the class in whose interest it functions (naturally, there cannot be any contradiction in this case) makes it valid or not. For example, an ideology may have its origin

in bourgeois class, but it may truly represent proletarian class interest and may stand for the working class. To this extent, it would be ridiculous to call that ideology as not valid simply due to the fact that it originated in the bourgeois class. So it is not a mere class origin which makes an ideology valid or not valid.

Mao and Gramsci are particularly significant in the context of developing societies. They have laid much premium on the ideological superstructure, and both Mao and Gramsci argued that a strategy of revolution should begin and unfold from the ideological superstructure. The endeavour of attaching primacy to the ideological superstructure ran against another school of Marxists lead by Plekhanov, which insisted on economic determinism. However, it will be wrong to argue that Gramsci was contradicting Plekhanov, given the spirit of Marxism. Because there is no sanctity about unilinearity or a particular symmetry of application of Marxist principles and tenets. Marxism is dynamic, it is growing and evolving, and therefore, it is essentially a store house of different methods, and as Lenin said,

"There cannot be any ultimate and ordered blue print for achieving revolution". All would depend on historical and contextual specifications which should go in no less measure into forging of a revolutionary strategy for a given society.

Gramsci discovers the revolutionary starting point in the ideological superstructure and advocates the necessity of creating a revolutionary brand of intellectuals who are to be assigned the responsibility of educating the masses in proletarian ideology, to fight until they destroy the hegemony of the ruling class ideology. Speaking about revolution Gramsci contains that an intellectual revolution is not performed by simply confronting one philosophy with another. It is not just the ideas that require to be confronted, but the social forces behind them, and more directly the ideology these forces have generated and which has become part of what Gramsci calls "Common Sense".

It is only natural that the ruling class ideology becomes a part of "common sense". It is natural and psychological that any prevailing

ideology is taken as granted because of its familiarity. History shows us that most of men accept things on the basis of familiarity. Gramsci says that

"In acquiring one's conception of the world one always belongs to a particular grouping which is that of all the social elements which shares the same mode of thinking and acting. We all are conformists of some conformism or other, always man in the mass or collective man". <3>

As a result, it is only natural for men to carry the hegemony of the ruling class ideology as a part of their "common sense".

Assuming the importance of the role of intellectuals in revolution, Gramsci asserts that it is the business of "philosophy of praxis" (Marxism - Gramsci could not use Marxian terminologies in prison for the fear of censorship and coercion) to create a brand of intellectuals

who would educate the masses in proletarian ideology. But he also recognizes the magnitude of the task. On the first place, Philosophy of praxis itself must stand firm because for philosophy of praxis, the challenges are from many directions and are powerful. Secondly, it has to deal with age old beliefs and "convictions" which got rooted into the minds of the mass. Recognizing the difficulty in creating an organic group of intellectuals, Gramsci says that philosophy of praxis

".....is still going through its populist phase creating a group of independent intellectuals is not an easy thing; it requires a long process with actions and reactions, coming together and drifting apart and the growth of very numerous and complex new formations". <4>

It is further difficult because people are unable to go beyond a limit. They are unable to go beyond and comprehend reality due to various compulsions under which they exist. Gramsci says that they are unable to go beyond certain point because there

".....still remains below the level of the possession, the state and of the real exercise of hegemony over the whole of society which alone permits a certain organic equilibrium in the development of the intellectual group". <5>

Thus, the task of creating a group of intellectuals becomes very challenging. Only a society which has an organic equilibrium which doesn't have the hegemony of the ruling class ideology is conducive in creating a revolutionary brand of intellectuals. On the other hand creation of organic intellectuals are aimed at educating the masses in proletarian ideology, so that the hegemony of the ruling class ideology should be destroyed. This position of Gramsci amounts to a paradox, on the face of it. In reality, the paradox, let me call it as the "paradox of hegemony" is only apparent, taking into consideration another factor in which Gramsci was greatly interested, the aspect of historical maturity. Thus it only proves the extent of difficulty in creating a revolutionary brand of intellectuals.

Organisation of the mass depends on yet another aspect, which Gramsci calls a theory practice nexus. Many places in "Quaderni" Gramsci is found speaking of the unity of theory and practice. And for the theory practice nexus, what we need again are the intellectuals. Gramsci says that there can be no organisation of the proletariat

".....without the theoretical aspect of the theory practice nexus being distinguished concretely by the existence of a group of people "specialised" in conceptual and philosophical elaboration of ideas". <6>

Thereby it is utmost importance for Gramsci to create the group of people who are specialised in conceptual and philosophical elaboration of ideas, who are nothing but the intellectuals.

Creating a revolutionary brand of intellectuals, therefore, becomes absolutely inevitable. The question is, how to create a revolutionary brand of intellectuals ? Gramsci assigns this task of creating a revolutionary brand

of intellectuals to nothing less than philosophy of praxis itself. Further, Gramsci assigns one more task to the philosophy of praxis, that is educating the popular masses. To quote him

"The philosophy of praxis had two tasks to perform : to combat modern ideologies in their most refined form, in order to be able to constitute its own group of independent intellectuals; and to educate the popular masses whose culture was medieval. This second task, which was fundamentalism, given the character of the new philosophy (Marxism), has absorbed all its strength.....

.....And yet the new philosophy was born precisely to supersede the highest cultural manifestation of the age, classical German philosophy, and to create a group of intellectuals specific to the new social group whose conception of the world it was". <7>

Thus, creation of revolutionary brand of intellectuals, either for combating the sophistication of bourgeois ideology, or combating hegemony, or organising proletariat to march towards a revolution, becomes one of the important tasks of the philosophy of praxis. Finding

solutions to all erstwhile maladies Gramsci prescribes Marxism to all; particularly in societies such as developing ones. He says that

"The philosophy of praxis presupposes all cultural past..... . The philosophy of praxis is the crowning point of this entire movement of intellectual and moral reformation, made dialectical in the contrast between popular culture and high culture. it is a philosophy which is also politics, and a politics which is also philosophy ". <8>

For Gramsci, Marxism becomes the crowning point in all intellectual endeavours; rather a kind of culmination of reason. This philosophy does not merely stay behind clouds; it rather comes down to concrete situations with solutions concrete. Perhaps it may be due to the practical sphere in Marxian philosophical frame work that Gramsci coined the expression philosophy of praxis substituting for the term Marxism to evade censors eyes in the prison.

True that for Gramsci the philosophy of praxis is at the zenith, but then he finds it as a

solution to rather every problems. Speaking about the unity of theory and practice, he says that

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".....in the most recent developments of the philosophy of praxis the exploration and refinement of the concept of unity of theory and practice is still only at an early stage. There still remain residues of mechanism, since people speak about theory as a "complement" or an "accessory" of practice, or as the handmaid of practice". <9>

Gramsci is against treating theory as a handmaid of practice. Practice that is not based on theory, on the other hand is empty. It is a full fledged theory that gives rise to meaningful practice. But if the theory is not practiced or impractical, then such theory is as good as not existing. Marxism is a theory that is functional in practical fields. This is an important contribution of Gramsci to Marxism. It is due to this reason that we speak of Marxism as a world of thinking and doing. It is neither thinking only, nor doing only, it is both taken together.

Gramsci finds that some idealists such as Benedetto Croce, and G Gentile having incorporated

some elements of philosophy of praxis. He calls them "Pure intellectuals", because they only think, but do nothing. An element of practice is absent in them. These 'pure intellectuals' were elaborators of widespread ideologies of dominant class: but they also carried some element of Philosophy of praxis through their elaboration.

Offering criticism to Croce and Gentile like Italian idealist, Gramsci accuses them in the following manner:

"One of the greatest weaknesses on immanentist (Italian Idealism) philosophies in general consists precisely in the fact that they have not been able to create an ideological unity between the bottom and the top, between the simple and the intellectuals".
<10>

While accepting many innovations of Croce, Gramsci also finds that their mistakes are grave. The gap between the common folks and elite - in the sense intellectual elites could never be converted. As a result, the intellectuals and their innovative ideas ever remained Greek to the masses. On the other hand, to ensure mobilisation of the

masses, one has to ensure yet another thing, that is active participation of the masses in the intellectuals exercises directly or indirectly.

Gramsci's conception of ideology is often called as "historicist conception of ideology" by most of the intellectuals. There by an understanding of Gramscian concept of ideology is an understanding of historicist concept of ideology. Both Lucacs and Gramsci are using the concept in the same way. Therefore, Gramsci's understanding of what history is an important aspect in understanding his concept of ideology. Gramsci says that

"The philosophy of an age is a process of combination of philosophies, intellectual groups, the masses, etc. It culminates in overall trend, which becomes a norm of collective action and becomes concrete, complete history".
<11>

Perhaps no one before and after has ever made such concrete and precise statement about what history is other than this master dialectician himself. Philosophy of an age is a combined form of

different philosophies belonging to that age, encompassing both intellectual groups and masses etc. This results in a trend or world view of the societies, which eventually leads to objective action on the path of societies. This becomes history. Further, he speaks of something such of "historical bloc". By "historical bloc" Gramsci means the inseparable participation of history and philosophy into one another. He says that

"History and philosophy in this sense are indivisible, they form a bloc". <12>

Following the Marxian spirit that "Philosopher ought to change the world" rather than merely interpreting it, Gramsci finds that ideology plays an important role in changing the world. Gramsci says that history of philosophy

".....is the history of attempts made and ideological initiatives undertaken by a specific class of people to change, correct or perfect the conceptions of the world that exist in any particular age and then to change the norms of conduct that go with them; in other words, to change practical activity as a whole". <13>

Here, Gramsci is found speaking of ideology as that which attempts to change the world of the given particular time. The changes envisaged are so drastic and complete, that it aims at changing practical activity as a whole. He is also prescribing a test to ideology. Agreement or non agreement of the mass in a given ideology becomes the test for him. In other words, if the mass is convinced in a given ideology then such ideology can be said to have qualified the test, and if not, it should be considered as not qualified. To quote Gramsci

"class adhesion or non-adhesion to an ideology is the real critical test of the rationality and historicity of modes of thinking". <14>

Thus, revolutionary ideology should be such that mass could be mobilised with it, and if it fails to reach the heart of the people, then something is definitely wrong with the rationality and the historicity of the modes of thinking, as Gramsci puts it. Further, if ideology could reach the people, then it can be counted as the beginning of revolution. One hundred percent acceptance of ideology means that the people are fully ready for revolution. Thus, a total adhesion of ideology is a clear indication of total readiness towards revolution. Gramsci says that

"If a social group is formed which is one hundred per cent homogeneous on the level of ideology, this means that the premises exist one hundred per cent for this revolutionising: that is that the "rational" is actively and actually real". <15>

Further. he says that

".....that only a totalitarian (unified, all absorbing) system of ideologies gives a rational reflection of the contradiction of the structure and represents the existence of the objective conditions for the revolutionising of praxis". <16>

By the expression totalitarian, Gramsci gives the meaning of a unified, and all absorbing ideology. Ideology for Gramsci is a part of superstructure. that is why he is talking about contradictions at the structural level. Contradictions at the level of structure or base should be understood and rationally reflected by revolutionary ideology which is at the level of superstructure. However, I shall return to the structure - superstructure aspect a little later in this chapter itself. Marx himself had referred to this point. Marx says that man acquires consciousness of structural conflict on the level of ideologies, in his work, "Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy".

Gramsci says that any conception of the world, or philosophy is facing a fundamental problem. Elaborating the problem, he says that

"This problem is that of preserving the ideological unity of the entire social bloc which that ideology serves to connect and unify". <17>

Here Gramsci gives the example of the Catholic church. The Catholic church had always to face two strata of people and their faith. One were the intellectuals and the other were common people. These two, by virtue of their being^s had two drastically different requirements from the church. What the common people needed could not satisfy the intellectuals and the requirements of the intellectuals may appear as atheistic and unGodly to the common people. Nonetheless, church had to keep both people's faith intact. They had to connect and unify the differences somehow. For ideology too, the task is somewhat similar. It should take care of the ideological unity of all strata of society (intellectuals as well as common people), which he calls as social bloc.

Gramsci is found doing an analysis on the term ideology itself. The word ideology means a science of ideas. Science means analysis, analysing a complex phenomenon into its simpler components in order to facilitate comprehension. Therefore science of ideas could mean analysis of ideas. Analysis of ideas would amount to investigating into the origin of ideas. Such an investigation shows that ideas were primarily

sensations. And thus, ideology was an aspect of sensationalism to eighteenth century French materialism. Gramsci says that both Freud and De Man were the last of ideologues. The fact that DeMan was an ideologue made Croce and Croceans very curiously enthusiastic. Gramsci says that the author of popular manual (Bukharin) also remained trapped in ideology. Croce was enthusiastic about DeMan because they both were opposed to revolutionary Marxism, which, obviously, Antonio Gramsci could not stomach.

"Philosophy of Praxis" makes distinct and definite advancements from such views, though the term ideology contained a negative value judgment in Marx. Gramsci says that

"'Ideology' itself must be analysed historically, in the terms of philosophy of praxis, as a superstructure". <18>

Gramsci says that in assessing the value of ideologies there had been a mistake. To make his argument clear, he makes a distinction between "necessary superstructure" of a particular

structure, and "arbitrary elucubrations" of particular individuals. He says that,

"One must therefore distinguish between historically organic ideologies, those, that is, which are necessary to a given structure, and ideologies that are arbitrary, rationalistic, or 'willed' ". <19>

This mistake occurs due to not maintaining this distinction. It is due to calling both by the same name ideology and giving same equal status to it. Unfortunately the second sense of them has been wide spread. Ideology came to stand for arbitrary or willed thought structures. As a result, in all theoretical analysis the term of ideology came to be used in only in the negative sense. This is why, Marx had been using the term as false consciousness only. Gramsci says that the phenomenon of calling "organic ideologies" as well as "arbitrary ideologies" by the same name has "denatured" the concept of ideology. Quoting him,

"The bad sense of the word has become widespread, with the effect that the theoretical

analysis of the concept of ideology has been modified and denatured". <20>

Gramsci maintains a theory of base and superstructure. While base consists of contradictions, superstructure consists of everything else. Ideology, and even philosophy of praxis belongs to superstructure. He is also passionate about explaining the question of freedom and necessity. To quote him,

"Structure and superstructure form a "historic bloc". That is to say the complex, contradictory and discordant 'ensemble' of the superstructure is the reflection of the 'ensemble' of the social relations of production". <21>

What Gramsci means by saying historical bloc is precisely this:

".....historical bloc in which precisely material forces

are content and ideologies are form, though this distinction between form and content have purely didactic value....".<22>

The superstructure is nothing but the reflection of the base, the substructure. The contradictory and discordant appearances of the substructure is due to the contradictions in the relations of production, which are at the base as substructure.

There is also a reciprocity existing between structure and substructure, and Gramsci calls this reciprocity is a necessary one. The necessary character of reciprocity makes it, what Gramsci calls it, a dialectical process. To quote him,

".....the necessary reciprocity between structure and substructure, a reciprocity which is nothing other than the real dialectical process". <23>

Gramsci was a man of praxis. He was for concrete evaluation or analysis of concrete

situations, and for concrete solutions. In one word, Antonio Gramsci was a man of the field. It is this aspect of praxis that made Gramsci popular among many Neo-Leftist movements all over the world, and one can always find an emotional loyalty among the Neo-Marxists to Gramsci. Gramsci was a man of action. This aspect becomes explicit in his following passage.

".....it (Marxism) is a philosophy that has been liberated (or is attempting to liberate itself) from any unilateral and fanatical ideological elements; it is conscious full of contradictions, in which the philosopher himself, understood both individually and as an entire social group, not only grasps the contradictions, but posits himself as an element of the contradiction and elevates this element to a principle of knowledge and therefore of action". <24>

The role that philosophy of praxis ought to play has been very clearly stated in the above passage. Philosophy of praxis is conscious full of contradictions and on the basis of this complete awareness of contradictions, the philosopher

becomes himself an element of contradiction. Further, he makes this element a principle of knowledge, and makes every one else aware of this knowledge. Then there is only one thing for him to do, that is to go for concrete action to remove these contradictions. Gramsci says that all philosophies of the past were manifesting contradictions. It is difficult for us to understand this, because taken individually we can not see or feel any element of contradictions in philosophical theories. Gramsci says that we must look at the ensemble of various philosophies; we must take them together in order to understand their manifestations of contradictions. Taken together, we can find that they conflict one another and contradict one another. Conflict between different philosophical systems at the level of superstructure is due to the contradictions at the level of base, which are social contradictions.

Gramsci finds the starting point of philosophy of praxis in what he calls "CATHARTIC" movement. By Catharsis Gramsci means a passage from purely economic to the ethico-political movement. This implies the superior elaboration of the structure into superstructure in the minds of men.

It also implies passing from 'objective to subjective' and from 'necessity to freedom'. As a result of this Catharsis, structure ceases to be an external force dominating man. It changes and creates a new ethico-politico form and to emancipation. Gramsci says that

"to establish the "cathartic" movement becomes therefore, it seems to me, the starting point for all the philosophy of praxis, and the cathartic process coincides with the chain of synthesis which have resulted from evolution of the dialectic". <25>

Later, Gramsci sets out to analyse the relationship between state and ideology. He talks about two kinds of societies. One, the western societies, were civil societies predominant. On the other hand in eastern societies, he finds the state as prominent. From the relationship of state and ideology, Gramsci deduces a new concept, the concept of HEGEMONY. Hegemony is understood to be the ability of a class to dominate by assuming moral and intellectual leadership, without

resorting to coercion. Referring to the political development of the concept of hegemony Gramsci says

".....the political development of the concept of hegemony represents a great philosophical advance as well as politico-practical one.....". <26>

Therefore it becomes absolutely necessary on the part of the working class to abolish bourgeois hegemony. to overthrow bourgeois hegemony, the working class must achieve ideological hegemony. Towards that, on the first place, the working class must realise hegemonic apparatus of the state. To quote Gramsci,

"The realisation of a hegemonic apparatus, in so far as it creates a new ideological terrain, determines a reform of consciousness and of methods of knowledge.....". <27>

The proletariats must be made conscious of the hegemonic apparatus, the is employing in the guise of state apparatus or other appealing propaganda. It is only on the basis of this consciousness that proletarian ideology could become erected and can stand effectively. Being conscious of hegemony is rather the first step towards proletarian consciousness; ideology. To quote Gramsci,

"Consciousness of being part of a particular hegemonic force (that is to say political consciousness) is the first stage towards a further progressive self consciousness in what theory and practice will finally be one". <28>

It is not only the case that proletarian ideology depends much on being conscious of hegemony, but also such consciousness is a

prerequisite of theory-practice unity. Gramsci says that every conception of the world and every philosophy had been concerned with the problem of unity of theory and practice. Here, Gramsci speaks of the role that party plays too. For him, the parties are

"the crucibles where the unification of theory and practice, understood as a real historical process, taken place". <29>

Parties assume great importance in practising theory, it is them that actually apply theory on the concrete field. Gramsci says that man's acquisition of consciousness of structural conflicts

on the level of ideologies in an ample evidence that it is of epistemological value, and not simply psychological or moral value. He says that

"From this it follows that the theoretical-practical principle of hegemony has also epistemological significance.....". <30>

We have seen that for Gramsci, ideology is a superstructural expression of a contradictory reality. He too follows the trend away from a purely negative concept of ideology. This contradictory reality, which is the base is a 'kingdom of necessity'. Necessity is that which is opposed to freedom. Their relations, the relations of freedom and necessity is contradictory in nature. But can not co-exist. Freedom can only begin where necessity ends. But a knowledge-scientific knowledge of necessity is a prerogative to freedom. The contradictory reality which is the base is a kingdom of necessity, and the superstructure is an expression of it; which philosophy of praxis got to change.

Structure and superstructure form a 'historical bloc'. As a result, the superstructure becomes a reflection of the social relations of production. For Gramsci, superstructure are an objective reality where man gains consciousness of their positions and goals. Therefore, Marxism is a superstructure like every other class ideology. Marxism is also an expression of historical contradictions. Contradiction belongs to the base, and its expression is the superstructure. In this case too, Marxism is a superstructure like any other element in superstructure. Still, Marxism is superior. It is superior because Marxism is the most conscious expression of those contradictions.

But Marxism is also bound to disappear along with other expressions of necessity, as freedom eventually takes over. Marxism, being an expression of contradiction is tied to necessity, and not to freedom. Necessity is bound to disappear, as freedom is bound to come. Thereby Marxism too is bound to disappear or change form: and the new form supersedes the old. To me it seems that the very dynamic nature of Marxism demands that, the theory should undergo intellectual evolution from time to time. I am not inclined to

agree with Gramsci that Marxism will wither away, but I feel that Gramsci can be justified if it amounts to saying that Marxism must evolve by Gramsci's expression that Marxism is bound to be superseded. One Marxist strand of interpretation would be superseded by another and so on as the time requires change. However Gramsci says that we can go no further than making the generic affirmation that the philosophy of praxis will either disappear or be superseded. To quote him,

"But even the philosophy of praxis is an expression of historical contradictions, and indeed their most complete, because most conscious expression; this means that it too is tied to 'necessity' and not to a 'freedom' which does not exist and, historically, can not yet exist. If, therefore, it is demonstrated that contradictions will disappear, it also demonstrated implicitly that philosophy of praxis too will disappear, or be superseded. In the reign of 'freedom' thought and ideas can no longer be born on the terrain of contradictions and the necessity of struggle. At the present time the philosopher- the philosopher of praxis - can only make this generic affirmation and can go no further; he can not escape from the present field of contradictions, he can not affirm, other than generically, a world without contradictions, without immediately creating a Utopia". <31>

NOTES

1. V. Lenin, What is to be done ?, Foreign Language press, Peking, 1975, p.50
2. Engels, Letter to C. Schmidt, 27. Oct. 1890, in Marx and Engels, selected Correspondence, Progress Publishers, 1971, p.400
3. Antonio Gramsci. Selections from the Prison Note Books, (tr.) Quinton Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971, p.324.
4. Ibid. pp. 395 -6.
5. Ibid. p. 396.
6. Ibid. p. 334.
7. Ibid pp. 392 - 3.
8. Ibid p. 395.
9. Ibid p. 334.
10. Ibid p. 329.
11. Ibid p. 345.
12. Ibid p. 345.
13. Ibid p. 344.
14. Ibid p. 341.
15. Ibid p. 366.
16. Ibid p. 366.
17. Ibid p. 328.
18. Ibid p. 376.
19. Ibid pp. 376 - 7.
20. Ibid p. 376.
21. Ibid p. 366.
22. Ibid p. 377.

23. Ibid p. 366.
24. Ibid pp. 404 - 5.
25. Ibid p. 367.
26. Ibid p. 333.
27. Ibid p. 365.
28. Ibid p. 333.
29. Ibid p. 335.
30. Ibid p. 365.
31. Ibid p. 405.

CHAPTER IV

Louis Althusser

on

Ideology

CHAPTER IV
LOUIS ALTHUSSER ON IDEOLOGY

While Antonio Gramsci gave his historicist conception of ideology, there was yet another Marxist who gave a different conception of ideology. That was the structuralist conception of Louis Althusser. Althusser's structuralist methodology and its application to cultural phenomena had conspicuous repercussions in Marxist studies. 'Structuralist' Marxist tradition starts with entirely different assumptions from that of 'historicist' tradition.

For Althusser, everything becomes different with his theory of "epistemological break" in Marx. Althusser finds two Marxs primarily. He finds the young Marx predating the divide as 'ideological' and matured Marx in post German Ideology period utterly scientific. It is from his understanding of 'the specific difference' in Marxist philosophy that Althusser develops his theory of epistemological break. To quote him,

"The question of the specific difference of Marxist philosophy then assumed the form of the question as to whether or not there was an epistemological break in Marx's intellectual development indicating the emergence of a new conception of philosophy- and the related questions of the precise location of this break". <1>

So it was the "difference" in Marxist philosophy from other philosophies that raised the question of the possibility of some kind of break; as a result of which, a new philosophy came into existence different from the previous unscientific philosophies, a new scientific philosophy. Naming the break as epistemological, Althusser says that

"There is an unequivocal 'epistemological break' in Marx's work..... new theoretical consciousness is already beginning to show through in the erstwhile consciousness and the erstwhile language as necessarily ambiguous and unbalanced concepts". <2>

For Althusser, the theoretical work of Marx before German Ideology period is not of much value. Before the break, things were not so consciously done. It is only after the break a new consciousness came in; and in the light of the new consciousness, it can be found that the previous theories were ambiguous and concepts were unbalanced. Althusser finds the origin of dialectical materialism after this break. To quote him,

"this 'epistemological break' concerns conjointly two distinct theoretical disciplines. By founding the theory of history (Historical materialism) Marx simultaneously broke with his erstwhile ideological philosophy and established a new philosophy (dialectical materialism)". <3>

Thus, it was a break from ideological philosophy to a scientific one, dialectical materialism. The point of this break could be seen as something like a middle point in intellectual Marx. And precisely for the same reason, Althusser finds this break as dividing Marx's thought into two periods.

"This 'epistemological break' divides Marx's thoughts into two long essential periods: the 'ideological' period before, and the scientific period after the break in 1845". <4>

The second period, the scientific one is further dived into two movements. One is the period of 'theoretical transition', and other the period of 'maturity'. As a result, Althusser finds three periods in Marx, which he pin points in the following manner.

1. 1840 - 44 The early works. (Ph.D Thesis, 1844 manuscripts, Holy Family.)
2. 1845. The works of the break. (Thesis on Feurbach, The German Ideology)
3. 1845 - 57 The transitional works. (First drafts of 'Capital', Manifesto, Poverty of Philosophy, Wages price and Profit etc.)

His division of Marx into two stages of ideological and scientific resulted in doubting the young or early or Neo - Hegelian Marx. Works like German Ideology are seen as ambiguous and not

contributing much to scientific world view, and many even treated it as worthless, destined to be superseded or surpassed and replaced with more mature works, with scientific approach. Mepham suggests that Marx had not achieved a clear conception of ideology in German Ideology. Though he struggles to discover a new language of interpretation, he fails<5>. On the other hand Poulantzas spoke at length about "the numerous ambiguities"<6> of the young Marx's work. Althusser makes it explicit and calls theory more directly a "positivist and historical thesis"<7>.

However it seems to me that Althusser's division of Marx on the basis of "epistemological break", if amounts to dividing Marx into two water tight compartments, is very unfortunate. It is unfortunate not only for the reason that it does injustice to Marx, but also for the fact that it limits intellectual forthgoing and misses the essential link in the period of intellectual evolution of Marx. In the second chapter, it was clearly shown about the stages of intellectual evolution of Marx particularly with reference to the concept of ideology.

Attempts to treat young Marx's work as not worth, or not bearing any significance to scientific Marx could essentially be one sided. The questions such as whether Marx is a humanist, or a revolutionary itself is wrong because, he is both. Marx becomes revolutionary only because he was one of the most scientific and passionate humanists history has ever seen. It was precisely such humanistic sensitivity that pushed forward him to envisage concrete conditions where men can become their real self. So Althusser's attempt to discard early Marx's works as ambiguous can not be agreed to.

We have seen that Althusser's conception is structuralistic as against that of the historicist conception of Gramsci. But interestingly, the origin of structuralism can be traced to Gramsci himself. The origin of structuralism can be found in Gramsci when he rejects ideology as psychologically and arbitrarily created. Structuralism is mainly concerned of freeing Marx from a conception of ideology as pure speculation or false consciousness. Historicism abates this interpretation due to its emphasis on the role of the subject class and of consciousness in the

origin of ideology. On the other hand, structuralism says that ideology has a material existence which determines the subject. If ideology has to be rejected as false consciousness, then a conception of subject participating in its origin also has to be rejected. Thus ideology is not a false or illusory representation of reality, because its source is not the subject. Its source is material reality itself.

Althusser is one of the chief and important representative of this thought. One can find Althusser making various attempts to understand and define the concept of ideology with the above spirit chiefly in his mind. But he is not very consistent always, and he even contradicts with himself at times. Speaking about ideological illusions, he says that they are well founded on ideologies. To quote him,

".....ideological illusions - illusions which are not 'naive', not mere 'aberrations' but necessary and well founded as ideologies". <8>

Further, he says that the concept of ideology as General. "it always works on something general"<9>, he gets this idea from Marx himself. Because Marx is found using general concept like Production, Labour, Exchange etc. Althusser says that such concepts are indispensable to a scientific theoretical practice. He finds that the first generality does not coincide with the product of scientific labour. It, on the other hand is the prior condition of scientific labour. He calls this precondition as the first generality, or Generality-1. Generality-1 becomes the raw material to science's theoretical practice, which transforms it to what he calls as specified concept. Specified concepts are concrete generality, or generality-2. Further, he talks about a third generality even, which is a synthesis of Generality-1, and Generality-2. He says that Generality-2 works on Generality-1 to produce Generality-3. I will return to this point later, when considering his various definitions of ideology. At another point, he defines ideology as

".....an ideology is a system (with its own logic and rigour) of representations (images, myths, ideas, or concepts, depending on the case) endowed with historical existence and role within a given society". <10>

After saying that ideology is a system of representations which has historical existence and a definite role to play in a society, he wants to make a distinction between ideology and science. to quote him

".....ideology as a system of representations is distinguished from science is that in it the practico-social function is more important than the theoretical function. (function as knowledge)". <11>

So what really differentiates ideology from science is its practico-social function. Or its primacy over theoretical function. His stress on 'social function' is particularly important. It is rather a prelude to what he is wanting to say, that ideology and society are inseparable. But first, he has to make the premises. So he goes into another aspect from ideology, he slips into a kind of definition of history.

"Subjects of history are human societies. Historical complexities can be reduced to three. Economy, Politics and Ideology". <12>

The three historical complexities form a base, or the base.

Since historic complexity is the base, and subject of human history is societies, Althusser concludes that:

"So ideology as such is an organic part of every social totality". <13>

Ideology, then is an integral part of human society. They, ideology and society, can not be separated from one another. He says that societies can not have lived without it. Even the Utopian imagination of society without ideology is the imagination of ideology. Only ideology could have imagined a society without ideology. Further, he goes into saying that ideology is a structure; it is structural in human societies. To quote him,

"So ideology is not an aberration or a contingent excrescence of history: it is a structure essential to the historical life of societies. Further, only the existence and the recognition of its necessity enable us to act on ideology and transform ideology into an instrument of deliberate action on history".
<14>

Althusser finds ideology as a structure. This structure is essential to societies, to the historical life of societies. Accordingly, ideology

can never be done away with; and even in societies were class antagonisms and classes itself have ceased to exist, ideology would continue its existence. In Communist societies, ideologies will be different; it is transformed to become an instrument of deliberate action on history, for man to make his own history. Interestingly, Althusser doesn't maintain the distinction between two ideologies as it was made earlier by Lenin, Gramsci etc. He treats both i.e., ideology as false consciousness and scientific with the same unqualified name, ideology. Perhaps this is what lead him into saying that ideology gets transformed.

For Althusser, ideology has nothing to do with consciousness. It doesn't belong to the realm of consciousness. He says that

"It is profoundly unconscious even when it presents itself in a reflected form as in pre-Marxist Philosophy". <15>

As being structural, they are systems of representations and not very related to consciousness. Making this more explicit, he says that

"they are usually images and occasionally concepts, but it is above all as structures that they impose on the vast majority of men, not via their consciousness". <16>

However, he repeatedly asserts that ideology is inevitable for human societies, they are structural, and they ought to be transformed to suit the conditions of existence of the proletariats. He tries to sum up in the following way:

".....it is clear that ideology (as a system of mass representation) is indispensable in any society if men are to be formed, transformed and equipped to respond to the demands of their conditions of existence". <17>

In Althusserian approach to the concept of ideology, his two articles are of crucial importance. They are,

1. "Theory, Theoretical Practice, and Theoretical formation. Ideology and Ideological Struggle" (1966)

and

2. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus" (1969)

In his entire theory, particularly in these two articles, it can be seen that he is laying three stages of emphasis. In the first essay, ideology is seen as an objective level of reality, independent of individual subjectivity. It is only and simply a system of representations. It has nothing to do with consciousness. Though men practice ideology, they are not conscious of it. It surpasses the way in which it is lived by particular individuals. It can only be known through its structure. Isolated images or

representations do not amount to ideology. Since it is determined by its structure; it can not be reduced to the way individuals practice ideology. In short, ideology can not be studied as objective phenomena. He says that

"it is their system, this mode of combination and disposition which give them sense; it is their structure which determines them in their sense and function". <18>

Though Althusser is very enthusiastic about this 'representation of system', he is not very consistent about the representations of this system. In "For Marx" he says that

"In ideology men do indeed express, not the relation between them and their conditions of existence, but the way they live the relation between them and their conditions of existence. this presuppose both a real relation and an 'imaginary'; 'lived' then relation". <19>

But we can see him again coming back to his old formula in "Theory, Theoretical Practice and Theoretical Formations. Ideology and Ideological Struggle". He says

"ideology is a representation of the real, but a necessarily false one, since it is necessarily oriented and biased". <20>

Even here Althusser does not realise or see of any inconsistency or incompatibility between this vie of ideology and the previous vie of it as an objective level of society.

However, what he implies is this. Man can't live without representing this world and his relation to it. This representation is predetermined with respect to each subject. Men are born into it. to quote Althusser,

"Ideology thus appears as a certain representation of the world, which links men with their conditions of existence and with other men....". <21>

Thus the function of ideology is something that secures cohesion from man to man and man to his task. Here we can see him borrowing the Gramscian expression of "cement" - ideology functions as a cement which joins all parts of the social building. Ideology functions as adjustment between men and their roles. Ideology smoothly makes it natural for men to bear the situation, be it exploited, or the exploiter. To question such dominations, will be what is 'unnatural'. Therefore, ideology is an essential element of all societies to fulfill some essential social tasks.

"Human societies secrete ideology as the very element and atmosphere indispensable to their historical respiration and life. Only an ideological world out look could have imagined societies without ideology and accepted the Utopian idea of a world in which ideology (not just one of its historical forms) would disappear..... Historical materialism can not conceive that even a communist society could ever do without ideology". <22>

It amounts to saying that ideology existed before the beginning of class division, and will continue even after class division disappears. It is a structural aspect of any society, its function is that of cementing the unity of society. In class societies, ideology has an additional function which it does not have in a society which is classless. In class societies, ideology is also a means to maintain domination. Ideology enables the bourgeois to dominate the proletariat. To quote Althusser,

"in a classless society, just as in a class society, this function is dominated by the form which the division of labour takes in the differentiation of man in antagonistic classes". <23>

Nonetheless, ideological functions are not true cognitions of the world. True that the general function of ideology is very important to Althusser, but the origin of falsity of ideology is crucial to him. His structuralist learning is more than a technological flirtation. He says,

"the distortion of ideology is socially necessary as a function of the very nature of the social totality, more precisely, as a function of its determination by its structure, which is made, as all the social; opaque for individuals who occupy a place determined by this structure. The opacity of social structure makes necessarily mythical the representation of the world necessary for social cohesion".
<24>

The opaque character of society is over determined by the class division in class society. As a result of these, both aspects determines the distorting and mystifying character of ideology.

According to the class division and class structure, ideology itself is bifurcated into various tendencies in class societies. In such class societies, Althusser finds dominant and dominating ideologies. At this point, one can find an analogy between Althusser and Lenin. He closely follows Lenin's tendencies in "What is to be done?" There may be occasions when dominated ideology represents the protest of the oppressed.

As a pre-scientific mode of cognition, ideology appears opposed to scientific mode of cognition. Ideological theoretical practice is opposed to scientific theoretical practice. Even if the case is such, scientific theoretical practice works on the result of ideological theoretical practice to produce scientific concepts. According to Althusser, science

"does not 'work' on a purely objective 'given', that of pure and absolute 'facts'. On the contrary, its particular labour consists of elaborating its own scientific facts through a critique of the ideological 'facts' elaborated by an earlier ideological theoretical practice". <25>

Speaking about 'ideological theoretical practice', he says that such practice produces problems which are not genuine, spurious or false problems. And the solution of this problems were already produced and kept ready outside the process of knowledge.

Thereby, because of this advance production of solution before the problems would appear, the solution that science produces will be arbitrarily not different; it is from the "epistemological break" between ideology and science. Science poses the problems totally different and therefore their solution is not prejudged and imposed in advance by ideological theoretical practice. At this point another analogy could be found between Althusser's 'epistemological break' and Lenin's 'political consideration on the importation of science from without into spontaneous consciousness' of the proletariats.

Althusser speaks about two functional requirement of ideology. On the first place, it is analysed in the context of 'reproduction of relations of production' and of the material existence of ideology in the Ideological State Apparatus which assumes the short form of ISA. Secondly, ideology is seen as a mechanism which constitutes subjects by interpolating them.

Althusser's article on ISA (Ideological State Apparatus) starts with the question of the need of producing the means of production again. He says

that it is absolutely necessary for the capitalist to reproduce the means of production in order to make further production possible. He says that

"The ultimate condition of production is therefore the reproduction of the conditions of production. This may be simple (reproducing exactly the previous conditions of production) or on an 'extended scale' ". <26>

In order to exist, it is absolutely necessary for any condition to reproduce the same 'system' of production. Althusser finds two types of reproduction, one, reproducing everything exactly as it were before, and two, reproducing it as an improved version on an extended scale. However, he says that

"It follows that, in order to exist, every social formation must reproduce the conditions of its production at the same time as it produces, and in order to be able to produce.

It must therefore reproduce:

- 1.reproductive forces,
- 2.the existing relations of production". <27>

The reproduction of circumstances has to be simultaneously done along with production itself, for production to repeat. For that, on the one hand the productive forces must be reproduced, and on the other, the relations of productions are to be reproduced. In reproduction of productive forces, reproduction of labour power is very important, and at the same time risky and tricky. For the labour power to be of any use, they not only must multiply, but also must continue behaving the same way. The reproduction of labour power is done in the following manner.

"It is ensured by giving labour power the material means with which to reproduce itself: by wages". <28>

Explaining wages he says that

".....wages represent only that part of the value produced by the expenditure of labour power which is indispensable for its reproduction". <29>

Thus only minimum requirement is given away as wages. Althusser says that this minimum does not mean biological minimum, he says that this minimum is historical minimum. Wage implies not only food etc., but also certain other things without which it is sort of impossible for the workers to live and function. He gives the example of the English labourers habit of taking beer and their French counterpart taking wine. This he calls as historically variable minimum. After securing the reproduction of labour by giving wages, what is next needed is the reproduction of the environment of production, or reproduction of productive circumstances.

In the article on ISA, he concretises a distinction which was implicit in his first writings. Earlier he had made a distinction between general function of ideology as cementing the social building and particular functions of ideologies in class societies, which enables the dominant class to continue dominating and repressing. In class societies, the general function of ideology is dominated by the particular function. Thus, he makes a distinction between

theory of ideology in general, and theory of particular ideologies.

The theory of particular ideologies refer to ideologies in concrete historical social formations, depending on certain combination of mode of production and on specific class struggle. Hence, here, ideologies have a history. But for the former, it is different. The theory of ideology in general treats ideology in the following manner:

"Endowed with a structure and functioning such as to make it a non-historical reality, in the sense in which that structure and function are immutable, present in the same form through out what we can call history". <30>

Thus, though particular ideologies have history, ideology in general have no history. In Althusser's early treatment of the concept of ideology he implied a question, how men accepted the tasks and roles given to them by society without questioning. In his later treatment of

ideology another question was implied, that is how the skills of labour power and labour power itself are reproduced in capitalist society. He finds that this reproduction takes place

"in the forms and under the forms of ideological subjection". <31>

To make this more explicit, he makes a distinction between Repressive State Apparatus and Ideological State Apparatus. Repressive State Apparatus functions by violence. The employ force and function. He gives the example of Army, Government, Administration, Police etc. Ideological State Apparatus on the other hand functions by ideology.

"by the exercise of the state power in the State Apparatuses, on the one hand the (Repressive) State Apparatus, on the other hand the Ideological State Apparatus". <32>

Speaking about Ideological State Apparatus, Althusser speaks about various ISAs. In fact, he gives a list of several ISAs. They are,

1. Religious ISA. (The system of different churches).
2. The Educational ISA. (The system of different private schools)
3. The family ISA. (Though family has other functions)
4. The legal ISA. (Law belongs both to RSA and ISA)
5. The political ISA. (Political system and parties)
6. The trade union ISA.
7. The communication ISA. (Press, Radio, TV etc.)
8. The cultural ISA. (Literature, Arts, Sports etc.)

The reproduction of the relations of production is done with the help of repressive state apparatus and ISA. He says that

".....for the most part, it is secured by the exercise of state power in the (Repressive) State Apparatus, on the one hand the (Repressive) State Apparatus, on the other the Ideological State Apparatus". <33>

Regarding the combined operation of RSA and ISA, Althusser says that

".....the State Apparatus secures by repression the political condition for the action of the Ideological State Apparatus". <34>

So RSA secures the political conditions for ISA to operate upon. Ruling ideology is specially concerned with ISA, and not RSA, to secure the reproduction of relations of production. Althusser says that

".....the Ideological State Apparatus which has been installed in the dominant position in mature capitalist social formation as a result of a violent political and ideological class struggle against the old dominant Ideological State Apparatus, is the educational ideological apparatus". <35>

Althusser finds that the Educational ISA having prime importance in capitalism. When wages reproduces labour power, other circumstances are by and large reproduced by nothing other than educational ISA. Speaking about ISA of education, Althusser says that

"it takes children from every class at important age, and then for years.....it drums into them.....a certain amount of 'know-how' wrapped in the ruling ideology.....or simply the ruling ideology in its pure state.....

each mass ejected enroute is practically provided with the ideology which suits the role it has to fulfill in class society: the role of the exploited.....the role of the agent of exploitation..... of the agent of repression.....or of the professional ideologist". <36>

He says that previously it was the church family couple that guaranteed the proper functioning of ISAs. But now the school-family couple has replaced the church-family couple. In school they successfully train both the exploiters

and the to be exploited ones, teaching them various 'proper' ways etc. of behaving, conducting in societies and types of 'know-hows' which are designed in such a way to produce the desired type of people in the society. The school becomes crucial.

As for the question of general ideology, he now solves the problem of definition. Of the previous two alternative formulations, such as one, ideology as representation of world and two, ideology as a representation of man's 'lived' relation to the world, he reaffirms what he said in "For Marx".

"ideology is a representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence". <37>

Ideology is not produced by a small group of men. It projects not the real world, but the relationship between men and their reality. It doesn't have an ideal existence, but it has a material existence. Ideology

"exists in an apparatus, and
its practice or practices".
<38>

Men live in ideology. Because men
participates when practices within specific
ideological state apparatus. Thus, they live in
ideology. Therefore, there cannot be any practice
except by taking part in or within a definite ISA
or ideology.

What precisely Althusser wants to establish
is simply this,

"there is no ideology except by
the subject and for
subjects". <39>

But here, it appears that this thesis suffers
from duplication. It appears duplicated into
imaginary subject and subjects. It is the subjects
who holds speculative relationships with individual
subjects. They find themselves as free subjects in

the subject, and are therefore subjected to it. Individual subjects does constitute by submitting to the subject; they act as they are acted by ideology.

Althusser's theory of General ideology and ideology in particulars; i.e., ideology in class societies, create problems to Marxist approach. His theory implies pretension of constituting ideology as an immutable subject across various modes of production. Even if one wants to help Althusser by trying to use abstract concepts making them applicable to various modes of productions, they still can not become object of any general theory. Contrary to Althusser, Marx went the other way.

In Marx, ideology in general have no validity. They are like "productions" or "labour" in general. Such concepts have no substance; and since they do not have any substance, they do not have any validity. Such general concepts, by themselves, they can not explain the way in which they make their appearances in specific situations. It is inconsistent to expect abstract concept to manifest in concrete situations, they do not.

Therefore, there can not be any connection between an abstract concept of ideology in general and concrete ideologies. From such generals we can not start from and make a deduction possible to deduce conditions of the concrete. Though Marx recognizes that labour process in general is common to every social phase of its existence, he also says that

"as the taste of the porridge does not tell you who grew the oats, no more does this simple process tell you of itself what are the social conditions under which it is taking place". <40>

Althusser's theory that particular ideology as depending on ideology in general appears that he is trying to establish something like the relation of part and whole. However, he is clearly mistaken to say that particular ideology is depending on a general theory of ideology.

One can find a shift in Althusser from his early position to 'Lenin and Philosophy'. He undergoes a change from his early position when he reached 'Lenin and Philosophy'.

Earlier he was of the opinion that the general function of ideology was even applicable to classless societies. But later he thinks that the function is immutable. Through out the history of class societies, it existed, and existed and present in the same form. Still this change does not consider class struggle. He has not taken care of a very important and crucial aspect of Marxism; Class Contradiction. He has not taken class contradiction into account in defining ideology as well as process of reproduction. He implies that ideology in general as well as ideology of the dominant class are realised in some state apparatus without any problem, and it is very easily imposed upon even against the will, just by the effort of conscious majority. It is this misunderstanding that eventually made him think that teachers are scape goats and helpless when he was analysing the ISA of the school. He says

"So little do they suspect it that their own devotion contributors to the maintenance and nourishment of this ideological representations of the school.....". <41>

However, at a very later stage he recognizes the abstract character of his previous analysis in a post-scriptum of the article on ISA. Now he is found saying that class struggle must be introduced for the analysis of the ideologies and their realisation in ISAs. Even in the post scriptum on ISA, he fails to solve the problem. Though here he brings together the general mechanism of ideology and the concrete conditions, they are not shown to have any theoretical relation. Class struggle is only introduced as an external addition and therefore it appears as an "over determining factor". As ideology here does not take class struggle into account, its objective role will be concealing class struggle. The early writings of Althusser appears as making attempts to compromise between the necessity of social cohesion 'in general' and class domination 'in particular'.

As ideology loses its historic character, science too becomes alienated from its relations to social contradictions. For him, science makes its entry from without to liberate the working class from their spontaneous ideological consciousness. As a result, science appears as above class struggle.

Another inconsistency that arises from his abstraction of science and ideology is at the arena of the confrontation between science and ideology. It appears as an abstract confrontation of truth and error, which reminds one of something akin to a war in heaven.

In the essay of self criticism, he is found of trying to correct science and ideology relation. Here he recognizes that Marx could break from bourgeois ideology. To quote him,

"because he took inspiration from the basic ideas of proletarian ideology, and from the first class struggle of the proletariats". <42>

However, even with all their changes, his theory continues to be ahistorical.

To conclude, two main criticisms can be spotted chiefly against Althusser's theory of ideology. First, is none other than the non-historical character of his theory of ideology. The

non-historical character of his theory eventually makes it the theory of social necessity of ideology. Secondly, his science and ideology relation overrate the role of science and forget the importance of revolutionary practice. His structuralism makes ideology an objective functional requirement of all societies.

NOTES

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CHAPTER V

Gramsci and Althusser

on

Ideology

Compared and Contrasted

CHAPTER : V

GRAMSCI AND ALTHUSSER ON IDEOLOGY : COMPARED AND CONTRASTED

Nothing would, perhaps be more difficult than a comparison of Gramsci and Althusser, and precisely for the same reason, nothing would be more challenging. These two thinkers belong to two different schools of Marxism, who could be termed as opposed to one another.

Gramsci's conception of ideology is a historicist conception of ideology, whereas Althusser's conception of ideology is a structuralist one. 'Structuralism' goes against 'Historicism'. For Gramsci and Althusser, their polarity in their conceptions were primarily due to the contrariness in historicism and structuralism. Therefore, it becomes essential to know what structuralism is, and what historicism is. Let me briefly explain historicism and structuralism within Marxian frame work.

In Marxism, the uses of the term 'historicism' is almost as protean as its original meaning in

pre-Hegelian German social thought. This has however acquired two main senses.

First one sense of historicism can be seen in Karl Popper. Popper says that Hegel and Marx are guilty of the misguided and noxious view that history has a pattern and a meaning that, if grasped, can be used in the present to predict and fashion future<1>. The conflation of history and philosophy involved in Popper's version of historicism might have been present in Hegel, but it is definitely not the main thrust of Marx. For Marx, history itself had no meaning beyond that which man in their varying stages of development assigned to it. But it is true that there had been subsequent versions of Marxism where allegedly superior insight to the "laws of history" helped to justify and sustain the totalitarian politics Popper associated with historicism. Equally whether Marx's own thought to be judged historicist is bound up with the question of its scientific character, with his critique of Utopianism, and with the status of his predictions.

The second sense of the term, which is current, and is opposed to the first sense in many

ways is found in the historical relativism of the "return to Hegel" in the words of young Lucacs, Korsch, and to some extent in Gramsci. Korsch, makes a reference to Hegel and asserts that

"We must try to understand every change, development and version of Marxist theory, since its original emergence from the philosophy of German idealism, as a necessary product of its epoch". <2>

In the same sense, Gramsci, in his critique of Bukharin could refer to Marxism as an 'absolute historicism'. The main critique of this version of Marxism is Althusser, who in the fifth chapter of 'Reading Capital' makes historicism together with humanism, the main object of his attack. It is the nature of Marx's science and the question of his relation to Hegel are what is mainly involved in this debate.

Structuralism is a method of inquiry or a more general philosophy of science which has some affinities to realism and contests the positions of

empiricism and positivism. The chief feature of structuralism is that it treats its object of investigation as a 'system'. System means reciprocal relations among a set of facts, rather than particular facts considered in isolation; its basic concepts according to Piaget are those of totality, self regulation and transformation<3>. In Marxism, the main source of structuralism is from Althusser. According to Althusser, Marx eliminated the human subject from social theory and constructed a 'new science' of the levels of human practice (economic, political, ideological, and scientific) which are inscribed in the structure of social totality. Therefore, Marxist theory is not 'humanist' or 'historical' (in a teleological sense) but is concerned essentially with the structural analysis of social totalities (e.g.: mode of production) and the object of such analysis is to disclose the 'deep structure' which is underlying and responsible in producing the directly observable phenomena in social life. Thus Godlier, in his argument against empiricism and functionalism in anthropology says that for Levi Strauss, as for Marx,

"Structure are not directly
visible or observable

realities, but levels of reality which exist beyond man's visible relations and whose functioning constitutes the deeper logic of a social system". <4>

This has not only influenced Marxist anthropology, but also Marxist political economy, where his analysis of the Commodity in Capital is seen as an exemplary instance of structural analysis.

The relation of Marxist structuralism to historical studies has given rise to much controversy. Althusser says that

"Marx regards contemporary society (and every other past form of society) both as a 'result and society', and the problem of the result, i.e., of the historical production of a given mode of production, of a given 'social formations'". <5>

has to be posed and solved.

However, in practice, he has paid no attention to historical change.

The rejection by Althusser and his followers of any causal influence of human agents, and the assertion of a rigorous structural determinism, has aroused criticism, particularly in the dispute between Poulantzas and Ralph Miliband where Miliband argues that this 'super determinism', with its exclusive stress on 'objective relations, disregards and obscures very important differences between forms of the Capitalistic State which range from a Democratic constitutional State to military dictatorships and Fascism. Structuralism is totally opposed to the Marxist visions of Lucacs, Gramsci and the Frankfurt school. They lay much stress on the role of human consciousness and action in social life, and base their thought upon a conception of history in which the idea of progress is implicit.

However it can be said that structuralism has given fresh expression to the long standing tension between two poles of Marxist thought, which is conceived at one extreme as a rigorous science of

society, at the other as a humanist doctrine. In this connection, it may be worth quoting Gramsci. He says that structuralism contains in itself all the elements

"needed to give life to an integral practical organisation of society, that is, to become a total integral civilization".
<6>

However opposed historicism and structuralism may be, something is strikingly common in both Gramsci and Althusser. It is the 'spirit' with which they set forth an analysis of the concept of ideology.

We have seen earlier in Chapter:II, how Marx and Engels treat the concept of ideology. Later, in the beginning of Chapter : III, we have also seen the innovations that Lenin finds in a concept of ideology. Marx treats ideology only in its negative sense, as false consciousness. Ideology thus had been functioning in the interest of bourgeoisie only. With Lenin, the positive connotation of ideology began and started to unfold.

The negative conception of ideology in Marx has posed a problem in front of both Gramsci and Althusser. They both wanted to help Marx. It is here, that we find their spirit as strikingly common. They both were trying to help Marx in their own way, and obviously enough, their ways were different; drastically different from one another.

Gramsci wanted to 'supplement' Marxist theory of ideology, whereas in Althusser, the effort was rather to rectify Marx's negative conception of ideology.

Gramsci makes a distinction between two ideologies. One, historically organic ideologies, and two, arbitrarily created ideologies. He says that

".....distinguish between historically organic ideologies..... and ideologies that are arbitrarily, rationalistic or willed". <7>

For Gramsci, historically organic ideologies are necessary to a given structure. One may recall that he maintains a distinction between structure and superstructure. While contradiction forms the base, every other expression appears in the superstructure. However, Gramsci favours historically organic ideologies, because they are class ideologies, proletarian ideologies. They are true expressions of the real nature of reality, ie, contradiction. Such ideologies are extremely necessary for revolution, because only they can function as a lever to social change. Masses are to be educated in such proletarian ideologies. Gramsci even feels the need of creating a revolutionary brand of intellectuals who are to educate the masses in proletarian ideology. Only such ideologies can have what he calls as 'mass adhesion'. So, historically organic ideologies are akin to Lenin's scientific ideology. They are far from being false consciousness; and on the contrary, they are full of consciousness. On the other hand, Gramsci speaks about arbitrarily 'willed' ideologies. They are artificially created, designed to conceal reality. They serve the class interest of bourgeoisie, and become instrumental in exploitation of the masses. Such arbitrarily willed or created ideologies necessarily conceals the true

nature of reality, that is contradiction. Such ideologies make man's consciousness an inverted one, representing an inverted world of reality.

Gramsci feels that Marx had not made such distinction of arbitrarily created ideologies and historically organic ideology. In Marxist analysis, he is more concerned with ideology which conceals contradiction, for his purpose of understanding reality. Marx very directly confronts with arbitrarily willed ideologies as functioning as a very powerful screen between reality and man's consciousness. So, Marx was working hard to envisage a situation, where such blocking screens would cease to exist. In the process, he does not make or maintain the distinction that Gramsci makes between two ideologies.

As a result, Marx was giving the common name "ideology" to both historically organic ideologies and arbitrarily willed ideologies. In giving the common name, Marx was much concerned with the latter version of ideology, as a result he used the term ideology in its negative connotation only.

Therefore, it can be seen that Gramsci's distinction of 'historically organic ideology' and 'arbitrarily willed ideology' is aimed at supplementing Marxist theory of ideology.

On the other hand, Althusser was trying to 'rectify' Marx. He finds Marx to be using the term ideology in negative sense, and felt that Marx was wrong. In tracing this 'mistake' of Marx, Althusser finds a difference between young Marx and later Marx. Here, Althusser comes forward with his theory of 'epistemological break' or division. Althusser's effort too is of freeing Marx from his concept of ideology as 'false consciousness. He says that

"There is an unequivocal
'epistemological break' in
Marx's work.....". /8\

He says that Marx can be divided into two, keeping the period of 'German Ideology' and 1844 manuscripts at the centre. The earlier Marx is humanist and ideological. For Althusser, the works

of young Marx is ambiguous and of no value. Marx has not yet come of age. Only works of later Marx, which he calls as scientific Marx is of value and importance. Marx's theory of ideology was written before the period of the break; and therefore, it is not of any value. Before epistemological break, Marx was ambiguous.

This is how Althusser rectifies Marx. He gives the theory of epistemological division and discards everything before as useless. Before epistemological break, Marx was committing mistakes, and therefore his theory of ideology too is nothing more than a mistake. After asserting this, Althusser goes on to give his own theory of ideology.

Althusser attacks historicism and humanism together. This has given rise to various debates such as whether Marx was a humanist or revolutionary.

However, such disputes are trivial to my mind. In the early works, Marx was seen highly emotional and as a hard-liner humanist. Like Buddha himself Marx was pained and concerned with human sufferings. Buddha left behind everything and went on searching for a solution to suffering. He went on searching until he became enlightened, and then came to the society with his philosophy of practising detachment etc. Analogically Marx too was, pained, bewildered at the sight of human suffering. Unlike Buddha, Marx set forth finding a solution for man's problems concretely. Marx was trying to find a situation where man's suffering would end. In other words, he was trying to find a situation where complete human emancipation is concretely done. Siddhartha was a humanist and later became Buddha. He became the one who attained 'Nirvana' and 'Thadhagatha'. In the same Althusserian spirit, one can say that there was an 'epistemological break' in Buddha too. And, maintaining the spirit, can any one say that the humanist Buddha was 'of no value'? Such expressions would be most jarring to human ears. What made Siddhartha into Buddha is precisely his love for mankind. Similarly, what made Marx revolutionary is the precise reason of Marxian humanism. To treat

Marx into water tight compartments of epistemological division will be wrong.

Althusser's treatment of Marx into ideological and scientific Marx is against the spirit of Marx himself. Althusser does not give any proper scope for "intellectual evolution" in Marx. Even if we allow him to maintain the idea of an 'epistemological break', it can't be neglected that he fails to perceive the nexus between young Marx and scientific Marx, the connecting link.

Thus Althusser's effort of freeing Marx from his negative conception of ideology has done grave injustice to Marx and resulted in a mistake unlike Gramsci. Gramsci has really succeeded in supplementing Marx.

The prime objective of analysis in Gramsci can be seen as his urge towards bringing forth a revolution. As against bourgeois ideology, Gramsci talks of a proletarian ideology. While bourgeoisie ideology conceals the true nature of reality, proletarian ideology does the opposite, it reveals contradiction and make people aware of the true

nature of reality. For Gramsci, such brand of ideology becomes revolutionary brand of ideology. Towards revolution, he feels the need of organising both working classes and peasants. He contemplates of linking peasantry with the workers. So in mobilising the masses, he feels the tremendous requirement of a revolutionary ideology. Such revolutionary ideology ought to be spread among the masses, and here he feels the requirements of intellectuals. A revolutionary brand of intellectuals who would educate the masses in proletarian ideology.

Gramsci is a man of praxis and a revolutionary. His entire theory has just one objective, that of finding ways and means of bringing revolution. But in Althusser, this is lacking. Althusser's analysis and theory remains only at intellectual level, which has a pure academic nature. His theory does not go outside the flexibility of the frame work of academic interest.

For this precise reason, Antonio Gramsci has become most popular among revolutionaries, particularly, in India, among the radical leftists. The Marxist-Leninist brand of radicals in India depend much on Gramsci in their various attempts

towards social change. What fascinates this people are Gramsci's attempt to bring peasantry and the factory workers together. In an agrarian country like India, Gramsci and Mao thus became particularly significant. Althusser, for his lack of revolutionary explanations, could not become popular among men of action, at practical level.

More crucial and of great importance is another lapse of Althusser. He does not take note of a very fundamental point in Marxism, that is the role of contradiction shaping society, history and even future. This is a very important lapse from Althusser. His structuralism has or could not have any place for such a fundamental concept in Marxian world of thinking and doing.

True to the Marxian spirit, Gramsci talks of freedom and necessity. Speaking about freedom and necessity, Maurice Cornforth says,

"On the contrary, with Communism this will have taken place, as Engels expressed it, 'humanities leap from necessity to the realm of freedom' and

that means that elemental conflict characteristic of the realm of necessity will give place to changes controlled and planned". <9>

For Gramsci too, revolution is the first step towards freedom from necessity. He says,

"In the reign of "freedom" thought and ideas can no longer be born on the terrain of contradictions and necessity of struggle". <10>

Ideology cannot be existing in the reign of freedom, according to Gramsci. It has to disappear, it can no longer be born. Ideology will wither away. This happens not only to ideology, but also to every forms of expressions in the superstructure. Superstructure in Gramsci is the expression of the base, which is contradiction. In a classless society, contradictions will not exist, it will cease to be. As a result, all expressions in the superstructure also will cease to exist;

they all are bound to disappear. For Gramsci, even Marxism is an expression in the superstructure, because it is the theory of contradiction. But Marxism, though is an expression in the superstructure, it is not like other expressions. Marxism is far more superior to other superstructural expressions. It is far more superior, because, he says that, it is the most conscious expression. Nonetheless, Marxism is also is bound to disappear, as it is also an expression of contradiction. He says,

".....the whole of philosophy of praxis may fall away in a unified world.....".<11>

On the other hand, what Althusser presents is structural determinism. Ideology is an integral part of every society. It is a part of the social system. For Althusser, society could have not functioned without ideology at all. Treatment of society as a system implies it. In any system, unless all systems are OK, it can not function. Ideology, Politics and economics are structural

aspect of society. As a result, there was ideology in every societies, and there will be ideology in every societies. Even after class societies have ceased to exist, and even if, there is only society, there will still be ideology. For Althusser, it is logically inconsistent to think of a society without ideology. He says only societies with ideology could have made that Utopian imagination of a society without it possible.

Althusser can be seen of borrowing the expression of "cement" from Gramsci. Gramsci speaks of ideology as a cement that unites proletariats and the intellectuals. Althusser borrowing the 'cement function' idea from Gramsci say that ideology functions as cement in unifying different aspect of social building.

However, when Gramsci says that not only ideology, but also Marxism will cease to exist in a world which is classless, Althusser says the opposite, that ideology is an integral part of the society and will always continue to exist.

Althusser is also found of speaking of two types of ideologies, but much different from the distinction that Gramsci makes. For Althusser, there is a general theory of ideology and a particular one. General ideology is present in every society, where as particular ideologies are ideologies found in class societies with an additional function, that of dominating. Althusser's theory of particular ideology can be seen as a 'near concept' to Gramsci's idea of hegemony, but in a much different way. For Althusser, even the particular ideology is related in a way of reciprocity to general ideology.

Both Gramsci and Althusser attempts to make their own understandings of history. For Gramsci

"The philosophy of an age is a process of combination of philosophies, intellectual groups, the masses etc. It culminates in an overall trend, which becomes a norm of collective action and becomes concrete, complete history".
<12>

And further he says that history and philosophy joins to form a historical bloc. So for Gramsci, history is containing everything and is full of life.

Althusser on the other hand says the following.

"Subjects of history are human societies. Historical complexities can be reduced to three. Economy, politics and ideology". <13>

and

".....ideology is not an aberration or contingent excrescence of history | it is a structure essential to the historical life of societies". <14>

Thus, for him, even the historical 'complexities' as he calls, is structural. They are economy, politics and ideology. Further, as a result, ideology has no history, it has nothing to do with history. It is a structure in the social system and history has no say in it.

When Gramsci attempts find a historical base for ideology, Althusser, on the other hand gives a definite expression of material base for ideology. He says that ideology are materially existing in Ideological State Apparatus. Speaking about the material existence of ideology, he says,

".....an ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices. This existence is material". <15>

So, when Gramsci gives the superstructural expression of ideology, Althusser says that it has a material existence. When Gramsci says that proletarian ideology is the most conscious expression of reality like philosophy of praxis itself, Althusser calls ideology as profundity unconscious. To quote him,

"It is profoundly unconscious even when it presents itself in a reflected form as in pre Marxist philosophy". <16>

For Gramsci the capital society is characterised by an acute, overt or covert class struggle. Each class uses ideas as a means to promote its interest. The pursuit of truth, therefore, comes to be replaced by the battle of ideologies. It is only when the class disappear and mankind is unified that truth and objectivity are possible. As he puts it, 'the struggle for objectivity..... is the same as the struggle for the cultural unification of human race'. This raises the question as to how we are to choose between the competing class ideologies. Gramsci is vague on this crucial question. He seems to give the impression that an ideology which meets the needs of the masses accelerates the movement towards a classless society, and provides the basis of a 'more homogenous, more coherent, more efficient practice' which is more 'rational'. He says that mass adhesion or non adhesion is a critical test of the rationality and historicity of the modes of thinking. The proletarian ideology satisfies this criteria much better than the bourgeois's ideology. Therefore, proletarian ideology is superior. In his view, Marx's thought is basically a definition and articulation of the ways of satisfying the fundamental interests of the

masses. It is not entirely clear whether he sees Marx's idea merely as a progressive ideology or as offering a true scientific account of the capitalist society.

For Lenin and Althusser, capitalism can only be grasped from a particular class position. Capitalism as such consists in the reality of exploitation of wage labour power. The bourgeois point of view covers up the reality, where as the proletarian point of view faces up to it. As he puts it, it is the only view point that renders visible the reality of exploitation, which constitute the whole of capitalism. Marx has adopted proletarian point of view as he knew it. For Althusser, it was by moving over to absolutely unprecedented proletarian theoretical class positions that Marx achieved the effectiveness of the theoretical conjunction from which emerge the science of history. Marxism is the theoretical exploration of the social reality visible from the stand point of the proletariat. Since this is so, Althusser says that Marx's work can not be understood until and unless one assumes the proletarian class position.

When Lenin's scientific ideology had to face difficulties with spontaneous consciousness, Gramsci's philosophy of praxis expresses a historical spontaneous direction. For him education does not suppress but it purifies.

However, his identification of 'subjectivity', 'superstructure', and 'necessity' also differs from that of Marx's position. Gramsci locates freedom in superstructure, which is a subjective sphere which surpasses all necessities. In his conception of civil societies too, there is a difference. In Marx, it is located in the economic base, and in Gramsci it assumes only a superstructure character.

Althusser tries to reconcile the general function which structural functionalism gives to the 'value system' of every society and the function which Marx assigns to ideology. The compromise between the necessity of social cohesion in general and class domination in particular. Instead of proposing the question of social cohesion, he proposes the question of reproduction of relations of production.

In Althusser, just as his theory of ideology in general loses its historical character, science also is alienated of its connection to social contradictions. In his Leninist formulation, science came from without to rescue the spontaneous ideological consciousness of the working class. In the theoretical formulation of Althusser, science constitutes itself by breaking with ideological knowledge at the moment of its inception. In both cases science is located above class struggle. In Leninist formula, spontaneous consciousness appeared as ideological as the result of the domination of the bourgeois ideology. IN his second formula ideology is just the material basis for science to emerge; the opposition between science and ideology becomes an abstract one. .

Though Gramsci is a historicist and Althusser a structuralist, and though structuralism and historicism are opposed to one another, they both have a common starting point with reference to the concept of ideology. It is Marx's usage of ideology in the negative sense; only that had made them to philosophize on the concept of ideology. The both felt that ideology is not only negative, it is positive also. They both wanted to correct Marx; Gramsci by supplementing and Althusser by

rectifying. But their theories happen to be poles apart; and as a result much differences are seen in these thinkers. Althusser's mistake became more conspicuous, and stand in need of clarity.

NOTES

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6. Antonio Gramsci. Selections from the Prison Note Books, 1971, p.462.
7. Ibid. pp.376-7.
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10. Antonio Gramsci. Prison Notes..., p.405.
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12. Ibid. p.345.
13. Althusser. For Marx, p.232.
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CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

Contributions of
Gramsci and Althusser
to
the Marxian concept of
Ideology

CHAPTER : VI

CONCLUSION

We have seen in the previous chapter, the various ways in which ideology was handled by various thinkers before and after Marx, and of Marx himself also. Initially the term ideology stood to refer intellectual deception of the masses by some form of authority. Marx has taken up the analysis from these and made a thorough study of the concept of ideology and called it false consciousness. But Marx did not stop at a simple analysis of the concept alone. When he finds that ideology operates as a false consciousness, which depicts the reality as an inverted one, the effort of Marx was to find out a situation where this false consciousness can not function. Therefore, after German Ideology Marx is found analysing economic relations; and lands up in the voluminous work of Capital. Here, Marx seems to repeat his earlier position that it is the task of the philosopher to change the world.

Philosophers who came after Marx, tried to expand Marxism in various ways. Marx had only briefly touched many aspects which had not fallen

directly on his way of investigation. His main thrust of intellectual investigation had opened several tributaries, but one really has to go into them to make many implications explicitly intelligible further. For those who took after Marx, this was one of the main task. And Marxian concept of ideology was no exception.

Among the Neo-Marxists, two trends are very prominent and important. They are historicism and structuralism. I have tried to reflect up on one thinker each of these traditions, and thereby chapter III was done on Antonio Gramsci, and chapter IV on Louis Althusser, The former Neo-Marxist representing the historicist tradition, and the latter, the structuralist tradition. Since classical Marxism lacked in elaboration of many areas, the views of these Neo-Marxists assumes a great importance.

For the concept of ideology, Marx is found using it only in one sense, in the negative sense. From him it was necessarily false consciousness. But after Marx, the Marxists felt the need of expanding the 'limited' sense in which Marx had used the

concept. Lenin found that ideology has not only the negative connotation as Marx thought, but also a positive one. He came to distinguish between science and ideology, and ideology as false consciousness as well as ideology as scientific.

Both the Neo-Marxist schools carried the spirit of Lenin. Both felt that ideology is not only false consciousness, but it is also something positive.

It is in this connection that Gramsci makes the distinction between 'historically organic ideologies' and 'arbitrarily willed ideologies'. By ideology, Marx meant the latter for most of its sense. As a result, the former sense of the term became absent in Marx. To supplement Marx, Gramsci tried to incorporate the sense of 'organic ideology' into the concept of ideology to co-exist with arbitrarily willed ideologies.

On the other hand, Althusser landed up in his theory of epistemological break. He makes a

distinction between ideological, humanist Marx and scientific, revolutionary Marx. Althusser laid much premium on the latter, and treated the former as not having much significance.

However, they both have their own definite contributions to Marxian theory of ideology. One can say that both Gramscian historicism and Althusserian structuralism could strength the Marxian concept of ideology, directly or, indirectly.

One of the most important contribution that Gramsci makes is through his concept of state, ie, his treatment of the relationship between ideology and the state. He finds that western societies are giving predominance to civil society where as eastern societies are giving predominance to state. From here, he deduces the central importance of "class hegemony", that is the ability of a class to assume moral and intellectual leadership over the other classes without resorting to coercion. Making an application of the concept of hegemony to bourgeois domination, Gramsci implies that the working class must attain an "ideological hegemony" first of all, to overthrow the domination of bourgeoisie.

Gramsci's thought has the originality of pointing out the peculiarities of the cultural situation the west and to the consequences deriving from bourgeois rule by consent and ideological hegemony. Still in spreading ideology from political society, Gramsci abandons the possibility of understanding one of the most important bases of ideological domination in bourgeois society. Moreover, Gramsci's concept of ideology as a class world view overrates the role played by consciousness in both the production of ideology and and overthrowing of capitalist society.

For Lucacs, the true strength of the society is spiritual. Therefore, knowledge is required to overcome it. Gramsci gives the theory of ideological hegemony in contrast to political coercion. Lucacs openly speaks of the need of violence in addition to the need for knowledge. This is not very clear in Gramsci. On the other hand, Lucacs only negatively asserts class consciousness is not a creation out of void, Gramsci positively affirms that every ideology is an expression of the contradictions of the reign of necessity.

Althusser's theory of ideology try to reconcile the general function which structural functionalism assigns to the 'value system' of every society and the function which Marx assigns to ideology. They seem to make compromises between necessity and social cohesion in general and class domination in particular.

Later, he presents this problem in a different light, when instead of social cohesion, he proposes the questions of reproduction of relations of production. Still, it is only a terminological illusion. He does not differ from his early concern of social cohesion and the acceptance of social roles by individual subjects. He equates the relations of production with the functions assigned to economic agents understood as human subjects.

The question of distortion of ideology in Marx lies in the fact that man can not solve contradictions in their minds that they are unable to solve in practice. He gives the idea that revolutionary practice can practically solve contradictions, Marx conceives the fundamentals of

a non ideological consciousness. On the contrary, Althusser's theory of ideology is that of a necessary domination of ideology. Ideology is a functional requirement of society, which constitute subjects in their imaginary relation to their world as if their minds were just helpless and passive. Althusser's theory overlooks the very essence of origin of ideology, in class contradiction, and therefore, he is forced to conceive a way out by resorting to the precarious solution given by science.

As ideology is a functional requirement of society, the challenges presented by science becomes necessarily a never ending battle which can not be won. Ideology can only be unmasked by science, but it can not be overcome in its source, it will always be. Althusser can not envisage a defeat of ideology because his theoretical approach leaves no role for a revolutionary practice which may change the source of ideology. Marx also accepts this unmasking role of science. But his point was not just unmasking and understanding of ideology, but the changing of circumstances. He accepts that science could not be automatically derived from a transforming practice, yet it can-

not be separated from it either. Althusser does not consider class contradictions in the origin of ideology and science also appears detached from class contradictions. He has instead given the view of a functional requirement for the origin of ideology in contradictions. Further., he has substituted theoretical practice for revolutionary practice. Though here it can not be said that he is representing Marx's theory, he is consistent.

Though ideology may stand for the dominant class and science for dominated class, in the absence of a concept of class struggle, this allocation of ideology to bourgeoisie and science to proletariat can hardly be justified. The absence of historicism in Althusser's ideology makes it a necessity for all societies. His science and ideology results in disregarding revolutionary practice which is very important in Marx. His structuralism sets out to eliminate the idealism of historicism. Historicism lays too much emphasis on the false consciousness of the subject. But by going in the other extreme from idealism of historicism, it makes ideology a functional requirement of all societies and lands up in another form of idealism. Thus the epistemological

idealism has been superseded by the transcendental idealism of the external ideology.

There had been much talks about science and ideology, where science stood for positive cognitive values and ideology for negative one. However, ideology in itself is not a concept to be distinguished from science. Ideology could be scientific. If it is not scientific, then it is certainly not due to the reason of it being ideology, but owing to reason of it belonging to certain class interests. Thus it is not anti-science, on the other hand, it could be scientific.

On the first place, Science and ideology can be seen as truth and error. Science appears to overcome ideology. They assume totally opposite character and scientific cognition is entirely different from cognition that of ideology.

This understandings of science and ideology can be seen in some traditions of positivist origin, such as Vienna school; and can also be found in some Marxist school related to

structuralism such as that of Althusser. They are much concerned with demarcation of science and ideology and they expect science to overcome ideology.

Secondly, ideology can be seen as different from science, though not opposed to it. Though they are different, science can not defeat ideology as ideology is rooted in social contradictions. Ideological error is due to the fact that it conceals contradictions. Only practical solution of contradiction can defeat this error. Ideology can not be dispelled by simple theoretical means because its roots are beyond mere intellectual errors. This seems to be the position of Marx himself.

The relationship between science and ideology are so complex that it cannot be deduced to pure opposition or a mere relation of ideology. Against the relation of pure opposition one can say that science is not a practical sphere of knowledge .

which may escape from contradictions of society and determinations of economic base. It is also not a simple error of knowledge which can be corrected by true knowledge or criticism. The social determination of scientific knowledge does not make it an ideology, but opens the possibility of ideological penetration. However, not all the accidents and errors which accompany the development of science are ideological.

Marx lays down two conditions for the presence of ideology. They are that contradictions should be objectively concealed, and this concealment is in the interest of dominant class. Ideology is not a simple error, it is a particular kind of distortion depending upon real contradictions. So to overcome ideology, these contradictions are to be solved in practice. Science by itself, can not overcome ideology. But it is through science that ideology can be understood, because science unmasks the concealment.

Against the relations of identity of science and ideology it must be remembered that science is not the opposite of ideology, but that it is different from ideology. When science penetrates

the appearances of reality to reach the inner connections, ideology remains trapped in the former and conceals the latter. The difference is not in the claim that ideology is class oriented knowledge where as science is mental knowledge, nor in the pretension that ideology is bourgeois knowledge while science is proletarian knowledge. . All knowledge is socially determined: the mere class character of knowledge does not discriminate between science and ideology. One has to accept, as Marx did, the existence of a bourgeois science like classical political economy. Similarly, it can also be the case that, there are instances of proletarian consciousness being ideological.

The difference between science and ideology does not mean that ideology can not dress up like science. Marx comes across this when he criticizes vulgar economy. Though it meant that it could not be considered to be a science, the occurrence of it can not be disconnected from bourgeois ideology. As Poulantzas puts it, "it is a feature of bourgeoisie ideology to try and hide its presence by explicitly presenting it self as science.

For legitimizing ideology social sciences are used very much. It, however, does not mean that

only social sciences are ideological and not natural sciences. On the contrary, no science can be ideological, insofar as they are sciences they can not be ideological. The point is, social sciences, owing to their nature are more suited to be used by ideology. Ideology is the negation of the inverted character of social relations in reality. To be effective, it has to negate that negation, it has to justify it by resorting to an unimpeachable criterion found in science.

Thus it is not science itself that provide ideology's basis. It is bourgeois ideology that appears a science. Here is the fundamental; mistake of the tradition that presents science as ideology. It sees the basis of ideology in scientific rationality itself, and in doing so, it surpasses class contradiction as real basis of ideology.

Marxism is essentially a philosophy that is aimed at human emancipation. The ultimate aim of Marx is a world where man and his world and his fellow men comrades - human beings stand in concrete relations. All chains that enslave mankind is finally done away with. For Marx, that is a unified world of man. It is not a world that is divided into various nations, and men divided into different races. There are no suppressive laws,

because by then, the objective laws will be nothing other than the subjective laws of man: which Marx calls man's inner law of reason.

Referring to the theory of the "four noble truths" of Buddha, particularly the first of them, that "the world is full of suffering", one can find an analogy between Marx and Buddha, as for the starting point of both the thinkers. The fact that the world is full of suffering can easily be cognized just by having little ingenuity, and sincerity in perception. After realising this objectivity, the reality of suffering, both Buddha and Marx are seen to have started into ways of finding solutions to this. It appears clear to me that what had started thoughts in them is one and the same thing, the painful awareness of this reality - miseries of the world, which rendered both, immensely restless.

It is needless to highlight of the difference in paths chosen by both of them, as it is conspicuous and obvious. Buddha went to the metaphysical plane of resignation and overpowering of sense organs.

The same kind of attempt of removing suffering can also be seen in the Upanishads.

What Marx had in mind is precisely the common folks and the majority. Marxian solution to suffering is meant for the vast majority, who will only be comfortable when their material needs, basic needs are fundamentally provided with. It is here that the economic relations of man become crucial. Class structure in a society results in division of society into classes that are having antagonistic relations. And thus, the domination of one class over the other - repressions and exploitation, and man becomes materially chained with his spirits broken. Ideology keeps them under various wrong impressions, and all exploitation and repressions are thus justified. So Marx envisages a society which is not divided into classes, and where all types of class antagonisms are absent. The state ensures equal distribution of material wealth among its citizens, and thus in Communism, common man attains emancipation.

Anything that passes off as an ideology may not be genuine. As a matter of fact, sometimes false consciousness is accepted as ideology. Marx's argument is that when false consciousness rules, the masses are hoodwinked. According to Marx, this has been happening through out the ages. So in

order to remove economic disparity, scientific ideology had to replace false consciousness. Scientific ideology presents to us a proper understanding of social reality. This clearly shows that the Marxist understanding is based on the presumption that a right understanding is a pre-requisite of a right action - right type of social action. One may discover affinity between Buddhism and Marxism at this point. It can be said that a proper and right understanding of social reality is a pre-requisite for any type of social action. If social action aims at changing society, it must begin with diagnosing the ills that beset human society at a particular state. False consciousness blinds human intellect and present a distorted picture of social reality. This has to be removed, and Marx thinks that there is what is known as the picture of social reality. This type of theory doesn't leave any room for what is known as social relativism. According to this view, there is only one ideology and that is scientific in nature. The absolutistic and universalistic theory of ideology militates against what is otherwise known as context bound ideologies. A question may be raised in this connection. It is this: is ideology context bound or it is context free ? The Marxists argue that ideology is context free. It is

because of this reason that scientific ideology is universal in nature. The followers of Wittgeinstein and the social relativists would argue that ideologies are context bound. An ideology is an integral part of value system. Every society has its own value system. Consequently every society has its own ideology. Further in this connection it might be argued that ideologies are relative to the world view and the value system of particular communities. If this view is accepted, then there can't be any scope for universal values or ideology. The relativists treat values and ideologies as relative and contingent in nature. In other words, according to them, the concept of absolute value is a myth. Different societies have different sets of values. Further, the social relativists seek to interpret Wittgeinstein's 'form of life' in such a way so as to strengthen the relativistic position. Values are a form of life, no two societies can have the same form of life. Seen in this light, it can be said that values and consequently ideologies being a form of life are bound to be relative in nature. But then the question remains, are the higher values in life relative in nature? It is true that different societies have different ethical codes. But the so

called ethical code may not be moral. In other words, the ethical codes and the value system are also subjected to moral appraisal.

The Marxists seek to develop an ideology for people at all times and in all climes. They base the ideology purely on economic consideration. That is why concepts like surplus value, alienation and exploitation become so prominent in Marxist literature. As a matter of fact, the Marxists sorted out and highlighted the economic function in their social analysis. It is true that economic factors play a crucial role in social formation. One may even accept the economic determinism to a very large extent.

It is true that economic improvement is a pre-requisite of any social reformation. That is to say, unless exploitation is removed from economic sphere, no improvement can be made. So economy plays a central role in any social change and reformation. The major social corruption and degeneration is the economic one. The Marxists recommend altogether different social order free from susceptibility to exploitation. But now the

question is how it is to be implemented. In other words, how to achieve this goal ? It is true that an egalitarian socio - political order is the prerequisite for any kind of social regeneration. But the social order as such cannot achieve anything unless human being constituting the social order undergo a radical change. This has posed a problem before man. In other words, how to change human nature ? How to eliminate greed and avarice from human psyche? This is an uphill task. It seems that social regeneration cannot take place unless it takes place in the individual level.

Religious leaders from time to time have tried their best to change man. It cannot be totally denied that the teachings of prophets and religious leaders have any impact on human society at large. But at the same time the point remains that man is yet to achieve that state of society where all types of exploitation and alienation have vanished. But this is not to advocate pessimism. A particular value system in India (the Upanishadic one) envisages renunciation in this connection. Renunciation is the limiting point of morality. But what does renunciation mean? In answer to this, it has been said in the Upanishads that renunciation

ultimately leads to self sacrifice. IN other words, renunciation and self sacrifice go together. This is a value which cannot be implemented by promulgating ordinances as formatting civil laws. Buddhism envisages such a moral code based on self sacrifice. Seen in this light, the Marxian ideology along with its social engineering appear to be inadequate and incomplete. But at the same time, the Marxian ideology provides the base for social reconstruction. In short, it can be said that scientific ideology complied with the ethics of self sacrifice and renunciation promises a greater future of mankind.

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