IDEOLOGY AND THE *WELTANSCHAUUNG* OF THE INTELLECTUALS

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It has often been noted that the word "ideology" in its nearly two centuries long history underwent a truly bewildering semantic change, acquiring in the end a meaning exactly contrary to its original connotation. Indeed, what more antagonistic semantic domains are there than truth and falsehood; science and common-sense beliefs; impartial, lasting knowledge and shifting, narrow-minded prejudice?

The oppositions are so dazzlingly evident that they easily cast similarities in a deep shadow. What is lost in this contrast is the question of continuity—more importantly, the question of a semantic field which the two apparently antagonistic meanings of "ideology" share. This question may seem strange to a generation brought up to think of the unfolding of ideas in the undialectical terms of Thomas Kuhn's "paradigm", which identifies logical contradiction with the mutual exclusiveness of underlying world-views. The question appears more obvious, even imperative, if instead of paradigms we think in terms of Michel Foucault"s "discursive formation", which is defined by its remarkable capacity of "giving birth simultaneously and successively to mutually exclusive objects, without having to modify itself".[1]

One can think of a number of reasons for placing the utility of the concept of discursive formation well above that of "paradigm". The most obvious reason is that this concept helps to reveal the genuine dialectics of thought—its continuity, the semantic interdependence of oppositions, the mutual determination of objects allegedly subject to independent logics, and so on. But there are other reasons as well. The evident fact of the on-going communication between separate languages, so baffling from a Kuhnian perspective, appears all but natural. It becomes clear that far from being mutually exclusive, different "forms of life" are often members of the same discursive community and must acknowledge, even if only obliquely, their joint membership by engaging the other form in a competition. Above all, the discursive-formation perspective brings into relief the social mechanisms behind the unfolding of thought. If in the Kuhnian world society appears only to interfere with the smooth unfolding of the play between theory and evidence, the idea of discursive formation reveals society and its authority network as the sole material content of the articulation and delimitation of objects of discourse and the dispersion of statements which it contains and legitimises. One could say that Kuhn's idea of the paradigm remains from the beginning to the end *inside* the discursive formation of ideology, which is the object of this essay—while Foucault's methodology offers the sought-after chance of stepping outside this formation so as to scrutinise and codify the rules

which made possible its emergence.

But to return to our proper subject matter: it is the main contention of this essay that the problematics of the theory of ideology, with all its bizarre turn-abouts and convolutions, can best be understood within that typically modern discourse of power which is associated with what has come to be described as the "civilising process". This process has been variously analyzed in the past as the triumph of reason over ignorance; as the victory of sweetness and light over crude and uncouth existence; as the displacement of brutality and barbarism by politeness and gentle habits; as law and peaceful order replacing the fist and the pandemonium of universal war; as the taming of passions by civility and self-control. With a measure of emotional detachment, more becoming of the aca-demic mode, the process has been characterized as the rise to dominance of instrumental rationality over irrational behaviour; as the trading off of a part of freedom for a partial security, and the concomitant harnessing of aggression; as the imposition of the courtier's ideal of *l'homme honnête*, and later of *l'homme éclairé*, upon successively lower rungs of the status ladder.

The descriptions vary in the size and importance of the aspect of the process they capture. But none seems to grasp the main link in the long chain of historical transformations which Western European society went through in the course of the last three-and-a-half centuries. If the main link is the one which articulates all the others into a continuous chain, and thereby contains the key to the interde-pendence of all units of the totality, then the gradual emergence of the new form of management of the socially produced surplus seems to be a promising candidate.

This form was indeed revolutionary and set the era of "civilisation" or industrial capitalist society apart from the previously dominant type of society. In this old type, surplus value was extracted from the producers, so to speak, in leaps and bounds, say, once or several times during the annual cycle of the predomi-nantly agricultural production, in the form of rent, or a tax, tribute, or tithe. Owing to will or fear or both, the producer had to be made to part with a portion of his product. Once he had done that, he could be (and had to be to keep the process of production going) left alone. It was largely irrelevant for the circula-tion of surplus how he went about his daily business, how he administered the activities of his body and soul. The only thing which mattered—the production of surplus—was quite adequately taken care of by the double pressure of the natural cycle and the threat of what Ernest Gellner once called the "Dentistry State"—a state specialising in extraction by torture.

The advent of manufacture and the factory system, and later of market exchange integrating ever-lower rungs of the social ladder, ended this relatively simple method of surplus management. The extraction of surplus ceased to be the only task of the dominant class. Now it was to assume responsibility for the very production of surplus; producers could not be left alone and relied upon for the administration of their productive activities. Later on, with the spread of the market, they had also to be induced to organize their life-process in a way befitting willing and pliable consumers.

These two different systems of surplus management were brought into being by two different types of power. The first type was to remain external and remote; its remoteness, or not-of-this-worldness, was heavily underlined by the sacralisation of the royal reign, which ceremoniously reproduced the immutability of the eternal order of supremacy. This supremacy boiled down in practice to the upward flow of agricultural surplus. In Georges Duby's words, the whole system of feudalism could well be portrayed "as a method of keeping the stomachs of the barons and their retainers full".[2] Beyond these requirements, it was of little consequence what customs or habit ruled the daily life of the food suppliers. This was—if judged by the later standards—a time of rich and robust folk culture, which the Church, exacting and meticulous in its support for the divine rights of the earthly powers, was amazingly happy to leave to its own resources.

The second type of power is much more complex. It needs to secure not merely the extraction of surplus once in a while, but the extraction of a *continuous* effort, day by day, hour by hour—an effort which is ruled by the rhythm of an external and often meaningless logic. Worse still, a commodity consumer, unlike a mere tax-paying subject, has to be a choice-making animal who will make the right choices. Hence he must be made responsive to externally manipulative stimuli if his choices are to become equally manipulable and by the same token predictable. This new task requires—to employ Foucault's distinction—a "power of discipline", rather than the old type of "sovereign power". The object of the new type of power is not the wealth or the goods possessed or produced by the subject, but directly his labour, time and mode of life. It is the body and the soul of the subject which are to be manipulated. "This new mechanism of power"—to quote Foucault—"is more dependent upon bodies and what they do than upon the Earth and its products . . . . It is a type of power which is constantly exercised by means of surveillance rather than in discontinuous manner by means of a system of levies or obligations distributed over time".[3]

Thus, the new power reaches parts former powers could not reach. It penetrates deeply into the mundane daily activities of its subjects. It makes a bid for the totality of their bodily actions. This aim cannot be achieved with the old means. It certainly cannot be attained with the help of the distant, invisible king-God, symbolising the intractable order of the universe; it cannot be recalled periodically, on the day when the levy or the tithe are due for payment. The new power must employ new resources.

The new, much more ambitious, ubiquitous, all-penetrating order cannot rely on the ritual invocation of the divine rights of the sovereign. It can rule only in the name of the norm, of a pattern of normality, with which it identifies itself. Since normality means in the end a continuous rhythm of bodily exertion and the unbroken chain of repeatable choices, it can be maintained only by a dense web of interlocking authorities in constant communication with the subject and in a proximity to the subject which permits a perpetual surveillance of his life-process. Old forms are transformed into such authorities, and new authorities are brought to life. Thus families and sexual functions of the body are deployed in the

new role: churches become teachers of business virtues and hard work; factories and poorhouses join forces in instilling the habit of continuous effort; idiosyncrasy and non-rhythmical life is criminalised, medicalised or phychiatrised; individualised training by apprenticeship or personal service is replaced with a uniform system of education aimed at instilling universal skills and, above all, a habit of universal and continuous discipline. No single power is now total, like that claimed by the absolute monarch. This web of authoritative relations nevertheless reaches the kind of totality no power had dreamed of reaching before. It now legislates for the whole of the individual's life, though the legislation is exercised surreptitiously by developing within the individual a tendency to a specifically patterned conduct. The sovereignty is always self-confined. There are no limits to the greed of the norm.

This is the origin of Freud's "garrison in the conquered city". Contrary to what Freud implied, this garrison is not an inescapable effect of social life, a universal sediment of the eternal struggle between the prerequisites of the "life in common" and intractable selfishness of the biological essence of man. It appears to be, instead, a historical event and a human accomplishment. It was brought into being by a concerned, though uncoordinated, action of a plethora of crisscrossing and overlapping authorities, alongside the emergence of the new bourgeois order of society. These authorities were established through a discourse which spawned numberless variants and transubstantiations of the essential opposition between the human and the animal.

"Disciplinary power", which aimed at the drill, regimentation and routinisation of the human body, was not, of course, an invention of the seventeenth century. It was, rather, its discovery. The universal control-by-surveillance employed for centuries—effectively, though matter-of-factly, by communities and woven in the thick and tightly knit tissue of the reproduction of quotidianity—was now lifted to the level of public consciousness, articulated as a problem calling for conscious design, specialised institutions, and their re-deployment in the relationship between classes. It reached the consciousness level once the communities (whether parishes, guilds or villages) and their essentially unstretchable resources became insufficient as the means of the reproduction of quotidianity. The masses of "unattached" people—vagrants, vagabonds, "dangerous classes"—were the first categories to "be seen". By virtue of remaining outside the network of communal surveillance, these groups, so to say, made visible what had been unseen before; they prompted action where customs and unreflected practices had ruled before. These people had to become the concern of societal agencies, of legislators, of centrally administered organs of coercion. But the latter were singularly unprepared for the task, never before having been engaged directly in the reproduction of daily life. Communities lost their grip on quotidianity—but no other agency, for the time being, was prepared to step into their place. This crisis of power was the basis of the Hobbesian question, "How is society possible?", and it found its response in the entirely new role assigned to the Prince.

The Prince was now to be in charge of the surveillance power. The communal

practice of "I watch you, you watch me" was articulated as a postulate of one category of people watching another. Disciplinary power turned into the vehicle of the asymmetry of class relations. Great numbers of people were now seen as having to be assisted (and, if necessary, goaded) to become "truly human"; a few were to adjust themselves to the new role of tutors and guardians of the process. It was essentially this new historical constellation, and the power crisis it generated, which strengthened the popularity of a great number of related concepts (civilisation, *Kultur*, *Bildung*, refinement, ideology, enlightenment, etc.). As we will see later, these concepts tried to capture and articulate this new situation—in a way which was unmistakably tainted with the group experience of the articulators. This disciplinary power sought to totally assault and virtually destroy popular culture; it sought the cruel repression of popular rebellions, of traditional (but now redefined as "deviant") conduct, of popular festivals, of heterodox beliefs and of "witchcraft"—a process brilliantly documented for France by Muchembled and, for England, by Stephen and Eileen Yeo.[4] In the course of this struggle, the human condition acquired a new conceptualisation. It appeared now as a drama of Manichean forces of passion and reason, of the crude and the refined, of the beastly and the human. "Rule over the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, and every living thing that moves upon the earth" was no more a gift of God to be enjoyed in peace. The subjugation of the animal *in* man came to be a major concern for humans. One had to lift oneself to the human condition; being a human came to be a task, an accomplishment, a duty.[5]

Three aspects of this new conceptualisation of the human condition deserve special comment:

1. The "duality" of human nature is seen to have a vertical dimension. The two antagonistic constituents of the self are conceptualised as stages of a process: through hard work and constant vigilance, one is to be displaced and replaced by another. Man becomes an unfinished product or, rather, raw stuff to be shaped and moulded into a human form. He becomes an object of activity, variously called culture, civilisation, *Bildung*, refinement—all these nouns, as Lucien Febvre pointed out,[6] originally connoted a transitive activity and not (as was later the case) achieved states of being.

2. Vertical and processual in its application to the life cycle of the individual, this duality is employed synchronically and horizontally in thinking about groups in their reciprocal relations within societies, or about relations between societies themselves. The human-animal dichotomy is projected upon the superiority-inferiority relations between collectivities or categories: adults and children, men and women, sane and mad, civilised and barbarians, gentlemen and the masses. In the vocabulary of the Enlightenment, the masses were described as "les bêtes-féroces, furieux, imbéciles, fous, aveugles". As Voltaire wrote in his note-books, "The people will always be composed of brutes;. the people is between man and beast".[7]

3. There is a third element invisibly present in the dichotomy of *homo duplex*: the positing of an agent in the passage from passion to reason, and the guarding of the supremacy of the reasonable over the passion-bound. The nature of this

agent is determined by the nature of the basic dichotomy. It is an agent simultaneously enlightening and repressing, benevolent and high-handed, offering the light of reason but applying a harsh medicine for the good of those reluctant or too indolent to accept the offer willingly. Superior knowledge and superior force, guidance and discipline, reason and power, come together as they do in the symbolic unity of the patriarchal father. Knowledge and power are meant for each other; disaster follows their divorce. For Diderot, "instruire une nation, s'est la civiliser; y éteindre les connaissances, c'est la ramener à l'état primitif de barbarie". According to Condorcet, "ce n'est point la politique des princes, ce sont les lumières des peuples civilisés", which will guarantee peace and progress on earth. A half century later, Guizot would castigate England for its emphasis solely on social development, with dire neglect for the refinement of spirit, and Germany for the reverse blunder: the failure to incorporate its thought into the business of social administration.

It was within this discourse constituted by the opposition between reason and passion that the concept of ideology was originally articulated, and it is there that it remains firmly entrenched. To Destutt de Tracy, commonly acknowledged as the person responsible for the coining of the word, ideology was to be a meta-theory of the moral and political sciences and of the "great activities which immediately influence the prosperity of society". The significance of ideology would consist solely in its practical applications; its many concerns would be united by the power of action, all of them bent on enhancing. Power would be the content and the consequence of all the tasks ideology would have to put in front of itself: the science of communicating ideas, of entrenching logic in human conduct, of forming morality, of regulating desires, of education—in short, all the tasks of uniting the efforts of the human arts in "regulating society in such a way that man finds there the most help and the least possible annoyance from his own kind".[8] The Institut Nationale, created to cultivate ideology as the practical science of the regulation of society, declared a public competition on the topic "What are the institutions for establishing morality in a people?" Tracy, Volnay, Cabanis, Laplace, Chénier and other members of the Institut, the leading lights of post-revolutionary Paris, gathered around the salon of Madame Helvétius, knowing well what the answer should be. Tracy in fact noted the answer on the margins of his reading of Spinoza: the good and bad tendency of our will is always directly proportional to the extent and exactitude of our knowledge. Knowledge is power over will. The idea of ideology implied confidence in the essential malleability of popular culture in the hands of the legislator, and in the crucial role of the ideologist in the legislator's effort to create a conscious, rational, ideological order.[9] Now, with the revolution triumphant in the name of reason, the time had perhaps arrived to realise the dream expressed by d'Holbach in his *La politique naturelle*: "Enlightened policies insure that every citizen will be happy in the rank where birth placed him. There exists a happiness for all classes; where the state is properly constituted, there emerges a chain of felicity extending from the monarch to the peasant. The happy man rarely considers leaving his sphere... The people are satisfied as long as they do not suffer;

limited to their simple, natural needs, their view rarely extends beyond". By offering "the most help and the least possible annoyance", ideology was to help the legislator by enlightening his policies.

If the dichotomy of passion and reason implies that man, unless taught and trained, may well act against his own good interest, then it also implies a profound lack of preordained coordination between needs and wants. Needs are what reason dictates; wants are what passion prompts. The subordination of wants to needs is therefore a task which may, and should, be accomplished for the sake of man himself—"in his best interest". From its very birth, the idea of ideology as the scientific code of enlightened policy allowed for the possibility that making people happy may involve forcing them to abandon their wants, making them do what they would rather not.

The distinction between wants and needs therefore constitutes the discourse of power. This distinction does not, by itself, determine political alignments—the attitude of support or dissent towards a specific power structure in the here and now. It provides, however, for the possibility of both attitudes. It allows for an account of the human condition as "knowing not what they truly need"; or "wanting what they truly do not need"; or "wanting not what they truly need". It opens up a number of interpretations, some readily classifiable as conservative, others as revolutionary. The gap between wants and needs may be accounted for by reference to the inbred or native obtuseness or selfishness of particular collectivities, which cannot lift themselves by their own resources to the level of a genuine understanding of their conditions. The same gap may also be explained by manipulation, conspiracy, deception by existing powers, or by the barriers to self-awareness entailed in the immediate context of life-business. The interpretations may lead to conclusions likely to be plotted on the opposite extremes of the political spectrum. All of them, however, remain *inside* the same discursive formation: the discursive formation of disciplinary power.

This discourse establishes the indispensability of an external factor in the process leading to the discovery of, and the submission to, the dictate of reason. It also delegitimises the authority of the individual or a group of individuals in determining the action which reason requires. It denies the self-sufficiency of man in finding out about and following the advice of reason. By the same token, it establishes the necessity of power as a positive or negative, but always irremovable, element of the human condition. The rationality of the latter is incomplete without power. So is man's urge toward the good life. Metaphorically speaking, in the secular version of the search for the meaning of life (i.e., where salvation is re-phrased as the good life), the discourse of ideology parallels the Catholic, in contrast to the dissident Churches', conceptualisation.

But the power that the concept of ideology calls into being and legitimises is not any power. As with all power, it is concerned with making people do what otherwise they would not, or allowing them to do what they evidently are not doing. But the kind of power generated and sustained within the ideological discourse achieves this change in human behaviour by specific means. These means belong to the category of persuasion. They invariably consist of the supply

of information and the argument. They are conversational means. They operate through a debate in the course of which a modification of the partner's motives, mental map or imagination is sought. The modification is to be attained through either legitimation of evidence or interpretation heretofore illegitimate, or through the delegitimation of currently accepted evidence and interpretations. In both cases, the essential strategy is to change the beliefs of the partner. The debate which is to accomplish this is envisaged as inherently asymmetrical. It is waged between the knowing and the ignorant; between teachers and the taught; between those who enjoy a certain privileged access to good knowledge and those who have not sought, or do not seek, such access.

In short, the drama of ideology is played in the world of ideas. As Destutt de Tracy put it in his *Mémoire sur la faculté de penser*: "Nothing exists for us except by the idea we have of it, because our ideas are our whole being, our existence itself". Ideas make the world we know; ideas may therefore change this world. The ideological discourse establishes ideas as power; and power as the administration of ideas.

In this perspective, the allegedly radical change of meaning which the word "ideology" has undergone since the heyday of the Institut Nationale seems much less dramatic. This change certainly did not involve an abandonment or even a substantial transformation of the original discursive formation. The change did not go far beyond a mere terminological re-shuffle. This verbal shift was all the easier and more convenient for the discrediting of the term "ideology" in the wake of the famous condemnation of ideology by Napoleon after Malet's abortive conspiracy of December 1812. ("We must lay the blame for the ills that our fair France has suffered on ideology, that shadowy metaphysics which subtly searches for first causes on which to base the legislation of peoples, rather than making use of laws known to the human heart and of the lessons of history....Indeed, who was it that proclaimed the principle of insurrection to be a duty? Who educated the people and attributed to it a sovereignty which it was incapable of exercising?") Having characterised the concept of ideology as a straightforward power-bid, Napoleon rendered difficult, if not fully ineffective, further attempts to legitimise it in terms of the impartial sovereignty of reason. From that moment on, any self-confessed preaching of ideology was inextricably associated with power disputes. More often than not, particularly since the Mannheim-induced renaissance of the word, ideology was now cast on the side of wants rather than needs, partiality of interests rather than universal truth, self-inflicted or enforced error rather than sound judgment, the contingent "is" rather than the compelling "ought". But the structure of the discursive formation within which this terminological reversal took place remained intact. Indeed, the very continuity of this structure rendered the reversal possible.

For a sociologist, then, a central task is to locate the structurally determined group experience which lent itself to being articulated into a *Weltanschauung* presupposed by the concept of ideology; to find a group which could proclaim with reason and conviction, with Destutt de Tracy, that "our ideas are our whole being, our existence itself" (or, for that matter, with Marx—that "ideas turn into

a material force once they capture the masses"). Not unexpectedly, the search turns towards intellectuals—people who, in Lewis Coser's words, "live for, rather than off, ideas".[10]

A full study revealing the resonance between the discourse of ideology and the group experience of intellectuals would of course require an extended and detailed documentation covering both the macro-social circumference of the phenomenon and its micro-social structure. I have to confine myself here to an inventory of such attributes of the intellectual mode of life as may assist the explanatory understanding of the emergence, and sustenance, of the conception of the world as a battle of ideas waged between reason and error, a battle in which the men of ideas play the role of generals. I must leave aside the particular circumstances of eighteenth and early-nineteenth century France, Germany, or Russia, where three different but related varieties of intellectuals were sedimented in the widening gulf between outlived power structures and a new network of social dependencies and reciprocities. In these countries, it suffices to note that there emerged a legitimation gap which created a demand, and an opportunity, for these intellectuals to appear as free-lance actors in the drama of power.

The crisis of the traditional forms of political sociability (by which I mean the organised mode of relations between subjects and the rulers) rendered them incapable of securing the kind of continuous discipline the emergent social order required. This legitimation gap was subsequently filled by *sociétés de pensée*, the focal points of new political sociability developing within the empty shell of the old. The new sociability was founded, in the words of the French historian François Furet, on that confused thing called "opinion," which was generated in cafés, salons, lodges, societies, and individual colleges integrated by correspondence. Separated from all practical levels of power, the individuals engaged in the domain of sociability-by-opinion perceived its impotence as the unhampered and uncompromising rule of thought. Untroubled by cumbersome practicalities of social action, and never confronted with the necessity of humiliating compromise or trade-off or the need to accept grudgingly the possible while dreaming of the ideal, they could (and they did) conceive of a social world subject solely to the rule of reason. Not for the first and not for the last time, marginality conceived of itself as sovereignty. In the domain of sociability-by-opinion, nothing counted but the power of persuasion and the authority of argument. Only wisdom, incarnate in compelling logical wizardry, could command there. Cafés and salons were parliaments permanently in session. The debate was continuous. There was nobody present except participants. It seemed that only the power of thought guided the course of the debate; no privileges of birth, rank, or money were allowed to intefere with the ultimate victory of better argument.

The unmistakable and distinctive quality of intellectual groupings—variously referred to as the intellectual style, or mode, or culture—can thus be traced back to the emergence of a self-monitoring community of men engaged full or part-time in argument about issues somewhat detached from the concerns and preoccupations of their more mundane, banausic activities. This phenomenon

has received the fullest analysis to date in Jürgen Habermas' impressive study of the structure of "the public sphere". As Habermas indicates, the community in question was constituted by the activity of discussion. This development was virtually unprecedented. A community constituted by discussion was likely to conceive of the world as a predominantly verbal activity. Such a community was also prone to attach to its argumentation a peculiar potency to influence and alter the state of things; it tended to conceive of *lexis* (the activity of talking) as *praxis*, or action. The way in which the intellectual community was formed and sustained goes a long way towards explaining its specifically intellectual bias in favour of thought as well as its latent tendency to play down the limits imposed upon the potential of thought, definition, motive, or will by elements of reality which resisted being "verbalised away".[11]

There were other features of the group-constitutive debate which help us to understand the conception of the social world as a battle of ideologies. The intellectual debate was seen as being waged outside the context of those mundane, self-interested concerns which engaged the participants at other times in their capacity as "private persons"—as household heads, property managers, breadwinners. An invisible wall seemed to rise between the two roles the participants played in their lives. They entered debate as private persons, but the debate required—and implied by the sheer fact of being carried out as a debate— that the rules which governed their private actions were to be declared irrelevant for the duration of the debate. In consequence, the dependencies which so evidently confined their freedom in mundane life seemed (counterfactually) to stop short of the debating chamber. If debate were to go on and pursue its declared objective—the conviction of truth—then the participants were to be forced to agree not to recognise their external constraints. They were to relate to each other solely through arguments aimed at common themes. Whatever relative superiority emerged during the debate was supposed to be fully explicable in reference to the strength of the argument advanced; no other criteria of superiority or inferiority were allowed. Social position, status, power connections and other properties which constituted the private identities of the participants were either silenced or proclaimed unrelated to the topic at hand. The politics of equality provided the experiential basis from which the ideas of "species being", "man as such", "the essence of man" or, indeed, "pure reason", were perpetually generated.

As might be expected, the fictitous assumptions and the counterfactual rules of the debate which constituted the intellectual mode of life were first applied and entrenched in fields relatively remote from the concerns of daily life; or, rather, in those fields which were only weakly controlled by the powers-that-be, and which were therefore capable of being easily annexed and self-governed. Such fields came to be known in the eighteenth century as "art" or, sometimes, "culture". It was over these weakest links in the chain of established power that the debating public first asserted its authority, establishing an early prototype of the "Yenan republic" in which it could deploy and test its own rules. Debating societies, salons, cafés, were simultaneously the conquered territories and invad-

ing armies. What came to be known as culture was a hypostatized mode of life that these armies administered within their territories. Inasmuch as art and culture had been constituted (as had everything else conceived within the intellectual mode) as "meaningful" or "significant"—and not merely useful or efficient—objects and actions, they were seen to be natural and undisputed domains of intellectual authority. Since rarely challenged by alternative powers, art and culture appeared to be administered by the rules of argumentative consensus. Their evaluation seemed to claim no other ground but that of an achieved consensus always renewable in a free debate between equals. It was this quality of consensus-producing debate—its purity and freedom from foreign contaminants—which was generalised as the philosophical principle of objectivity of judgment. As John Stuart Mill was to say, "[the] beliefs which we have most warrant for, have no safeguard to rest on, but a standing invitation to the whole world to prove them unfounded".[12]

This valuation of objectivity seemed safe and sound in a debate which was the whole world; it was less secure in a world which refused to be a debate. If intellectuals were ever to use in wider battles the armour forged by the smithy of cultural argument, if they were ever to move beyond the confines of their "Yenan republic", they had to confront the task of re-negotiating fields other than culture—fields like economics or politics, which were under the control of different authorities, but which were nevertheless capable of being conquered by terms similar to those already worked out for the articulation of the domain of art and culture.

Naturally, the intellectual mode of life complete with its counterfactual assumptions served as the starting point of this re-negotiation. The substance of the re-negotiation was the universal extension of the principle of objectivity, which was understood to be the monopoly of argumentative consensus in the grounding of legitimate beliefs. The principle of objectivity demanded, for example, a rejection of the principle *cuius regio, eius religio*. It militated against the criteria of individual or group utility. It was, in essence, conceptualised in opposition to any non-intellectual power over the authority of argument. The moment the intellectual mode of life stepped over the boundary of its proper, self-administered enclave, its matter-of-fact, unproblematic rules of consensus reached the level of conscious articulation in such oppositions as objectivity and bias, reason and interest, universal truth and selfish ends. The various opposites all reflected the new experience of a resistance of alien forms of power to authority grounded in the intellectual way.

For a community constituted by discussion and argument, all other groups or structures appear as so many obstacles to the smooth unraveling of argumentative consensus. The limits imposed on intellectually administered authority are experienced as the stubbornness of counter-beliefs; as unwholesome and obstinate ideas which would not stand that test, which was binding within the "liberated territory" of argument. This amazing refractoriness of not-properly-grounded beliefs could be understood only as an effect of the breaching of rules which, if applied, would soon disclose these beliefs' groundlessness. This self-

understanding of argumentation preceded inquiry; as such, it was immune to the test of refutation. Each successive failure to stamp out the beliefs which did not pass muster was seen as another confirmation that the understanding was correct and "objective" in the first place.

The idea of breaching the rules brings the rules themselves up to the level of consciousness. The counterfactual assumptions which underlay the exercise of authority inside the intellectual community were now codified into a set of stipulations which the world at large was supposed to observe. This codification took the form of the vision of "undistorted communication". Given this name quite recently by Jürgen Habermas, this vision in its essence has been upheld for a very long time in a variety of circles: in post-Marxian diagnoses of false consciousness; in claims about the ideological impact of daily life or state ideological apparatuses; in Weber's concept of the ideal type, which postulated the possibility of knowledgeable actors rationally pursuing their interests; and, more generally, in the universal belief that ignorance equals error and that error derives from the insufficient control of reason over conduct. In this sense, Habermas' vision of "undistorted communication" crowns some two centuries of negotiation guided by the intellectualist utopia of the world re-made after the pattern of intellectual community, a world organised as an unbridled debate and grounded on the principles of equality, power of argument and the openness of consensus to scrutiny and criticism.

The two successive meanings commonly attached to the word "ideology" marked (and perhaps still mark) the role assigned to the secular powers-that-be in bringing about the realisation of this intellectualist utopia. Sometimes these powers have been trusted as the major levers of change; sometimes they are cast, in disappointment, into the role of villains of the piece, i.e., as the very source and agent of ignorance. The most dramatic changes in the perception of political authority have not, however, modified the essential features of this world-view. On the contrary, the continuity of this *Weltanschauung* organised by the intellectualist utopia is the very condition which makes feasible the above-mentioned fluctuations of meaning of the concept of ideology.

The perception of the world as a battle between reason and error—as a "civilising" struggle of reason against passion, of true against false interests, of needs against wants—reserves the word "ideology" for either side of the barricade and articulates men and women as bundles of motives. These motives are represented as the principal objects of social action. Action upon motives, aimed at their alteration, is articulated as the main lever of social change as such, indeed—for all practical intents and purposes—as social change itself. By the same token, individuals, groups or institutions devoted to the dissemination of ideas and thus acting upon motives, are cast in the role of the subjects of change—as its principal initiators and agents. Among such individuals, groups or institutions a special role is allocated to those who have a privileged access to reason and operate reliable methods of correcting erroneous judgments. In a world conceived as a permanent "learn in" or "teach in" session, such individuals, groups or institutions are related to the rest of society after the pattern of

teachers.

The concept of ideology belongs, in sum, to the rhetoric of power. It is in full harmony with the modern form of power as a disciplining force. But within this modern form it articulates the power struggle as seen from the perspective of the intellectual mode of life. In its pragmatic repercussions, the concept of ideology articulates the intellectualist bid for authority; it conceptualises the world in a way which locates the intellectuals alongside the strategic boundaries where problems, interests and programmes are delineated and verbalised. To conclude in this way is not to draw conclusions about the cognitive usefulness of the concept of ideology. The concept, as I have tried to show, is interwoven with the type of social reality it attempts to capture. It was born as a response to a new historical situation and then became a factor in promoting one of its resolutions. The question of "cognitive relevance" in the sense of truth as correspondence does not, therefore, arise. What has been emphasised—in opposition to many recent and highly fashionable denunciations of the theory of ideology—is that the questioning of the concept of ideology makes sense only as the questioning of the specific socio-historical constellation with which the concept has been inextricably intertwined. This constellation of disciplinary power is an historical development which the "ideological" perspective takes for granted: it "naturalises" its products and never looks beyond the universe which it has constituted. Conservative or radical in its current political applications, the perspective of ideology is bound to remain within the horizon drawn by a social system in which the asymmetry of power is the indispensable vehicle of social reproduction.

Within this horizon, no doubt, the ideological perspective tends to illuminate some aspects of social reproduction better than others. Among the factors confining and channelling human agency and its choices, it brings to light pressures variously called "socialization", "cultural influences", "distorted communication", "propaganda", "linguistic deprivation", or "false consciousness". Yet it leaves pre-discursive practices of bodily drill in the shadows. Inadvertently, the perspective of ideology translates the political issue of the relationship between the controllers and the controlled into the theoretical issue of the relationship between enlightened reason and ignorant superstition.

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Notes

1. Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* (London, 1974), p. 44.

2. Cf. Georges Duby, *L'économie rurale et la vie des campagnes dans l'occident mediéval* (Paris, 1962), p. 98.

3. Michel Foucault, *Power and Knowledge* (Brighton, 1980), p. 104.

4. Robert Muchembled, *Culture populaire et culture des élites dans la France moderne (XVe -$XVII^e$ siècles)* (Paris, 1978); Stephen and Eileen Yeo (eds.), *Popular Culture and Class Conflict* (Brighton, 1981).

5. Cf. Paul Clavel, *Les mythes fondateurs des sciences sociales* (Paris, 1980), p. 38: "the rationalists of the 17th century knew that man cannot be fully reduced to reason....Between the order of reason and this of drives and passions, there was an abyss. An individual incapable of conforming to the advice of his judgment leads a dissolute life and creates disorder which society must contain. Nobody doubted that people can behave like animals....If man's ways cannot be amended, the only solution is to isolate him from the society he threatens. The age of reason was also an age of confinement".

6. Lucien Febvre et al., *Civilisation. Le mot et l'idée* (Paris, 1930), pp. 9-10 and the note on p. 48.

7. Quoted after Harry C. Payne, *The Philosophes and the People* (New Haven, 1976), p. 29.

8. Emmet Kennedy, *Destutt de Tracy and the Origins of "Ideology"* (Philadelphia, 1978), p. 47.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 68.

10. Lewis Coser, *Men of Ideas* (Glencoe, Ill., 1970), p. viii.

11. Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1962).

12. J.S. Mill, *On Liberty* (London, 1884), p. 72.