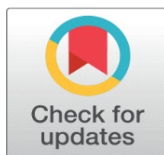
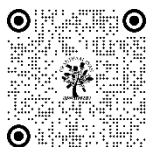


CONCEPT OF IDEOLOGY: VIEWS OF MAJOR POLITICAL THINKERS

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the meaning, functions and characteristics of ideology. According to Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy, ideology was a study of the process of forming ideas and a science of ideas. Two aspects of his theories should be noted. The first is materialism thought and the second is Social and political improvement. Ideology performs many functions that is solidarity and mobilization, organization, expression, manipulation, communication and affect. Ideology arises in conditions of crisis and in sections of society. It has a broad but varying scope and is a systematic pattern of political thought. Political ideologies are divided into statuesque ideologies, revolutionary ideologies and reformist ideologies. Major scholars such as Karl Marx, Michael Oakeshott, Althusser, Herbert Marcuse, Habermas, Antonio Gramsci, Lukac, Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington's views of ideologies are highlighted here. Marx used the term ideology in two interrelated senses, first idealism and second an apologetic body of thought. For Marx, a society is characterized by two types of ideology, namely the dominant and the subordinate. Michael Oakeshott says that an ideology is an abridgement of a tradition. His statements about ideology occur in Political Education. In Althusser's view ideology represents an imaginary distortion of the real relations of individuals to the relations of production, and to the relations that derive from them. Marcuse analyses the three constitutive components of the totalitarian ideology - universalism, naturalism and political existentialism. According to Habermas, ideologies are a set of beliefs that dissolve when they are called into question since they are maintained only by restricting systematically free and public discourse. Lukac's study of ideology, history and class consciousness is equally concerned with the problem of mediation and relativism. Francis Fukuyama is also quite right in asserting that the notion of human progress is not outdated. Samuel Huntington has argued that the world is moving into a period of clash civilization, in which the primary identification of people will not be ideological, as during the Cold War, but cultural. People separated by ideology but united by culture come together. Ideologies from the First to the Third World are also included here.

Keywords: Ideology, Statuesque Ideology, Revolutionary Ideology, Reformist Ideology, Solidarity and Mobilization, Manipulation, Dialectical Materialism, Infrastructure and Superstructure, State and Revolution, Universalism, Hegemony, Clash of Civilization

DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i3.2024.3932](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i3.2024.3932)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The meaning of the word 'Ideology' is frequently debated. Several definitions have been suggested, and each has been challenged and contradicted. Indeed, political scientists cannot agree on whether ideology is a positive, negative or neutral feature of modern society. It is generally agreed that the French used the term ideology in the early Nineteenth Century¹, but we do not know for sure who coined it. Most of the evidence, however, indicates that the word 'ideology' was first used on 23 May 1797 by the French theorist Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy². Writing at the turn of the nineteenth century, he used the word ideology in his systematic study of the enlightenment³. Like other thinkers of his

time, De Tracy believed that people could use science to improve social and political conditions. To him, ideology was a study of forming ideas and a “science of ideas”.

Two aspects of his theories should be noted. The first is materialism thought, which according to De Tracy, is stimulated by material things only, and the formation of an idea is a physical rather than a spiritual or mystical process. The second important aspect of De Tracy's thought is that social and political improvement was its main goal. De Tracy wanted to apply the knowledge developed from his “science of ideas” to the whole society and thereby attempt to improve human life⁴. Thus, ideology has been closely associated with politics from the beginning. In the 1950's liberal writers saw ideology as essentially explicit, consciously coherent and systematic. Ideology was seen as a form of 'secular religion' and associated with fanaticism⁵.

The term ideology has several meanings and connotations⁶. One meaning is that of “deception”, “distortion”, or “falseness”. Ideology may relate also to the complex of ideas and values and beliefs that bind only a certain group or a given number of individuals. Many ideologies coexist and very often are in conflict. In one and the same society there may be many particular ideologies mobilizing different groups and individuals for different purposes. An ideology consists of a set of ideas and beliefs through which we perceive the outside world and act upon our information. It is a medium through which we try to learn and comprehend the world; but it also generates emotions, which hold people together. Finally, ideologies are action-oriented⁷.

The Liberal school periodically argues that ideology is an illusion; a set of value judgements that have not been subject to rational scrutiny⁸. However, Marxists have always asserted that ideology is deception: a soul-destroying 'false consciousness'. It is any theory which guides or acts effectively in the interest of the bourgeoisies. To conservatives, the hallmark of an ideology is an attempt to impose a rational systematic plan on society⁹.

All ideology performs many distinct functions¹⁰. Firstly, Solidarity and Mobilization is a common sharing of ideas integrates individuals in to a group, a party or a movement. All ideologies perform the function of unifying, integrating and giving a sense of identity to those who share it, but with varying degrees of success. All political movements and all political parties provide a sense of common purpose and common action. Secondly, Organization exists when people perform different roles and functions to accomplish a given end. The end is a common goal commonly perceived by the participants. Ideology imbues the members with a common purpose and encourages them to perform the designated tasks. Expression is another function. Ideology provides a vehicle to express our wants, our interests and hopes, and even our personal drives and anxieties. Any ideology can provide a form of expression, and usually brings like-minded people together. Fourthly, Manipulation of idea involves the conscious and deliberate formulation of propositions, which will incite people to action for ends that are perceived clearly only by those who are in power. Manipulation is very close to propaganda and there is virtually no political system that does not practice both, sometimes in good faith and sometimes in bad. Another function is Communication. A coherent body of ideology shared by a given number of people makes communication among them much easier. Ideologies simplify communication and make common effort easier for all those who accept them. Finally, affect is the function of all ideologies and is expected to provide emotional attachment. People are proud of their ideas and proud of each other and all these who share them.

We may divide political ideologies into three broad but distinct categories¹¹. Firstly, those that defend and rationalize the existing economic, social and political order at any given time in any given society. We may call them status quo ideologies. Another term would be conservative, but this might be misleading since quite a few status quo ideologies are not always considered to be conservative. Secondly, ideologies that advocate far-reaching changes in the existing social, economic and political order. We may call them radical or revolutionary ideologies. Thirdly, in between there is, of course, a large gray area favoring gradual changes called reformist ideologies.

2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF IDEOLOGY

Firstly, ideology arises in conditions of crisis and in sections of society to whom the hitherto prevailing outlook has become unacceptable. Secondly, ideology has a broad but varying scope. It ranges in its horizontal dimension, from partial explanations to comprehensive 'world views'. Thirdly, ideology is a systematic pattern of political thought. It is not a body of scattered ideas, but is an ordered arrangement of pertinent and logically related ideas offering an explanation and vision of human destiny. Fourthly, ideology includes both empirical and normative elements. Fifthly ideology tends to be exclusive, absolute, and universal. Sixthly ideology is a persuasive argument designed normally to motivate active involvement. Fifthly, ideology tends to be exclusive, absolute, and universal. Sixthly, ideology is a

persuasive argument designed normally to motivate active involvement. Seventhly, ideology is personalized and scripturalized, having its heroes (founding fathers and great interpreters, charismatic leaders and martyrs), sacred documents (manifestos, declarations, constitutions), and rituals (pledges, anthems, salutes, holidays). Finally, ideology undergoes development but is resistant to fundamental change¹².

Ideology has been exploited politically in our times for at least four purposes¹³. It has been used to bring and hold together a disciplined group able to take quick advantage of changing circumstances to achieve power. It has been used to induce people to make great sacrifices for causes, which have meant much more to their leaders than to them. It has been used to extend the power of a government or other organized body outside the country or countries in which it already has power also been used inside a party or other organization by people endeavoring to get or to retain control of it.

Marx used the term ideology in two interrelated senses; first idealism and second an apologetic body of thought¹⁴. Marx held that an ideology is a body of ideas systematically biased towards particular social group. For Marx a society is characterized by two types of ideology, namely the dominant and the subordinate¹⁵. The dominant ideology articulates and generalizes the forms of thought of the dominant social class. The subordinate ideologies articulate and generalize the forms of thought of the other social groups. An ideology, then, is a systematically and socially based body of thought. Marx's theory of ideology involves two related but logically distinct types of inquiry, namely a critique and a critical and a sociological inquiry. A critique aims to demonstrate that a body of thought is an ideology.

3. A PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

According to Marx, men and women are both the product of history, bound by the conditions it creates, and also the makers of history in reacting to those conditions and changing them. Marx maintains the dialectic: he maintains the whole scheme of historical movement in terms of thesis-antithesis-synthesis.

3.1. DIALECTIC MATERIALISM

This is what in contrast to "dialectic idealism" has become known as dialectic materialism¹⁶. The stages of historical development, the specific content of a thesis, an antithesis and a synthesis are not to be found in the not-so-easily observable world of ideas but in the empirical world- in our society. There are two types of conflicts according to Marx, the first between the human being as a social being (society) and the environment (the outside world). The second is between human social groups. The second conflict is that among individuals and groups in one and the same society. It is highly structured. The conflict is between classes: it is a class struggle. The word 'class' has been used to define nobility, riches, education, intellect and other characteristics of certain groups.

3.2. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPERSTRUCTURE

In the constant class struggle that corresponds to various historical stages, human beings develop particular forms of property but also change them. For each phase there is a particular set of ideas and norms, and these correspond to and are fashioned by the interests of the property owning class. Capitalists have a set of ideas about society and the world, which correspond to their interests and to their dominance. The workers in turn begin to develop theirs to express their needs and interests.

4. THE THEORY OF THE STATE AND REVOLUTION

The basic assumptions of the nature of State are firstly, the State is not a "natural" but a man made institution. Secondly, it is the product of the class struggle, an instrument of class rule. Thirdly, the basis of the State is force. Marx said, 'the State is a parasite feeding upon, and clogging free movement of society¹⁷.' Fourthly, the State forms a part of the superstructure that rises upon the productive forces. The form of the government undergoes a change whenever there is change in the mode of production. Fifthly, the law of the State i.e. Bourgeois State is subtle and poisoned instrument which defends the interest of the exploiters'. Sixthly, the political institutions of the State constitute a "machine to crush and repress the toilers".

The revolution is not, according to Marx, a matter of will, indignation or even leadership. Conditions, both objective and subjective, must be ripe. The workers had to gain freedom from their oppressors, therefore, by force. They must gain full consciousness that they are a class and they must demand the change in the existing property relations¹⁸. Marx provides a two-stage scheme of the Communist Society. The first corresponds to the transitional stage towards socialism, and the second is the ultimate one, the utopian level of communism.

5. VIEWS OF OTHER SCHOLARS

The fullest elaboration of Michael Oakeshott's views on the State of Politics occurs in his essay 'Rationalism in Politics'. His statements about ideology occur in 'Political Education'. Michael Oakeshott says that an ideology is an abridgement of a tradition¹⁹. He uses the term ideology to refer to a form of thinking that constantly inhibits or disrupts rational political activity²⁰. For Michael Oakeshott, science is only one idiom of understanding among many. Human knowledge is not the mother of practice, but only its step-child²¹. Michael Oakeshott's argument that the rule of law in a civil Society is not that of promoting general welfare or any other similar obstruction (such as Fundamental rights), but rather of securing the conditions in which persons may themselves contract in to a mutually chosen activities. Michael Oakeshott's conception of civil association identifies the most essential ingredient in 'Liberalism'.

Althusser's contribution to the study of ideologies is the conception that the basic function of all ideology is to interpolate and constitute individuals as subjects²². This essay is situated in a particular theoretical conjuncture conjecture of Marxist discourse on ideology opened by Althusser in his essay 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses'. First, Althusser conceptualized the operation of ideology in terms of the formation of human subjectivity, thus linking Marxist social theory to psychodynamics and psychoanalysis. Second, he broke with the tradition of viewing ideology as a body of ideas or thought, conceiving it instead as a social process of address, or 'interpellations', inscribed in material social matrices. In Althusser's view ideology represents an imaginary distortion of the real relations' of individuals to the relations of production, and to the relations that derive from them. Althusser has presented the basic functioning of all ideology as a quadruple system involving: the interpellation of "individuals" as subjects; their subjection to the subject; the mutual recognition of subjects and subjects, the subject's recognition of each other, and finally the subject's recognition of himself; the guarantee that everything is so, and that on condition that the subjects recognize what they are and behave accordingly, everything will be all right²³.

Marcuse attempted to re-examine and develop the Marxian project to make it more relevant to the particular situation and problems. Marcuse's works have been concerned for liberation and revolution; these concepts are hysterical categories for him that are related to specific social contexts and different situations²⁴. In his work, Marcuse stresses liberation from various socio-historical forces and proposes different strategies and goods for social transformation. Through this historical-genetic perspective, Marcuse's thought can be read as a philosophical articulation and explanation of the major historical and political transformations in the century of revolution and counter-revolution. Marcuse's argument is that the totalitarian State and its ideology respond to a new era of monopoly capitalism and provide a defence of capitalism against crises engendered by its market system and protection against opposition to the system. Marcuse analyses the three constitutive components of the totalitarian ideology - 'universalism', 'naturalism' and 'political existentialism'. Universalism maintains a priority and primacy of the whole over its "members" (parts) claiming that the whole is a living, organic unity and that the destiny of its members is to serve the whole, and to fulfil themselves through participation.

According to Habermas, ideologies are a set of beliefs that dissolve when they are called in to question since they are maintained only by restricting systematically free and public discourse²⁵.

Gramsci uses the concept of hegemony to describe a modern State, and it is indeed an integral part of the very definition of a modern State and arises from the development of modern society²⁶. It was not a part of ancient or feudal society. Gramsci uses the concept of hegemony in three ways. First, about the concept of history. Second, Gramsci uses the concept of hegemony to describe the various modes of social control available to the dominant social group. Third, he emphasized that the bourgeoisie in 'modern' democratic Western societies maintain power primarily through consensual or hegemonic control. The intellectuals are the dominant groups, 'deputies' exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government. In modern conditions, it is the party, which finds the State. According to Gramsci, the link between old and new society is provided by the political party. Using Machiavelli's language, Gramsci calls the political party "the modern prince". The party is the result of historical development and

contains the germs of collective will striving to become universal and total. The party is the preacher and organizer of intellectual and moral freedom. The party, Gramsci believed, should be dedicated to a revolutionary ideology²⁷. The political party is precisely the mechanism which carries out in civil society the same function as the State carries out more synthetically and over a large scale in political society.

Lukac's study of ideology, history and class-consciousness is equally concerned with the problem of mediations and relativism. He adopts a concept of interest as the basic factor in the determination of 'truth' or 'falsity'. He argues that the proletariat simultaneously constitutes the subject and the object of History - the proletariat simultaneously constitutes the subject and the object of History - the proletariat is the knowing subject which approaches truth through its awareness that history's mission for it is none other than the liberation of all men from capitalist alienation. Both proletariat and bourgeoisie share a similar social reality capitalism. Proletarian thought is self-knowledge of its concrete historical situation and the necessary historical changes, which this consciousness implies. Proletarian knowledge is in essence a rejection of the immediately given social structure in favor of 'real' and 'true' historical change.

Francis Fukuyama is also quite right in asserting that the notion of human progress is not outdated. Certainly terms of science and technology in general, styles of life, material and social culture and human freedom and development of human individuality, humanity has been making progress, despite setbacks on the way²⁸. The concept of rationality or the role of reason in the development of human society is under attack for the last hundred years or more. Fukuyama divides rationality into western rationality and non-western rationality. Fukuyama clearly defines liberal democracy as capitalist democracy or democracy based on capitalism.

As we approach the twenty first Century a remarkable convergence of political and economic institutions has taken place around the world. Earlier in this century ideological cleavages divided the world's societies. Monarchy, Fascism, liberal democracy, and communism were bitter competitors for political supremacy, while different countries chose the divergent economic paths of protectionism, corporatism, the free market, and socialist centralized planning. Today virtually all advanced countries have adopted, or are trying to adopt, liberal democratic political institutions, and a great number simultaneously moved in the direction of market oriented economies and integration into the global capitalist division of labour. He argued this movement constitutes "an end of History", in the Marxist Hegelian sense of history as a broad evolution of human societies advancing toward a final goal²⁹.

Samuel Huntington has argued that the world is moving into a period of 'clash civilization', in which the primary identification of people will not be ideological, as during the Cold War, but cultural. People separated by ideology but united by culture come together, as the two Germanys did and as the two Koreas are beginning to. Societies united by ideology or historical circumstances but divided by civilization either come apart, as did the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Bosnia or are subjected to intense strain, as is the case with Ukraine, Nigeria, Sudan, India, Sri Lanka and many others³⁰. Accordingly, conflict is likely to arise not among fascism, socialism, and democracy but among the world's major cultural groups: Western, Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu and so on³¹.

6. IDEOLOGIES FROM THE FIRST TO THE THIRD WORLD

The historical and political reasons for the special effect of Western ideologies on the Third World and their modification are obvious. They were adopted, used and further developed as theories of resistance against Western colonial regimes, as patterns of intellectual opposition, of civil disobedience and finally of a liberation struggle. In Asia, the idea of three very different leaders, have governed the development of three great States: the Communist Mao Tse-tung in China, the nationalist Sukarno (1901-70) ³² in Indonesia, and Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948), the philosopher of non-violent resistance, in India. The Communist ideology of Maoism initially aimed at alignment with the Soviet Union, but subsequently with increasingly specific objectives of its own, sought to promote the revolutionisation of the Third World. Sukarno and Gandhi's successor Nehru, developed a philosophy of neutrality between East and West, which ultimately led to the movement of non-aligned countries. Tito's Communist Yugoslavia, having defected from Moscow, and Nasser's national dictatorship in Egypt gave their support to this orientation in international politics, an orientation which claimed to unite in itself the socialist idea of anti-colonial liberation and the idea of national democratic self-determination.

Whereas Mao's ideology focused on collectivism, class struggle and people's struggle, it was the concept of 'guided democracy' in Sukarno's nationalist liberation theory that acquired special significance for political beliefs in the new countries³³. A third type, embodied chiefly in the development of Indian democracy, finally gained stature and prestige

from the worldwide role played first by Gandhi's political-religious liberation philosophy and subsequently by the policy of neutrality pursued by Nehru.

The connection between politics and religion pronounced in the development of political thought in the Islamic world. The strengthening or weakening of the religious component has been of very considerable importance. This has been shown, ever since the twenties, by the new Turkey under Kemal Ataturk, even though it has been successful in assimilating Western democracy. Modernist development dictatorship clashes, also in its ideological claims, with Islamic doctrines of government, have been witnessed in Iran. Most importantly, however, the real Arabic heartlands are characterized by a permanent political and ideological conflict between the individual States' Power Politics and the pan-Arab concept of an 'Arab nation'.

The two most important instances are the more secularly ideological claim to leadership by the Egyptian dictator Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-70) and the fervently nationalistic anti-imperialist stance, inspired by rigorous Islamic missionary ideas, of the Libyan dictator Muhammad al-Gaddafi, both of them doomed to failure in real political terms but advanced with a considerable ideological change. The Islamic potential has, at the same time, the problem of the adaptation of a deeply rooted traditional religion to the secular trends of modernization. It reflects the difficulties arising from a combination of Western civilization influences and ideas on the one hand and native cultural traditions on the other. In consequence the development of a democratic concept has been less successful in the Islamic world than anywhere else.

The history of political thought in the Third world in most cases shrinks to a string of propaganda statements by liberation leaders. Nasser's 'Philosophy of Revolution' of 1952 admittedly is an early instance of a non-Marxist concept of socialism, but in spite of its further evolution based on a mono-party system and the goal of an 'Arab Socialist Union' (1962), and despite its radical policy of expropriation of foreign companies, most memorably over the Suez Canal, and of its clamorous anti-Israeli course, it never really acquired a clear political profile. Under his successor, Anwar El Sadat, the policy then developed into a moderate authoritarian system with leanings towards the West³⁴.

The case of the short-lived attempt made by General Ayub Khan in Pakistan to introduce land reform and establish a system of 'grassroots democracy' using a state-of-emergency dictatorship, was also in the name of modernization of Islamic social and state theory. Ayub Khan's ideological declarations of 1959-60 were much more strongly oriented towards actual cooperation with the West, but this did not rule out a subsequent intensification of relations with China³⁵. However, the numerous versions of 'Arab nationalism' differed so much in the various member countries of the Arab League (founded 1945), from Iraq to Morocco, that the idea more often resulted in political and ideological conflict than in unity; frequently hostility to Israel was only effective common bond.

The 'Islamic Socialism' since 1969 of the Libyan military dictator Gaddafi and the Iranian revolution of the Shiite religious leader Khomeini since 1979 demonstrate the unexpected political and ideological pattern which may arise from the clash of traditionalism and modernization, of Islamic and Socialist ideas³⁶. Unlike Asia and the Arab countries, the new States of Africa had neither a common religion nor a pre-set political ideology to guide them. It is there that we witness the fiercest clash between transferred forms of government from the colonial era and emphatically progressive socialist-nationalist ideas with traditional cultural and social ties, which cleared the way for strong individualism. Three main types of liberation and governmental ideologies may be distinguished³⁷. First, a moderate authoritarian pro-western social-national doctrine with an emphasis on a specific African character as represented especially in Senegal by Leopold Sedar Senghor [born 1906]. The second type is a radical theory of democratic dictatorship with occasional pro-communist leanings and influences, seen initially in Sekou Toure, the dictator of Guinea, and his colleague in Mali, Modiboketa, with his defence of the United Party and the unified party system.

In the other region of the Third World, in Latin America, the conditions for the formation of political ideas are again very different, even though the problems of development and modernization are entirely comparable. The strong European character of the cultural and political elites, which followed the classic dispute between left-wing and right-wing ideologies, contrast sharply with underdeveloped structures of society and State, which have been preserved in their late colonial forms. Christian - democratic, socialist and communist doctrines are facing realities marked by wealthy large-scale land ownership and a poor rural population, by uneven industrialization and strong foreign influence on the economy³⁸.

However, the intellectual argument about reform or revolution has remained fierce, following Castro's rise under the banner of emphatic 'anti-imperialism' the argument gave a new impetus to ideologization. Terrorism and guerrilla warfare also found particularly articulate intellectual support in Latin America during the sixties; from there its influence

went out to the European Left's debate on violence and terrorism. Ideological conflicts reached a particular peak in connection with the rise and overthrow of the radical regime of the Socialist Allende in Chile. Since then Latin America's intermediate position between the West and the developing countries of Asia and Africa has emerged mainly in an intensified human rights debate and in the role of the Church which, traditionally conservative, is greatly agitated by the discussion of social problems and by the upsurge of liberation theology.

The Liberal democratic regimes (originally mainly in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Costa Rica) enabled their populations to enjoy a higher standard of living, while traditionally more dictatorial States (like Haiti, Bolivia and Paraguay) exhibited the lowest socio-economic standards. Even the special case of Cuba, which before Castro's revolution was one of the most highly developed countries, contrary to its communist propaganda, has not been nearly as successful as a development regime as it has been as a system of oppression as proved by the most recent flight of its population in 1980, a flight which has socio-economic as much as political motives 39.

The twentieth century has been declared the "Age of Ideology", apparently to distinguish it from prior centuries. Ideology has become the core of many cultures and the organizing principle of societies in distress. Ideology in the context of social movement has to be treated not merely as a framework of consciousness, but also as a source of legitimizing actions.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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