IDEOLOGY: A COMMENTARY ON A DEFINITION[1]

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Abstract

In this piece, I write a commentary on a one sentence definition of ideology which is provided us by the late American political philosopher Gerhart Niemeyer. The sentence contains four clauses, and I explore, in a theoretical fashion, the meaning of each clause. I support the theoretical part with a large number of reference points from the contemporary scene and from the literature on ideology.

Keywords

art, control, ideology, modernity, philosophy, second reality, technology.

In a work whose publication almost went unnoticed at the time of its appearance in 1971, and that is almost never read today, the late American political philosopher, Gerhart Niemeyer (1907-1997), wrote the following about ideology:

> The term 'ideological' refers to the subordination of contemplative theory [*theoria*] to the *libido dominandi*, which manifests itself in the building of closed systems around dogmatically willed 'positions,' in reductionism of both scope and materials of analysis, and in the determination to substitute an intellectually fabricated 'Second Reality' [See also Heimito von Doderer, *The Demons*] for the reality given to man.[2]

This is unquestionably one of the most compact and philosophically refined definitions of 'ideology' available in the literature on 'ideology,' and it is one of the most interesting as well.[3] While it is not stated explicitly, this definition of 'ideology' is largely, although not exclusively,[4] beholden to the theorising of the late Austrian-American political philosopher Eric Voegelin (1901-1985). Let us look closely at each one of the four clauses composing this definition, with a view to extracting as much of what is contained in each as is possible.

1. 'The term "ideological" refers to the subordination of contemplative theory [theoria] to the libido dominandi ,...'

The point of this introductory clause is to introduce and draw the reader's attention to the most important difference between philosophy and ideology, namely, the fact that 'ideological thinking' is at odds with Plato's and Aristotle's understanding of *theoria* and *epistémé*, ...at odds, it must be said, in a very specific way. It informs us that ideological thinking is driven, not by a desire to know the world

about us as *it is given to us*, but rather by a desire to *dominate, control and eventually transform it*, even before knowing it, along lines that are designed by the ideologist's fertile and creative imagination. In other words, the ideologist is someone who, from the start, is not accepting of *the given*. He is someone who does not first seek to know, and then to act. Rather, he is someone who first seeks to shape and transform, according to some inner need, some emotionally driven and deeply unsettling criteria, before knowing whether, and to what extent, shaping and transforming is appropriate and right, ...for he secretly, and, in many cases, not so secretly, doubts that there is anything for him to know or to be right about before he first transforms, shapes and creates. Prior to the ideologist's dominating, controlling and transforming, the world – if one can speak of the world at all here – is an indistinguishable and perhaps even disorderly mass, for the ideologist. It is an available plasticity needing definition. Simply put, it is the raw material on which he, the ideological thinker, will apply his art.[5]

In order to understand better what is at issue here, it may be appropriate to reflect on a passage from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. It will be recalled that Aristotle, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI, defines 'theoretical knowledge' (*epistémé theoretiké*) as being the knowledge of what is, as it really and truly is, i.e., as it is given to us, independently of and unmediated by our thought processes. The idea here is that man can be said to have theoretical knowledge when, and only when, the mind of man conforms to the given, i.e., the *reality* of the thing on which the mind is focussed often outside of the mind – but not necessarily outside of the mind[6] – such that it can be said that there is a similitude between what is resident in the mind concerning what is outside the mind, and what really is outside of the mind, i.e., other. The situation is such that one might say that there is either a one for one relationship, or there is as close to being a one for one relationship as it is possible to achieve, between what *is* and what is known by the mind. Hence, to know the *truth* about something, Aristotle informs us, is to know in this way, i.e., to know the other or the given *as it is*. In fact, *truth* is synonymous with this kind of knowing, for Aristotle, ...and maybe even for the majority of us who, today, still think common-sensically about these matters. And, if it is not synonymous with this understanding of knowing, then truth either has no meaning at all, or it refers only to what is

conventional.[7]

Now, Aristotle concedes that arriving at this kind of knowing and knowledge is admittedly not an easy matter. It requires two things: (a) it requires that the knower be rooted in a particular way of being in the world (a *practice*) that sustains lucidity and saneness, and, (b) it requires the existence or presence of a certain type of predisposition on the part of the knower.

Speaking of the first requirement first: Being rooted in a particular way of being in the world, in a *practice*, means that the knower has to be experienced in the ways of the world, that he or she has a deep familiarity with his or her environment, in the sense that he or she cannot just have come upon the scene as a complete neophyte, and immediately expect to delve into the intricacies of a particular reality. He or she has to have accustomed himself or herself to the peculiarities of the vicinity in which that reality that interests him or her resides. The point here is that revealing the real is not a matter of putting a particular procedural knowledge into operation – i.e., a method for extracting truth – an all too common understanding of how knowledge is acquired today – and then following the programme or procedure through to its end. This sort of proceduralism does not lead to the knowledge of the *true* and the *real*. It leads only to the skilful manipulation of epiphenomena, which, in turn, is designed, in too many instances, just to impress – and unfortunately does impress in our modern environment – in lieu of the development of understanding. Most importantly and worse still – in the case of the human environment, this sort of proceduralism is designed to govern, control and discipline a man's unintended chance encounters with the *real*, and to govern the real's revelation of itself, so that man not notice that the encounter is a consequence of his way of being, or of his *manière d'être*, and not the result of his following some impersonal procedure.[8] And so, for Aristotle, revealing the real is a matter of having no mediating or procedural knowledge in mind at all, designed to govern the encounter, prior to engaging the real, but of having an intimate, profound and practical acquaintance with the subject and its environs, and intuitively knowing when and when not to move in a specific direction.[9]

With reference to the second requirement, it calls for the knower to adopt a *contemplative* attitude for this type of knowing and knowledge to arise. The knower can not begin with what, in the broadest sense, can be defined as an explicitly held unfounded and preconceived understanding of what it means to know, nor, most importantly, can the knower begin with a fixed pre-understanding of what is outside of the mind (i.e., what colloquially is often called 'a take on things,' and sometimes even 'a theory,' which it most definitely is not), and seek to impose or force this unfounded understanding, this 'take,' on the real that he seeks to know outside of the mind. Put simply, the one who would know theoretically cannot force the entity outside of the mind to conform to or render an account of itself based on the exigencies of a 'take' set by the mind of the would-be knower. That is, he cannot reveal the real and the given that is outside of the mind by imposing on this real, this given, the mind's imaginative expectations and coercive interpretations. This is completely self-defeating if the purpose is to know the true and the real as it is. If the knower is to know theoretically and scientifically, he has to be open and receptive to what he has not created and imagined. He has to be fully available to that which he is seeking to understand. He has to be contemplative with respect to 'the clues that are shed by the reality that is to be known,' to use a Polanyian expression.[10] From the start, he has to adopt a contemplative attitude,[11] and not an aggressive attitude, in order for theoretical knowing to take place.[12] In a sense, he has to have entered into a state of expectancy and allow the otherness, i.e., the given – that is often in the world outside the mind, and with which he is attempting to establish contact – in its own good time, *and to the extent that he has properly prepared himself*,[13] to reveal itself to him.[14, 15] Failing that, there can be no theoretical knowing.

This understanding of knowing expresses a Greek classical as well as Mediaeval Scholastic view of knowledge and of reality. It affirms that the world about us is *real*, in the sense that it exists outside of the mind – or if our concern is on something that is within us, then what is within us is real – and it is not our creation, i.e., the creation of our mind or imagination. And, most importantly, it is not available to us to be re-created, *in a wholesale fashion*, according to our hubristic desires. It has an integrity all its own that we either respect, and thereby show that we are wise, or try to ignore, and show that we are fools, i.e., without minds (*anoia*). The Mediaeval Christian and the Christian Mediaevalist would add that this real has been created by God, and is therefore not available for man to alter radically. And like the ancient Greek, the Christian in all ages acknowledges that this real is written on a human scale, in the sense that it is available for contemplative man to know, and that there can be a complicity of sorts between the *real*, the given, and man the knower, ...a complicity that bears fruit and that leads the real to reveal of itself only to the person who adopts the proper contemplative attitude.

In contrast, the non-theoretical enquirer with the 'will to dominate' approaches the knowing process

in an entirely different manner and with an entirely different disposition and spirit. He very much comes upon the scene with an arbitrary preconception or plan in mind,[16] and he attempts to force (i.e., govern and control) *the other* – that is in the realm outside of the mind (or that may be experienced as *distal*, if one is focussed on an aspect of one's body or interiority) – to reveal itself, but not as it is, but as he wants it to be. He has it address, or, in some cases, meet the exigencies of his preconception. He attempts to compel *the other* to reply to his plans and questions. In other words, rather than adopting a contemplative disposition, where thought precedes action, the non-theoretical enquirer is an activist first, inasmuch as action precedes thought. He does not wait for the other to reveal itself by making his a state of patient expectancy. Nor does he attend to the clues that this other issues in his direction. Rather, he approaches the knowing process with the attitude of one who is going to coerce the other (i.e., the real, namely, that which has its own integrity and existence independent of the knower) to reveal itself to him, and the instrument by which he will compel reality to revealing itself is his pre-existent plan or schema, which he may varyingly call a conceptual framework, a model, a paradigm, a pattern, an exemplar, and occasionally even a *theory*, when it is, of course, no such thing. What we see here is the dominating disposition of the non-theoretical enquirer. Reality will be placed on the rack that is the arbitrary preconception of the would-be knower, so to speak, and reality shall speak, we can hear the libidinous enquirer proclaim. It shall speak *his* language and meet *his* exigencies. And should the *other* attempt to express itself and its integrity, he shall not hear it, he shall discipline it, for its murmurings are meaningless gibberish that is beyond comprehension and any acceptable range of human interests and concerns.[17]

We have not arrived at the realm of modern 'ideology' yet, but we are well on the way towards entering the ideological world. What is missing from the above description of things for this world to be 'ideological' in the modern sense is the fact that the non-theoretical thinker still believes that there is a *reality* that is beyond the mind, and that this reality can be revealed by creative inventiveness and ingenuity. His approach to revealing it may not meet with the standards of the contemplative theoretician, but these are standards that ought not to exist anyway for the non-theoretical knower. Simply put, the non-theoretical thinker, described thus far, does not dispute the existence of the *real*. He only presumes that the *real* is more amenable to force than to respect. In fact, it is not amenable to respect at all, as far as the non-theoretical thinker is concerned. However, this is not what the modern ideological thinker holds. In other words, the

modern ideological thinker has yet to appear on the scene. He will appear on the scene when reality itself is doubted, that is, when it is believed that there is no *reality* to begin with, other than the *reality* (actually, it would be more appropriate here to speak of *realities*) that is produced by the 'enquirer' (who is really not an *enquirer*, but a *producer*) when he imposes *his* plan and *his* order on what is now perceived as the presumed 'chaos' that is outside of the mind.[18] [19] [20] And when this happens, the full meaning of 'governing, controlling and disciplining,' i.e., of *libido dominandi* and the *will to power*, will be felt.

Note here that this new conception of a plan is different from the earlier one. The aim of the earlier plan was to force reality to reveal itself, but no one expected that there was no reality to be revealed. However, in this instance, that is to say, in the world of the ideologue, reality is presumed – I would prefer to say *imagined* – to be non-existent, and the point of the plan is not to have reality speak or reveal itself. Rather, the plan is to bring order, i.e., man-made order, to be sure, into a presumed chaotic and orderless environment. The idea here is that the man-made-plan will actually be constitutive of a *reality*.[21] We see this most clearly, it seems, in the realm of modern technology and the society which issues therefrom; ...note, 'technology' and not 'applied science,' as many would have us believe. Technology is concerned with the creation of realities. The modern technologist is the person who approaches the world about him with a plan to impose order on what he perceives to be a wholly plastic and malleable environment, ...an environment that is deemed by him to be in dire need of a plan or design, if it is to be orderly. It is, of course, here that we encounter the 'desire to dominate.' It is here where *libido dominandi* is expressed most forcefully and clearly.[22] The modern technologist wants to dominate, not out of any explicitly held tyrannical propensities, but because he believes that unless he dominates, all is chaos.[23] Indeed, to dominate is the only responsible thing that a 'reasonable' person can do, according to the modern technologist – or should we speak, at this point, of *the ideologist*? – which, by the way, would indeed be true, if, from the start, there were no given, ...no *reality* that man does not author.[24] [25]

2 '...which manifests itself in the building of closed systems around dogmatically willed "positions", ...'

As we have observed above, this plan or schema which we have described as the product of the imaginative and creative genius of a thinker, is not developed under any sort of obligation to 'get it right' – i.e., create a plan that conforms to the given order of things – since it is the thinker's assumption

that there is no possibility of 'getting it right.' The world outside of the mind is entirely malleable and available for authoring. All that needs to be done by any creative genius is for him arbitrarily to posit or will an order into existence. And so, it is possible to say of this plan that it is *dogmatic*, in the sense that it need satisfy nothing other than the planner's imaginative designing and willing; it is *non-referential*, in the sense that there is nothing real for it to refer to; and it is *self-contained*, in that it is sufficient unto itself, hence *closed*. It is also *systemic* as well, because it is designed and understood to deal with or trade in only those things that are within the integrative whole that is brought into being by the creative genius.

Let us explore this matter further. The plan of which Niemeyer and we speak is non-referential because it refers to nothing beyond the confines of the technologist's or ideologist's mind and creative imaginings, because it is presumed that there is nothing for it to refer to beyond the mind; and it is self-contained because it is whole and entire within the mind. What is not part of the plan, simply is not. The plan and its contents are constitutive of what is real and sufficient unto themselves. It is closed in upon itself, in the sense that it need not take account of anything that transcends the mind and the plan, because there is, according to the understanding of the technologist/ideologist, nothing intelligible that transcends the plan, until that something is created by the planner.[26] The plan or schema brings into being everything there is that is intelligible and meaningful for the planner, and there is nothing beyond the plan, ...absolutely nothing that can serve as a reference point to keep the plan on course, so to speak, and inject a note of realism and sanity into the operation.

As a result, we can say that viewed from the perspective of someone who holds that transcendence of the plan is possible, i.e., viewed from the perspective of the contemplative theoretician, of whom Niemeyer speaks, the modern ideological plan or schema is both blind and hostile to all transcending reality, which it sees as an attack on its freedom and creativity. It holds that there is no reason for it to go beyond itself, because it asserts that there is no 'beyond itself' to go to. It communicates with nothing beyond the ideologist's creative self. Of course, this is also why some speak of the ideological plan as delusionally closed, 'delusionally' because, if viewed from the vantage point of the non-ideological thinker who holds that communication with otherness and transcendence of self is possible – indeed, crucial for knowledge to be knowledge – there is no real to reveal itself further, with the passage of time. The ideologist has defined the parameters of his real at the point of creating it. As a consequence, one can say that this pseudo real

is, of necessity, closed off to further development. Moreover, this pseudo ordering of the technologist, this authored order of the ideologist, this 'position,' is not only delusional. It is also sustained by an act of *willing* that can only be described as arbitrarily *dogmatic* when contrasted with the non-arbitrary character of any true knowledge of the given order of things. The pseudo order or 'position' is a capricious imposition on reality, capricious, that is, only to one who has *not* lost all contact with the real and with the given order of things. For those who have lost contact with the given, there is no, and there can be no, awareness of the capriciousness of it all. The capriciousness is concealed from view by the plan, the pseudo order, i.e., the *second reality*.

Notice that what we are saying here is that ideological thinking is a particularly sophisticated form of delusional thinking, which is, in a very deep sense, related to some of the psycho-pathologies which prevent, in varying degrees, depending on the severity of the illness, the ill subject from dealing with reality, and which cause him or her to fabricate an imaginary world, an imaginary reality or realities. These pathologies are perhaps best explored from within the realm of philosophical psychology.[27]

3 '...in reductionism of both scope and materials of analysis,...'

One of the more damaging consequences of having to live in the pseudo order that is this engineered reality (i.e., second reality) fabricated by the ideologist's imagination is that it is never as rich and subtle an order as the given order of things. The reason why it is not as rich or as subtle is because it can be no more subtle than the imaginative capacities of the one who constructs it. Now, admittedly, some imaginations are more subtle than others, but none is as subtle nor as capable of producing the variety and luxuriousness we see as the order that is given. For one thing, men construct on the basis of what is already known, whereas, when the given develops, it is not restricted in its development by what is already known to man. It is restricted only by the inherent potentialities of the given, which is beyond the capacity of the modern ideologist, at any point in time, to know completely or totally. And even if someone's imaginative capacities were almost as subtle and creative as the given's, the fact is that they would not, in either the short or long term, reveal themselves to have unknowingly constructed more than they initially intended to construct.[28] And so, to live in a pseudo order is to live in a collapsed and restricted order, ...indeed, a much more restricted order (world) than the one that is given us. It is to live in the equivalent of a prison of our own making. As a consequence, we can say, while it is initially perhaps interesting, and maybe even entertaining, the imposed world of

the ideologist is ultimately a world that is impoverished by comparison with the order that we experience as given to us. Hence, we ask: Why would anyone want to live in such an environment? Why would anyone want to settle for a hovel, i.e., a caricature of the real, when the luxuriously real is available to us?

What is particularly intriguing here are the consequences of this sort of 'prison life.' Because man cannot eliminate or even indefinitely ignore the given order, eventually a dissonance arises between the imaginatively imposed pseudo order and the order given to man, and this dissonance creates in man something in the nature of a bifurcated experience of the world around him. Man, at one and the same time, is obliged, by his contemporaries – who also may have experienced the dissonance, but who have in some sense committed to the imaginative man-made order, i.e., to prison life – to live in this pseudo order, and yet, he is subsidiarily aware[29] of the presence and the importance of the given order in his life. However, he cannot acknowledge the importance of this given order in the environment in which he finds himself, for, to acknowledge it, would be to challenge and contest this order, which, of course, has its supports and its supporters. And so, the average person represses, as best he can, his awareness that something is awry in the world about him, despite the fact that he does know tacitly, and maybe even explicitly, that something is not quite right. In fact, he may even begins to wonder whether he is maybe not suffering from some sort of cognitive or emotional imbalance, that he may equate with a pathological condition, since, all about him, he sees others who seemingly experience the pseudo order as if it were normal, while he is in a state of doubt, maybe even severe scepticism, as regards this matter. Little does he know that many of neighbours are in the same dissonant state as he, and like him, they dare not speak for fear that they will be set upon by the defenders of what they dimly experience as pseudo. Sadly, he does not realise that almost no one is entirely comfortable with himself or herself, not even those who make a show of believing in the imaginative creations of the ideologists.[30]

Lest someone think that prison life is something that affects man only at the political and societal level, consider the fact that ideological thinking extends even into our intellectual concerns and musings, into the field of epistemology, for example. The pseudo order created by ideological thinking in the field of epistemology expresses itself in a most recognisable way. It restricts our relations with the world about us to a set of formally prescribed relations. It sets before us as worthy and true only those things that are approved of by the fabricators of the pseudo order. We might illustrate

this by reflecting upon the way in which modern empiricism and empiricists insist(s) on the pre-eminent importance of fact in scientific knowledge and in knowing scientifically, as well as upon the absolutely crucial character of experimentation in natural science, when our own experience as well as many of the foremost practising natural scientists tell us that while facts are important, it is, in the end, experienced judgement and 'connoisseurship,' and not fact or proceduralism, that counts in the advancement of natural science knowledge. Experienced judgement, we are informed, tells us when to ignore certain facts because they are unimportant, would lead us astray were we to credit them, and do not mean what they seem to mean to the inexperienced person. And so, it is not true that practising natural scientists either treat all facts in a given field of study as equally important and significant, which is what early empiricists in the philosophy of science contended at the beginning of the last century, nor is it the case that natural scientists rank facts according to the exigencies of some conceptual framework or *theory* (understood in the modern sense, i.e., as plan, schema, conceptual framework, paradigm, etc.), for that would be to prejudice the argument from the outset. Rather, practising natural scientists discriminate amongst the facts that are available, and this discrimination is not based on or grounded in a criterion that is intersubjectively transmittable in any explicit fashion, as would be a conceptual framework, model, schema, paradigm, etc. It is based on experienced and schooled judgement and connoisseurship, which cannot be made wholly explicit, as the Anglo-Hungarian physical chemist and philosopher of science, Michael Polanyi (1891-1976), informs us in his famous work *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (1958). But an empiricist, be he or she early or more recent, is not allowed to say these things or think these thoughts, for while it accords with his (and our) experience of what is the case, it is, though true, ironically, not a rendering of the facts that is prescribed by the ideology that is scientism expressed as empiricism. Again, we see the need to control, dominate and discipline the real and the true. In short, in the name of empiricism, the modern empiricist cannot state the facts. He or she has to distort the truth about the facts in order to meet the ideological exigencies of scientism and modern empiricism.

In terms of the study of politics and sociology, we can illustrate the proclivity that ideological thinking has to force us to live in a restricted and restrictive environment by drawing attention to the tendency of ideological thinkers both to misread and reconstruct the political and social environment in which we live. Ideologists misread the political and social

environment by their impoverished descriptions of it, which, all too often, reduce all of its rich fabric to nothing more than the expression of social laws and forces at play, when it is all-too-frequently plain for all reasonable persons to see that the events being described are both more complex and more interesting than the simple unfolding of social forces would allow us to observe.[31] They reconstruct the political and social environment when, in their intended descriptions of it, they distort it to meet the exigencies of their particular ideological orientation,[32] or alternatively, when they attempt to give the well established norms of a great social institution new meanings.[33]

4. '...and in the determination to substitute an intellectually fabricated 'Second Reality' for the reality given to man.'

Now, this pseudo order that ideologists fabricate, in the belief that if they do not fabricate it, there will be no order at all, is an order that is in the nature of a 'Second Reality,'[34] in the sense that it is a illusory substitute for the First Reality, that is to say, for the reality that is given man, but which the ideologist refuses to acknowledge as a given.

Notice that the modern ideologist is an especially interesting character type ...provided we can prevent him from working his magic on us. If we cannot prevent him from working his magic on us, then he becomes a great deal less interesting, and a whole lot more frightening. Why interesting, and why would we want to speak of magic in connection with this character type? The ideologist is interesting because he has given himself the task of denying the existence of what he, in some sense, often knows exists all too well, namely, the reality that is given to man, i.e., the First Reality, and of substituting for this reality, a reality that he gives himself, and then either imposes or seeks to impose on the rest of the population. In other words, he knowingly sets about to suppress a dimension of his awareness, and of the awareness of others, so that the given can have no claim on him or on the others, and, in the process, he often unreservedly exaggerates a dimension of human existence that is undoubtedly present, but not to the degree that the ideologue would have us believe it is present. Simply put, the ideologist chooses to live, and have us live too, in a different world from the world that is given us as human beings, and the way that he hopes to succeed in this venture is by denying outright the reality of the given world both for himself and for us. Now, in order to achieve this objective, the ideologist has to engage in intellectual gymnastics and slight-of-hand that matches that and then some of the great magicians. Indeed, the more capable thinker knows

that it is not enough simply to deny the reality of the given. He has to represent the given as a chimera, an illusion, and, in turn, he has to represent his illusion as reality. As a result, the ideologist is involved in nothing less than a great shell-game involving the restructuring of human consciousness so as to make the familiar unfamiliar, and the unfamiliar familiar, which, to say the least, entails bizarre mental callisthenics.[35]

The point here is that the ideologist has a plan, a plan which, under normal circumstances, would be viewed by most people as deranged, but it is not so viewed because the ideologist operates in an atmosphere where the commonplace and the abnormal are either difficult to distinguish from one another or are no longer distinguishable.[36] The plan is to achieve nothing less than the restructuring of human consciousness according to the ideologist's wilful demands, which are, in no way, seen as capricious or disdainful of others, because he sees and represents himself to himself and to others as archetypal man, ...as universal man. Consider, for example, how Marx understood 'consciousness',[37] and how the expression 'false consciousness' developed amongst Marxists. 'False consciousness' is an expression that is used by Marxists to speak of the presumed mistaken and alienating idea that people have which is to the effect that consciousness determines life, whereas, in fact, life determines consciousness for Marxists. It is also the expression that is used by Marxists to designate the views of one who associates with his class-enemy's societal objectives rather than with his own class's societal objectives. An instance of this would be a proletarian person's assimilation of, and association with, bourgeois capitalist goals, when they are clearly not to his or her advantage, or when this same person pursues religious goals and values, in the mistaken belief, according to Marxists, that these are class neutral goals and values, when, again according to Marxists, they are anything but class neutral. Indeed, as part of the Marxist's effort to restructure consciousness, it is his general contention that there are no class-neutral goals and values. All goals and values are class based, the Marxist affirms, and so, associating with goals and values that are not one's class 'objective' goals and values is tantamount to having a colonised mind, colonised by a class that is not one's own class, by the dominant class. Concomitant with this is the Marxist argument that there are only class truths, and there is no such thing as truth *per se*, truth that is common to all mankind, irrespective of class. Affirming all of this, of course, is linked closely to the restructuring of consciousness, for the Marxist. If one can get people to believe that what they know all too well, namely, that truth is truth, is actually not the case, and have them doubt their

common-sense knowledge, then the familiar becomes the unfamiliar, and the unfamiliar the essence of reasonableness.[38]

Of course, it is not only ideologies on the left that seek to restructure human consciousness. Ideologies of the centre left and centre right, and the far right, also attempt to do the same thing, as do ideological movements in the philosophy of science, in art, and even in religion, religion which, by its very nature, should reject everything having to do with ideology and ideological thinking. By way of an example, consider Nazism. This was, in many respects, a crude ideology which sought to explain the world in which we live as a product, not of class, but of race. Every aspect of human existence, the Nazis believed, was a function of race, and could be explained on the basis of the race of the individual(s) involved.[39] Now, it may be the case that some things may be explicable on the basis of race, although, I cannot imagine what these things might be. But no man who is not an ideologist is going to argue that *all* things, or even very many things, are susceptible of explanation on the grounds of race. Here again, we see the ideological component displaying itself in the single-minded abandonment of common sense, in favour of an outrageous claim that anyone with an elementary experience of living and of the world would readily know to be wrong. Of course, the fascinating thing is that the ideologist is totally immune to life, to living and to the world that is about him, and even to any semblance of common sense. In fact, he has vaccinated himself against life and the world of common sense, by blinding himself to the given order with a notion like 'false consciousness'. He, that is to say, the Nazi, the Marxist, the capitalist, the positivist, the religious fanatic or fundamentalist, etc., has protected himself from life and living by convincing himself that the key to understanding the world about him is to be found apart of him, ...apart from his hopes and desires, i.e., in race, in class, in an especially arcane skewing of religion belief that we see today amongst certain Christian sects in the U.S.A., as well as amongst Muslims, and other religious denominations. The story is virtually always the same. One group or another has access to the truth, something needs to be done about man's predicament immediately, and common-sense is of no assistance to us in bringing about a remedy.

A very similar ideological mind-set is displayed by the so-called mainstream school of thought in the field of epistemology. In this instance, the key to the acquisition of 'so-called' scientific certainty – that ever present objective where ideological thinking is concerned – in the field of knowledge is method or procedural know how. Procedural know-how becomes the key to understanding how scientific knowledge comes to be the reliable thing that it is, and any knowledge that would be reliable in the scientific sense is a function of this know-how. As an instance of this, consider a school of thought that is, in one variation or another, still a mainstay in the Anglo-American world – particularly so in the social sciences, and to some extent even in the humanities as well – namely, that school that is sometimes referred to as the mainstream school, but which is perhaps better described by the appellation positivist empiricism. Positivist empiricists hold that scientifically trustworthy knowledge, as opposed to biased or emotionally based reasoning, is founded solely on reliance on *sense data* and the *scientific method*, in the sense that sense data forces the decision for or against a particular position, and man, who is guided by procedural know-how, has neither the freedom to acquiesce to nor to refuse to acquiesce to the data and the procedure, for that would be to indicate a personal preference and bias. Man is there only to record the decision taken by the data, i.e., the facts, and not to show preference or bias.[40] The education of social scientists is heavily focussed on driving home this point. 'Bias' is the every-present watchword, the thing to be avoided, the thing that will plunge us into uncertainty. Of course, even here, the restructuring of human consciousness in order to meet these ideological exigencies is necessary, for what is being recommended is certainly not intuitive. Programmes of study are specifically configured in ways so as to teach the student to be critical of personal biases in decision making in science, for, it is argued, biases play no positive role in the advancement of truly scientific thinking. Rather, students should focus their attention on the collection and proper methodological analysis of sense data.[41] Reliance solely on sense data, and not on any kind of personal knowledge and judgement, it is held, is the reason why the knowledge provided by the natural sciences is the powerful and predictive knowledge that it is. And so, any disciplined study – be it one of the social sciences or the humanities – that would be scientific ought to follow suit and mimic the natural sciences in this regard. But, this is precisely where things derail completely because this has nothing to do with the way natural scientists reason when engaged in scientific research, as we have been reminded umpteen times by natural scientists who are regularly involved at the forefront of scientific research. This is ideological thinking passing itself off as scientific. And the reason why it is able to do so rather successfully is because it has monopolised the discussion of these matters for so long that many have come to believe that it must be correct. And yet, this does not gainsay the fact that the personal preferences of the connoisseur in science are central to the development of science and scientific

knowledge? When a natural scientist identifies some sense datum as a fact, but not all sense data as fact, and then decides to privilege certain facts and not others, there is always an expression of preference or bias involved, since it is obviously not the facts that privilege themselves, as would have to be the case if positivist empiricists mean what they say. On what *fact-based basis* would a natural scientist credit certain facts and not others? For this is what has to take the place of the expression 'founded solely on sense data (and not on bias)' to be meaningful for a positivist empiricist, ...unless, of course, the positivist empiricist means something that is completely different from what he is saying, and is not expressing himself clearly on this matter. That is, does the positivist empiricist really mean to speak about the elimination of *inappropriate* biases and *unjustifiable* preferences,[42] and not about the elimination of all preferences altogether? If that is what the positivist empiricist means, then let him or her say it. Let the positivist empiricist say that he is not, strictly speaking, a positivist empiricist at all.[43] Let him say that he has been misunderstood. Let him or her say that for science to take place, there are certain biases that are absolutely necessary for science. But if he really favours the elimination of all personal preferences from the knowing process altogether, in the expectation that facts will decide, then that is completely unattainable. No practising natural scientist reasons this way because, were he to do so, his efforts as a scientist would be totally unproductive and lead nowhere. Were these sorts of ideological recommendations to be followed, science and scientific thinking would rapidly come to an end. The advancement of scientific knowledge is not based primarily on sense data, but on the educated judgements of natural scientists about which data to accept and which data to ignore. My point, and that of others as well, is that *science is a culture and not a procedure to be implemented, and the survival of science depends upon a particular (moral) way of being in the world, and not upon dogmatic adherence to a modus operandi. Science does not stand apart from our various cultural activities, and legislate unto them from afar. It is part and parcel of and on par with these cultural activities, which cultural activities, if corrupted, result in the corruption and death of science itself.* And so, to be a great scientist is to have developed a deeply refined moral and culturally-based judgement. It is really not true that the advance of natural science knowledge is based *solely* on devotion to method and sense data. It is rather the case that the culturally schooled and experienced judgements of the natural scientist advance natural science knowledge.[44]

Needless to say, all of these attempts to deny the given order, or to affirm something that is all too obviously inconsistent with a practice that we know very well, cannot be successful in the long run. Eventually, the truth wills out. However, there are consequences of a psychological nature that are discernible while we live under the spell of ideological thinking, and this is true whether it be political ideologies that we speak of or other types of ideologies. For instance, it is impossible for us not to experience some sort of cognitive dissonance while under the influence of ideological thinking. This cognitive dissonance may be more or less troublesome depending upon a number of factors, i.e., our degree of commitment to the ideology in question, the extent to which the ideology is supported by an authoritarian structure, the presence of avenues of escape from the clutches of the ideology in question, etc. For instance, it appears that if our commitment is great, despite the cognitive dissonances we may experience, avenues of escape are likely not to be use. In fact, in an effort to find favour with the authority structure, we are likely even to critique the escape routes, and the consequence is that we set up for ourselves a 'blind spot,' where the ideological order will dominate over the given order, and over our lives, indeed, more than dominate, it will actually lead us to deny the given order. But this can only last for a time, for the given order does not disappear just because the ideologist denies it. It remains present in the background of our lives, in what we might call *the subsidiary ranges of our existence*, and it creates for us cognitive dissonances or dislocations. That is, conflict develops between our explicit awareness of and belief in the dominant ideological *take* on things, and our implicit or subsidiary awareness that is alert to the fact that there is something serious wrong with this *take* on things. This ultimately sets up a tension within us, a tension between our ideologically rooted existence and our momentarily eclipsed or suppressed truer experience.[45] Of course, the momentariness of this conflict may last much longer than one would like it to last, and be more destructive than we might imagine or than we would like it to be, but, ultimately, it must end.[46]

In conclusion, the thing that strikes us most forcefully in all of these matters is the fact that ideology and ideological thinking is not a rare or unusual mode of thinking in our times. It is, rather, in one form or another, an important and almost unavoidable ingredient in, if not at the heart of, much modern thinking.

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Notes:

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2. Gerhart Niemeyer, *Between Nothingness and Paradise*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), p. 141f. Karl Jaspers provides us with a somewhat related definition of ideology. However, it is not as subtle or as elegant as Niemeyer's definition. Yet, like Niemeyer's definition, it captures the deceitfulness masking the need to control, a need which is characteristic of all ideological thinking. Jaspers writes: 'An ideology is a complex of ideas or notions which represents itself to the thinker as an absolute truth for the interpretation of the world and his situation within it; it leads the thinker to accomplish an act of self-deception for the purpose of justification, obfuscation and evasion in some sense or other to his advantage.' See Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History*.

3. The word 'ideology' has a modern origin. However, aspects of the reality that is ideology predate the appearance of the word. The word was coined in 1796 by the late Eighteenth Century French thinker Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836). It appears that the term, as de Tracy understood it, referred to a general science of ideas, and had few of the contemporary connotations we assign to it. Concerning ideology, de Tracy wrote in 1801:

"Cette science peut s'appeler idéologie, si l'on ne fais attention qu'au sujet; grammaire générale, si l'on n'a égard qu'au moyen, et logique, si l'on ne considère que le but. Quelque nom qu'on lui donne, elle renferme nécessairement ces trois parties; car on ne peut en traiter une raisonnablement sans traiter les deux autres. Idéologie me parait le terme générique, parce que la science des idées renferme celle de leur expression et celle de leur déduction. C'est en même temps le nom spécifique de la première partie".

One or two additional things that can be said are that de Tracy, in the fashion of the late Eighteenth Century, apparently sought to understand ideas as would a contemporary materialist like Condillac, let us say, rather than as an earlier philosopher. To this extent, therefore, there is a connection between de Tracy's understanding of the term ideology and some modern views which see ideas as the products of the material conditions under which men live. It is further said that the term 'ideology' received its negative connotations from Napoleon, who opposed de Tracy's followers who were known as 'les idéologues.' See also Roger Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought*. London: The Macmillan Press, 1982, p. 213.

4. Voegelin did not explicitly use the expression 'contemplative theory,' and it is not clear to some scholars that the expression is entirely consistent with the architecture of his thinking. In fact, there is rather good evidence to show that it is a term that is not consistent with Voegelin's thought.

5. In this connection, consider Marxism, a movement that has become almost synonymous with ideology and ideological thinking, both from the perspective of providing us with an understanding of what ideology is that is proper to it, and from the perspective of it itself being an ideology. At no point in his writings does Marx attempt to make sense of the givenness of the world, not even when he is ostensibly describing an event or a thought from the past or from his present. That is, he rarely does justice to the event or thought he intends to describe in his would-be description of something. He rarely states it the way it is or was. Rather, he 'describes' the event or thought according to the exigencies of his preconceived interpretive framework, and in the process, deforms his, as well as his reader's, very ability to understand the phenomenon under investigation, because there is really no investigation of the phenomenon as such taking place. What there is, is a fitting of the phenomenon into the mould of Marx's interpretive schema. Of course, this is fundamentally dishonest inasmuch as it knowingly seeks to represent what is really a pseudo description as a true description, and to pass off a pallid simulation of something as the real thing. There is, in a sense, a swindle taking place here, a swindle that is entirely consistent with and to be expected given Marx's Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach, where Marx makes it clear that he is not interested in knowing what *is*, or presumably what *was*, but in bringing about what can be. The famous Eleventh Thesis reads: 'The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it.' (See Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), p. 653.) Of course, it is not only Marx and Marxism that does this. All ideological thinking swindles us in this way.

6. This clause is necessitated by the fact that the intellect

may want to focus on and draw attention to an intellectual reality, i.e., a concept or idea that is within the intellect, and make contact with its givenness as the intellect would, on other occasions, make contact with the givenness of a reality that exists outside of the intellect. In fact, this is precisely what I am attempting in these notes on ideology. I am attempting to focus attention on an intellectual reality that we conventionally call 'ideology,' i.e., I am attempting to acquire a theoretical knowledge of what it means to think ideologically, as others, at times, seek to acquire a theoretical knowledge of a physical reality. However, in my case, the reality does not exist primarily in the world outside of the mind. It exists within the mind and has bearing on the world outside of the mind, inasmuch as it affects the way we approach this world.

7. Speaking of the truth in this way is something that is almost unheard of in institutions of higher learning today. In fact, holding the view that is possible to know some part of the truth about something is almost forbidden. If one even dares to assert that there is such a thing as truth that is not radically contingent upon context and time, one opens oneself up to the charge of being a fool or a dogmatic ideologue, or both. Not far beneath the surface is the insinuation that this sort of thinking about truth was and is what is behind the murderous actions of ages past and present, and that one is indirectly sanctioning these murderous activities by holding this view of truth. People who oppose injustice, violence and murder are supposed to hold the view that there is no truth that is not culture- and time-bound. This is being broad-minded, enlightened and liberal. This is the way one affirms one's decency, goodness and opposition to the inhumanities of the past, because it shows that one is prepared to revise oneself totally and affirm the complete opposite of what one affirmed in the past. Revising oneself is the hallmark of a liberal-minded person, we are led to believe.

The curious thing in all of this is that it seems never to cross the mind of these contextualists and relativists that when one says that it is possible to know the truth about something, one is not claiming that one can know the whole truth. Nor does it seems to have occurred to them that when someone says that he or she knows aspects of the truth about something that he or she can be just as tolerant of any challenge to his or her views as can any relativist. After all, is that not the manner in which natural scientists reason when they defend their views before their colleagues, since they certainly do not assume that their knowledge of the truth is contingent on space and time? That would not be science. In fact, it would be the end of science. Contextualists and relativists simply assume that they have a monopoly of tolerance – they are the good people, and you, who claim that it is possible to know truth, are not, didn't you know – and that this monopoly which they have is directly related to their belief in the truth of nothing except their beneficent and fine sentiments.

Of course, the major problem with all of these fine sentiments about contextualist thinking is that is flies in the face of reasoning in science, historical reality and clear thinking generally, something that one would expect academics to know about, but apparently many of them these days do not. Was it not precisely the contextualists and relativists, who, in conformity with their beliefs in the relativity of truth in the 1920s and '30s, and in defence of their right to be open-minded and non-doctrinaire, revised themselves totally and worshiped at the alter of the 'new age'? Believing in nothing, was it not they who showed, when the Nazis and the Bolsheviks came to power, that they were capable of believing in and coming to the defence of anything, including tyranny, and this for no better reason than the fact that they were tired of the *ennui* of liberal democracy? In fact, did they not argue that democratic government and justice of the sort that prevails in liberal societies was *passé*, bourgeois and old-fashioned? Was it not they who said that they were in pursuit of a better, more robust, more Aryan way of living in this 'new age'? Was it not they who also said that humans were about to realise a more masculine way of governing and a higher justice, something more in keeping with the times and the 'new truth' of the Nazi and communist eras? Of course, it was they, as we learn from the historians of the period. However, many of our contemporaries, it seems, have forgotten this – if they ever knew it at all – and they vindictively misplace the blame for the monstrous actions that were committed in the name of this 'new truth' during the 1930s and 40s, and even later, on the opponents of contextualism and relativism.

8. For a compelling understanding of this need to 'govern, control and discipline' man's chance encounters with the given and the real, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books (Random House) 1979, pp. 135-169.

9. This experienced knowing or connoisseurship of which I speak in this piece can be equated with Michael Polanyi's understanding of 'tacit knowing.' See Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, pp. 54ff.

10. idem.

11. The word 'contemplative' here is not meant to signify that the knower needs to enter into something akin to a trance-like state in order to know theoretically. To suggest something like this would be completely nonsensical. The word 'contemplative' rather refers to the state of mind of the experienced connoisseur who, in his attentiveness, is receptive of the clues that issue from the real, which he is attempting to know. The *contemplative mind* is at variance with what I will call the *active* or *aggressive mind* inasmuch as the aggressive mind is really not founding itself on experienced connoisseurship, nor is it at all interested in 'attending to' (if I may be permitted a Polanyian phrase) the clues that emanate from the real. The aggressive mind is founded on the assumption that experienced connoisseurship is not, and cannot be, a basis on which to found theoretical knowing. Theoretical knowing, according to the aggressive mind in the early modern period, arises when the would-be knower preconceives (in the sense of claims neither to rely on any sort of connoisseurship nor be attentive to any kind of clues in the elaboration of an insight into

the real, but rather begins by constructing a plan according to which it forces the real to account for itself) an order. In the late modern period, the aggressive mind carries its logic forward and calls an unfounded orderliness (unfounded in the sense that it has no basis in the given, but is a fabrication of the mind of the one who calls it forth) into existence by the fiat of its creative imagination.

12. The word 'aggressive' may seem inappropriate. However, it is not. The reason why it is not inappropriate is because the so-called knower who would approach the world of the other and the given with a preconceived notion of what is other and given, i.e., with a plan or schema, is, in a manner of speaking, forcing what is other to reply to the exigencies and questions generated by his plan or schema. He is saying that he will take notice of the other only to the extent to which it conforms to his preconceived understanding of it, a preconceived understanding that is not rooted in the other, but in the creative imaginings of the would-be knower. In other words, the so-called knower is refusing to be informed by the other, if his being informed by the other involved him in going beyond *himself*, ...in his transcending himself in the act of making contact with the other and given. He will make contact with the other only inasmuch as the other is, curiously, not the other, but a dimension of himself, and, of course, for this to be possible, he has, provisionally, at least, to eliminate the otherness of the other, ...hence, the violence and aggression done to the other. The point here is that there is something violent and deeply solipsistic about this approach to knowing, in short, about the approach of the artist-technician.

 Later, when this aggressiveness is brought into the study of the social sciences and the humanities, we will want to say that its exponents are often patronisingly aggressive, in the sense that the wilful egotism exhibited above is frequently masked by a pseudo humanist discourse that is designed to achieve nothing less than our compliance with what is an entirely egotistical plan. Human compassion and concern become weapons in the arsenal of the egotist, and virtue is increasingly just a means of gaining the listener's compliance with the technician's will.

13. This is what we mean when we speak of the *experienced connoisseur* and *connoisseurship*.

14. See Nicholas Lobkowicz, *Theory and Practice: History of a Concept from Aristotle to Marx*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967.

15. I am assuming here that this 'otherness' exists in the world outside of the mind. However, it may very well be that the 'otherness' in question is within the knower, and maybe even within the mind of the knower, in the sense that an idea that a knower wishes to explore, must first be experience as something that is, using Michael Polanyi's expression, *distally* related to the knower. That is, the knower must relate to it as he or she would to a physical object existing in the world outside of the mind, even though it is an idea or an aspect of the knower's mind that the knower seeks to know theoretically. In such an instance, the knower is obliged to treat that idea or aspect that he wishes to know scientifically as if it were an 'otherness,' that is

to say, deal with it as if it were an object of his attention and knowledge that exists apart from him, despite the fact that it is within him, and perhaps even within his mind. For want of a better word, the knower has to set *distance* between his experiencing self and that aspect of himself that he seeks to know theoretically or scientifically. Rather than experience the object of his investigation in the usual way, i.e., as he typically experiences it as he goes about his life doing other things, he has to experience the object of his investigation as if it were detached from him, despite the fact that it may be within him, if he is to know it theoretically and scientifically. And so, in a very profound sense, what this tells us is that theoretical knowing and knowledge is different from experiential knowledge, but very much dependent upon it also. For a very insight-filled account of what is happening in this to-ing and fro-ing between experiential knowledge and theoretical knowledge, see Michael Polanyi's distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge in *Personal Knowledge* as well as in many of his published papers from the 1960s and '70s. such as those in *Knowing and Being*. We have already briefly spoken about this in n. 6 above.

16. We speak of *arbitrary* preconception here because we want to draw attention to the fact that this preconception is not rooted in a *practice* or *way of being*, but rather in inventiveness. The non-theoretical enquirer does not approach the object of his investigation with respect for its integrity. Rather, he comes upon it with the will to dominate it, and he will dominate it by applying to it *his* expectations of what it should be, and, as far as he is concerned, is. Rather than *respectfully* try to explore its integrity through contemplation, he will ignore its integrity, and have it respond to his activist's questions. (Parenthetically, the entire history of the shift from theoretical thinking to ideological thinking is the history of the loss of respect for the integrity of the known. The activist we are describing here is not an ideologist, yet, but he is clearly someone who has no respect for the given order about him, for if he had respect he would not act the way he acts *in regard to matters that are*.)

17. See the writings on the Canadian scholar George Grant on technology, particularly his work entitled *Technology and Empire*, Toronto: House of Anansi, 1969. While Grant's prime concern was to describe the technological mind-set in his writings on technology, he also captures the mind-set of the person I am calling 'the non-theoretical enquirer' as well, ...at least to the degree that he sees him as 'summoning forth' reality and demanding of it that it account for its being.

18. Observe that we do not speak of *respect* anymore. We cannot speak of respect in the presence of the ideologist and in the age of ideology, for the ideologist does not know respect. What is there to respect?, the ideologist tacitly asks. And the answer is 'nothing,' according to the ideologist, '...absolutely nothing.' Man is here to create realities, not to respect reality.

 Parenthetically, it is in relation to this issue of *respect* that I find myself in disagreement with my teacher Charles Taylor over his focus on *recognition*. It is true that Taylor speaks to us, not of *respect*, but of

dignity and *recognition*, and he informs us that these concerns have a specifically modern origin. Well, to the extent that there is a relationship between what I am characterising as the *respect* of a Classical, Scholastic and early modern thinker for the integrity of the other, and what Taylor refers to as *recognition* of the *dignity* of the other, then it seems to me that *recognition* and *dignity* are concerns for modern man more by virtue of their felt absence than their presence in our world, i.e., because they are so little present in the lives of modern men. After the atrocities of the last century, man can do no less that issue a plea to be respected, ...a plea in favour of human dignity and recognition. Modern man's call for recognition arises not from the fact that he is free to ask to be recognised in the modern context, in a way that he was not able to ask in earlier times. Instead, his call for recognition comes from the fact that he has suffered a major loss of dignity over the past three centuries or more, and, hence, he is too little acknowledged and recognised. Modern man speaks of dignity, not because of the overwhelming acknowledgement of human dignity in the modern world. Rather, haunted by the atrocities of the modern era, he persistently asks to be recognised as dignified because of the overwhelming absence human dignity from modern practice. Speaking a language that Taylor will not allow himself to speak because it is a language that is inconsistent with his deeply held modern beliefs in the emergence of a new way of being in the world at the dawn of the modern era; in modern times, the First Reality – the reality that Classical thinkers and Scholastics knew as given to man, and that teaches respect – breaks the surface of the fabricated Second Reality created by the modern – the reality that man gives himself – and, in the process, it disturbingly inserts itself into a context in which, on its own terms, it hardly makes sense any more, except as a protest against man's loss of dignity, recognition and respect in our era. And so, we can say that our focussing in these difficult times on *dignity* and *recognition* highlights not the achievements of modernity, but its all too obvious failures over the past few centuries.

19. While it is true that there is a rapport between the Classical, Scholastic and early modern artists and technicians, on the one hand, and the modern ideologists, on the other, we must not confuse the two, for one is not the other. The modern ideologists are, *in a manner of speaking*, infinitely freer than any Classical, Scholastic or early modern artist, but this freedom is purchased at a high price. The price is *freedom* itself.

20. Parenthetically, this gives rise to an interesting observation. Although the non-theoretical thinker is not someone who is necessarily moving in the direction of ideological thinking, there is a connection between the two thinkers. The connection is that the ideological thinker draws on the thought of the non-theoretical thinker in the sense that, following the eclipsing of reality, which the ideological thinker insists on seeing as the abolition of the real, he produces and then dwells with and within the substitute realities that the non-theoretical thinker saw only as abstract modellings of the real.

21. Hence, the overwhelming concern with governance in the modern context, the governance of everything, from the seemingly most innocuous aspects of human lives to the most serious of matters – and this is true not only of the ideologies of the left, but of the centre and right as well.

22. The expression *libido dominandi* is perhaps best translated into English by the expression 'desire to control or dominate.' From whence does this desire to control or dominate come – this desire which is so central to the ideologist and modern technologist? This is one on the most searching question that can be asked.

23. Note that there is a frightful urgency to all of this, in the sense that unless the plan is imposed on the chaos, the future of mankind may be in jeopardy, ...or, at least, so it is felt by the ideologist. This urgency issues out of two different but related concerns. *One*, it is, in part, the fear of the lurking chaos that drives technological society to act, which means, to transform, by an act of the will, the feared plasticity of things outside of the mind into something that is 'recognisably rational and stable.' But what if what is outside the mind is not plastic, or as plastic as it is imagined to be by the technologist- ideologist? What then? What sort of imaginative madness is the technologist-ideologist engaged in then? Is it not then that one speaks of the imaginative madness of 'Second Realities'? *Two*, it is also the case that this urgency, in part, issues out of the need to do good – or, at least, good as it is perceived by the modern person – and to stave-off the perceived incoherences of the natural order. Consider the issue of genetic engineering. We have arrived at a point where it is now *seemingly* possible for us to disavow the influence that untidy evolution may still have upon us, and to take charge of our destiny by transforming ourselves into the kinds of beings that we estimate we ought to be. Indeed, we speak of eliminating, through genetic engineering, both biological and psychological diseases in the hope of compensating for all sorts of *felt* inadequacies present in our species. Simply put, we propose for ourselves nothing less than a *metastatic* transformation, namely, a transformation of our species as we have known it till now *through an act of the human will* into something that will transcend and thus escape what we mistakenly presume to be the errors and the capriciousnesses of time. One speaks of 'mistakenly presume' here because one must never forget that human life is the consequence of some of these presumed errors and capriciousnesses, and that the sought for replacement is the certitude of the morbidity of stagnation and death. In this matter, it is important to recall the observation of the two great French biologists and Nobel Prize winners in medicine (1965) Jacques Monod and François Jacob who held that the stupendous edifice that is evolution is predicated on so-called 'errors' – which we today in our limited wisdom would correct – in transplanting DNA into amino acid sequences. See François Jacob's two works, *The Possible and the Actual* and *The Logic of Life*.

In addition, if this is the sort of transformation that is to be pursued, then the question will inevitably

arise: why should we not pursue another type of transformation? Why should we not bring into being and maintain a completely separate species from our transformed self, a species that will be at our beck-and-call, a species that will not protest our dominance, but see it as entirely acceptable and appropriate? What is wrong with this? Why should a new morality not come into being – a morality that is consistent with our metastatically transformed *new self* – a morality that will find acceptable things that are not, at present? At this point, one cannot help but wonder whether Hitler has not returned to live amongst us as a 'compassionate' geneticist who is prepared to fulfil not his will, as was the case in the past, but *our* will that was once *his* will. It is amazing. We discover that we fought against Hitler not because we were at odd with his objectives, although many would have argued that we were at the time, but because he failed to consult us and obtain our permission before embarking on his project. Had he consulted us, it would have been a wholly other matter. In this mad ideological era, Hitler is the archetypal modern man. He is the great artist of the modern age, and the full force of the Nazi conception of art resurfaces in our day.

As terrible as all of this may seem, we need to remind ourselves that there are still islands of pre-modern or post-modern – I cannot tell the difference – sanity in our time. Their shorelines may be contracting at the moment, it us true, but, it is our responsibility and our duty to maintain them, and where possible expand them.

24. This out-of-control penchant to dominate goes well beyond what is reasonable, and a long way towards explaining the ever-expanding role of government in our lives in the modern era, not to mention, the actual policing and surveillance of the lives of people. At the seemingly most innocuous end of things, consider, for example, the constant attention that is given by the authorities to controlling, sometimes in the minutest detail, the way modern man conducts himself. Increasingly, every aspect of one's life comes under the scrutiny of government, for, should any part of it escape scrutiny, there is, it is felt, the potential for a loss of control, and this may mean chaos and disorder. (Michel Foucault does a marvellous job of describing this phenomenal growth in governance and policing in modern times in *Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la prison*. Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1975. For and English translation of this work, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. by Alan Sheridan. New York: Random House (Vintage Books), 1979.) Of course, this attentiveness on the part of governments is ostensibly always defended on the basis of the need to achieve some moral good, which would, indeed, be appropriate, if there were no real, and things were completely malleable. However, this defence of some good is increasingly seen to be little more than a strained justification for exercising complete control over the lives of ordinary people. We have in mind here little things – things that are seemingly always done in the interests of being more moral or of making things more secure for modern man. Consider the following

example. In the early summer of 2002, it was reported on the national news in Canada that parents in a 'Church of God' (Mennonite) community in Aylmer in southern Ontario were in 'hot-water' with the local child welfare society because of their alleged use of 'the rod' to discipline their children. When interviewed by reporters, the parents indicated that they were guided in this matter by the Bible, that, as parents, they were responsible for the moral and spiritual education of their children. Now, it was clear from all that was said, and all that was observed, that they loved their children, and were certainly not given to brutalising them. As for the children, when they were questioned by reporters, they unanimously acknowledged that they did not experience the disciplining to be excessive, and to the unbiased observer it was transparent that the children were very well-adjusted and happy, and showed no signs of being cowed by brutality and physical abuse. In fact, it transpired that the one great fear that some of the children had was that of being taken from their parents by the authorities, a fear that was not baseless, since it had been the fate of some of their play-mates. The local authorities were not interviewed by reporters, but one expects that had their representative been interviewed, one would have discovered that their actions *vis-à-vis* this small Mennonite community were well intentioned, and that they would have genuinely had the welfare of these and other children at heart. Doubtless, these child welfare people have seen a great deal of child abuse, and, by what they define as 'objective standards,' this was a case of child abuse, ...or so they believe. And so, there is no disputing the sincerity of child welfare, it seems to me. However, exactly what is child welfare engaged in here? In addition to protecting children from abusive parents and guardians, which is certainly desirable, but which, by any appropriate and prudential standard of measurement, seems not to be the issue in this case, is child welfare not simply one of the many agencies through which the government exercises control over and disciplines the conduct of decent – and, admittedly, sometimes not-so-decent – people? In fact, in this particular instance, are not traditionally moral actions – moral actions that have served us well over the centuries – actions that no sane person would find untoward – being criminalised in order to enable government to gain control over the conduct of a morally upright and even recognisably responsible sector of the population?

In the course of viewing this particular reportage, one was inevitably drawn to reflect on the consequences of the actions of child welfare. Here we have a law-abiding community of Mennonites, noted for its virtually non-existent crime rate and high sense of morality and social responsibility, being forced by a quasi-governmental agency to abide by supposedly loftier rules and regulation than those of the community in question, yet, nonetheless, rules and regulations that are in the process of bankrupting the rest of society, with its rampant egotism, its relative high crime rates compared to the Mennonites, and expanding criminality (and if not criminality, then certainly anti-social behaviour) at all levels of society.

While no one contests the fact that children have to be protected against brutalisation, one could not help but think that judgement needs to be exercised in ways that it appears not to have been exercised in this and too many similar instances, and child protection, etc., should not become a means to mask the expansion of government control over peaceful and responsible parents and citizens. But, of course, in order for judgement to be exercised, one has to be cognisant of the ubiquitous and surreptitious character of modern ideological thinking, and the influence it has on virtually every aspect of our lives, even when the goals may be laudable, as in this instance. Unfortunately, our awareness of the ubiquitousness of ideological thinking in our life is what is missing.

Consider now an example of a move to expand governance at the other end of the spectrum, and that is with reference to matters more serious than the Mennonite case just mentioned. When U.S. President George W. Bush met His Holiness Pope John Paul II in Rome in the late spring or early summer of 2002, in the course of his meeting with His Holiness, he offered (according to President Bush's own statement made following his meeting with His Holiness) His Holiness the help of the U.S. government to 'clean-up' paedophilia in the American Catholic Church. Just how the U.S. government was going to help the American Catholic Church in this regard, other than by enforcing U.S. law, was not made clear. But, it seemed, that that was not important. Now, no doubt, President Bush meant well when he made this offer. However, we are not certain that His Holiness appreciated the offer, for it was an offer that completely ignored, if not made light of, the millennial-old governing laws, rules, regulations, practices and traditions of the Church, which are, to say the least, every bit as thoughtful and moral as those of civil governments. Indeed, they both predate and are the origin of many of the laws, rules and regulations instituted by civil governments in the West. As such, President Bush's offer was mildly offensive, if not worse. One cannot help seeing in this offer of help a desire on the part of the civil authorities to arrogate unto itself the right to set moral standards for the institution that has been at the centre of moral debate in the Occidental World for the past two millennia, and without whose influence and inspiration the civil state itself would be much poorer. More to the point, one cannot help wondering if this offer of help was not an attempt on the part of civil government (and here we do not find fault solely with the actions of the U.S. government, although in this instance it was the U.S. government that was involved) to get a 'foot in the door' of the Church, and to begin to convert it into an institution that in the end would be subservient to the state. The point that needs to be recognised here is that amongst all of the religious institutions in the contemporary world, the Catholic Church is perhaps the only one that has the moral authority and traditions of government that match those, and then some, of civil governments. Civil governments inevitably, in these ideological times, feel threatened by this. And so, what better way to remove the threat than by gaining control over the Church, by setting adrift doubts in the minds of the faithful, by highlighting an unquestionably real problem within a part of the Church, and then feigning concern for the Church's well-being, in the expectation, of course, that this will eventually lead to the Church's conversion into an instrument of the state, as so many other religious institutions and even churches have been, at least in part, taken over by the state. Fortunately, this Pope had experience with these sorts of issues, albeit the case that his early experience was with much cruder actors acting on behalf of the state. Rarely, one imagines, had His Holiness seen previous challenges to the authority of the Church come in the form of offers of help. Providentially, he seems not to have been taken in by any of this. As for the state, the issue was moved to the back-burner, when it too was faced with having to address its own serious moral shortcomings and weaknesses, first, when faced with the moral corruption of part of the U.S. business community, a community which the U.S. state regularly defends, and a year and a half later when confronted with the revelations about the part played by the American military in the torture and sexual degradation of Iraqi detainees while on its mission to bring democracy to Iraq.

25. Notice the extent to which modern ideological/technological society is not neutral or indifferent to what is given by the Transcendent. It is actually hostile to both the given and the Transcendent inasmuch as its aim is not to reveal but conceal the revealing of being and truth, to use Heideggerian language. In fact, it is engaged in a long-lasting low-grade war with both the given and the Transcendent. Note further that this gives rise to a culture that is not morally neutral in the struggle between good and evil, as many of us are wont to believe. It produces a culture that is very clearly and actively on the side of evil, inasmuch as it, at the very least, makes light of the given, and, at the worse, denies it and seeks to replace it with an entirely man-made order, an order that is willed. As a result of this, all who live under such conditions are, in different degrees, participants in this evil, in this wilful subversion of the given, even as we go about our lives doing good, as our culture understands it. The good that is done by us is, in one fashion or another, a good that is used to advance the cause of the egoistic order that neither understands nor shows any care for 'the given' that is the measure of the good that is done. But there is worse. Ideology and ideological thinking is prepared to discipline the expression of the good, and submit it, along with its measure, to its control. The genuinely good act, the act that is done with no regard to whether or not it advantages the community, is quickly seized upon and converted into something that does benefit the community. Of course, in the conversion, the act is amputated of its transcending quality so as to make certain that it is neither appreciated nor respected for what it is.

Of course, the point that surfaces in all of this is that ultimately morals are not strictly private matters, as many liberal democrats are wont to believe. How can they be private when it becomes the belief of a large part of the community that its fulfilment depends upon its setting the standards of right and wrong? One

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may disagree, but one always has to go along for the ride, and accept that the quality of one's actions be tarnished. Russell, with whom I am more often in disagreement than in agreement, nicely captures an aspect of the point that I am making. He writes: 'I often long to be simple and good, never say a clever thing again, never bother about subtle points, but give up my life to love of my neighbour. This is really a temptation – but it is Satan in an angelic form.' Bertrand Russell, *Letters*.

26. When I refer to 'nothing intelligible that transcends the plan,' I mean nothing that is not understood by ideologists to be chaotic, meaningless, orderless, purposeless, etc. It is the ideologist's plan that gives order and meaning to existence, as far as the technologist/ideologist is concerned. In the absence of a plan, all is deemed by him or her to be chaotic and unintelligible. Note here that order, meaning and intelligibility are not things that are available to be discovered, according to ideological thinking. They are to be created by the ideologist when he or she conceives of and brings the plan into being, ...a plan which is often manipulatively represented as a description of the real world. I speak of manipulativeness here because the ideologist is not someone who believes in the *real* world, other than as something available for authoring and structuring. (Notice the complicated deception at work here. The ideologist argues that his plan better reflects what is, while, at the same time, he holds that there is no such thing as 'what is.') Consider the thought of Thomas S. Kuhn in this regard. His is a thought that is, at once, profoundly ideological and technological.

We have here an insight into the essence of modern technological thinking. Modern technological thinking approaches the world, not as something to be discovered, for this would presuppose that there *is* a something to be discovered – an order, a meaning – whereas, it is felt by the technologist that there is no order or meaningfulness in existence. There is no given to be discovered. Rather, what there is, is an opportunity for the creative individual, i.e., the technologist, to bring into existence order and meaningfulness.

The ideologist is a technological thinker, the technological thinker is an ideologist, and technological society is ideological society. (Note that this observation flies in the face of Daniel Bell's thesis in *The End of Ideology: On the Evolution of Political Ideas in the Fifties*, New York: The Free Press, 1960. It is my claim that not only have we not seen the end of ideological thinking with the rise of modern pragmatic approaches to the world about us, but we have plunged more deeply into the world of ideological thinking than we might ever have imagined possible.)

27. This leads me to suggest that a good analysis of the delusional thinking associated with ideology would perhaps be best carried out by a philosophical psychologist, who is familiar with those pathologies of the *psyché* that cause a person to shun the real, and to enter into a subjective realm of his own making. While there are a number of psycho-pathologies that come to mind in this connection, it may be tentatively suggested that one could begin by searching for the connection between autism, and perhaps even schizophrenia, and ideology, to the extent that neither is strictly biologically based.

28. This gives rise to an interesting conundrum. First, man, the creature, casts himself in the role of man 'the dominator creator,' and then presumes that he can take charge of creation, of which he is a creation and a creature. Stating this differently, man, who is a product of the unfolding of reality, in the midst of its unfolding – for who can say that the unfolding is over – seeks to take charge of the real that has authored him, in the belief that he can transcend his position of creature in the scheme of things, and, in so doing, do a better job of authoring himself and the order that surrounds him, and he believes this despite the fact that his very presence on the scene is entirely due to the real, i.e., to creation, which he has come to believe is directionless, random and uncontrolled. Of course, what this is is hubris on a grand scale. But it is more than just hubris. It is hubris that has been elevated to the level of a cultural, intellectual and pathological madness.

29. I am borrowing the expression 'subsidiarily aware' from Michael Polanyi, who speaks of 'subsidiary awareness' in his famous work *Personal Knowledge* as well as in many of his other writings.

30. In this connection, reflect on Plato's parable of the cave from *The Republic*. It deals with the very dissonance that we are speaking of in this paragraph. See also Eric Voegelin's, 'The Eclipse of Reality,' in Maurice Natanson, ed., *Phenomenology and Social Reality: Essays in Memory of Alfred Schütz*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), pp. 185-194. This bifurcation is the source, according to Voegelin and many others, of many modern emotional, social and political pathologies.

31. By way of an example, consider the way in which David Easton, the father of behaviourism in political science, was forced, by the nature of his systems model of political life, to describe the transition from Weimar to Nazism in the early 1930s. His model (which was based on Ludwig von Bertalanffy's reasoning about systems in the biological world) obliged him to view this transition as a *stress-alleviating change*, since change (by Bertalanffy and Easton's definition) always takes place in order to alleviate stress. Now, apart from the problems associated with the transference of a model originally designed to explain the biological world to the political and moral world, can anyone truly believe that Easton's description of this change is a true description of the momentous character of this event, perhaps the most momentous event of the Twentieth Century? And I am not speaking solely or primarily of whether it is appropriate to describe the transition from Weimar to Nazism as stress-alleviating. Of course, I understand that this was the only sort of description of the event that Easton's systems 'theory' permitted him to give. However, I am concerned with the question of whether it was a description of the event that captures the complexity of the moral and political issues at the centre of this event. The point here is that, viewed from within the realm of Easton's ideology or pseudo 'theory,' it may be correct for him

to say what he says. But is it true? Would Easton not have described, *in exactly the way, and using the very same language, any change that would have taken place*? Replacing the authorities, or modifying the conversion process, for example, would also have been described by Easton as *stress-alleviating,* would it not? And so, why did Weimar not adopt one of the less traumatising forms of stress-alleviating change, rather than the one it did adopt? This is the question that Easton should be answering and that his so-called theory should be able to answer, for it is the essence of the political question. But he cannot answer nor even address this issue, and not being able to address this matter casts serious doubt on the usefulness of Easton's systems model for the study of politics. More than that. It raises the question of whether Easton's systems model of political life is at all capable of dealing with political issues. For a more sustained exploration of these and related matters, see Charles Taylor's very interesting piece entitled 'Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,' in *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. XXV No. 1, (September 1971), p. 3-51.

32. We have all witnessed political ideologues representing themselves as 'experts' on the politics of this or that region of the world. And, frequently, we ask ourselves how it was possible for these people apparently to know so much about a place which they either have not visited at any length, or, if they have visited it at some length, which speaks a language which they do not understand. We may even wonder how it is possible for these same people to make sense of things by basing themselves on models designed to make sense of a completely different cultural, economic, developmental, etc., environment. Very quickly, we realise that these people are not familiar, or have only a passing familiarity, with the political practices of that part of the world for which they claim expertise, for they certainly are not describing anything that is recognisable about the place they claim to know about. What they know very well, however, is a modular explanation with its set of phrases and canned expressions fed them by the ideology which they espouse (and we are not only speaking of Marxists here), and they apply these phrases in virtually exactly the same way, and with the same fervour, to every political context they speak of, whether it be in Europe, Africa, South or North America, or Asia. But to say that they know something about the particularities of any specific context anywhere – apart from the locale where their modular explanation originated – would be a gross exaggeration bordering of a lie. I am reminded here of a statement made by David Kay, President Bush's envoy to Iraq, who, upon returning to the U.S. in the summer of 2003 after his team's exhaustive search for weapons-of-mass-destruction (WMD), reports on the Charlie Rose show on PBS that he cannot understand what is going wrong with the American effort to pacify that country, and then by way of an explanation for his befuddlement, he says 'We sent our best social scientists over there, and it's turning out to be a complete failure. None of their recommendations apply. Absolutely nothing works. I think that we are

going to have to just use common sense.' What an amazingly perceptive observation for Kay to make in these ideological times when common sense (*phronesis*) is a rarity. It seems that Kay concluded – correctly, it has to be said – that common sense is just not part of the baggage of some of America's 'best social scientists.' But what do social scientists, and specifically political scientists, study if not politics, and is politics not about the exercise of common sense? Of course, my point is that sadly political science is not about the exercise of common sense, and it has not been for years. For far too many, it is about ideological thinking.

33. Consider the following logic, which was often heard in academic settings in the 1960s. It went something like this: the speaker would say, that, in these modern times, it goes without saying that it would be naive for us to think that there is such a thing as disinterested truth, and so, *all* approaches to a discipline (whatever that discipline may be) are essentially interested and, hence, ideological. And since one cannot, without overt prejudice, decide which interests should have priority over other interests, all interests should be treated equally for all are equally worthy and deserving of our attention as academics. Hence, *in the interests of democracy and fair-mindedness vis-à-vis all ideological positions*, it is desirable to achieve greater ideological balance in our transactions with one another. As a result such-and-such an action should be taken. In a university this often means that students should be made aware of a broad spectrum of ideological options, so that, without being swayed by anyone, and particularly not by anyone in authority, they may be allowed to chose their preferred bias.

Now, note the convoluted thinking and sometimes outright dishonesty that is involved here. Or is it a combination of both convolutedness and dishonesty? Either, the ideological thinker has no difficulty elevating 'the good of democracy' and 'fair-mindedness' above ideological interestedness – otherwise why would he or she view these arguments in favour of greater ideological latitude as persuasive, and not simply the expression of another form of ideological interestedness – or, these too are expressions of ideological interestedness, and if they are mentioned at all here, it is because the ideologist knows that his audience is vulnerable to this sort of argument. In other words, the argument in favour of the good of democracy and fair-mindedness serves his or her purpose of the moment. And when it ceases to server the purpose, then the speaker can forget both of these arguments quite quickly and easily, since, after all, they are ideological, and therefore no better or no worse than any other ideological argument. Or there is a third possibility, and it is that the speaker is both unclear in his thinking and dishonest in terms of his stated objectives, which is what I expect is the case with a good many ideologists.

What are we to make of this? It behoves us, I would argue, to reject outright the claim that there is no truth. We should deny that *all* approaches to a discipline such as, for example, politics or philosophy, or any other discipline, are necessarily ideological. It is also incumbent upon us to argue that it is not true

that scientific thinking is on a par with ideological thinking. In fact, it is our responsibility to show that the scientific study of politics and philosophy is incompatible with every ideological approach to the study of politics and philosophy. In addition, and in the long run, it is also our duty to demonstrate that there is little or no *true* interest in the creation of a more open society amongst ideologists, despite their claims to the contrary and calls for fairness and open-mindedness. And the reason why there cannot be any true interest in the creation of a more open society is because anyone who claims that there is no truth, other than the truths we, as human beings, construct, is making it patently clear that there is no open societal order *per se*. That is, there is no open societal order existing independently of the will of its creator. And if there is no open societal order existing independently of the will of its creator, then the ideologue's initial pleading in favour of openness and breadth is, under the best of conditions, nothing more than special pleading and misguided thinking, and under the worst of conditions, subterfuge designed to place him or her, or one of their acolytes, in charge of whatever order there is.

Most importantly, of course, teachers are enjoined by their commitment to the truth to demonstrate to the ideologist that it is *not* the function of an academic to provide students with a smorgasbord of ideological offerings from which to choose. In fact, on what basis would the student's choices be made if, as the ideologist claims, there is no truth and all is ideological? No doubt, the choice(s) would be based on the prejudices of the moment. Of course, ever willing to demonstrate his or her open-mindedness when not at the helm, the ideologist will ally himself or herself with the prejudices of the moment. But when at the helm, the smorgasbord of choices will receive short shrift from the ideologist, and those who appeal to the need to be open-minded under these altered conditions are apt to discover just how dangerous such an appeal can be. The fact is that the sole function of a teacher is to go beyond ideological thinking, and to speak the truth as best he or she can, and if, at times, the truth happens to be on what some see as the ideological left, the ideological right or the ideological centre, then so be it. It is not correct because it is on the ideological left, right or centre. It is correct because it is about what is the case, about what is real and true.

34. The expression 'Second Reality' is borrowed from the Austrian novelist Heimito von Doderer (1896-1966), who, in his work *The Demons* (1956), was the first to speak of life in the modern world as having the character of a 'Second Reality,' thus conveying that it is alienated from the givenness of things. Life in the modern world has a puzzling character, he informs us. It is seen as real, but it ought not to be seen as real, for it isn't real.

35. We have here the reason why Eric Voegelin brands Karl Marx a 'swindler,' in his work *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company [Gateway Edition]), 1968, pp. 27f. Marx was a 'swindler,' according to Voegelin, because he very clearly understood what he was up to, and he went ahead and did it anyway, unlike many contemporary thinkers who do not fully understand either the import or the implications of this sort of move.

36. A great deal more should be said here about the transformation of the commonplace into the abnormal, and the abnormal into the essence of reasonableness, if we are to explain how the ideological thinker and ideological thinking gains the upper hand. One of the first things that has to be noted is that this transformation is not something that is made possible overnight. That is, it is not because an ideological thinker decides that he would like to experiment with the possibilities offered by his skill at designing alternative realities that it immediately becomes possible for him to foist on a community a Second Reality. Simply put, the shift is not something that is entirely the product of the ideological thinker's initiative. A great deal of preparation is required to transform the commonplace into the unfamiliar, and the unfamiliar into the commonplace. Before the ideologist can begin to realise his objective, a virus, so to speak, has to install itself in the community that is to be transformed by ideology, and, curiously, the ideologist has not much say about whether or not the virus installs itself. Furthermore, this virus is not necessarily something that is irresistible for a community. The community that wants to save itself from a terrible fate can extirpate the virus from its midst. However, as with all viruses, this virus usually makes itself invisible, or almost so, to the defences of the unwary community, and, as a result, the community weakens and eventually succumbs.

But what are the initial signs that a community is under attack by the virus of ideological thinking? This is a question that has intrigued scholars over the years, and while there are no absolutely incontestable signs that something is amiss in a given community, there are some features that seem to be present, if not in all, then in many communities under attack. The community that is under attack, or, at least, important segments of the community that is under attack, begin by showing signs of wanting what is beyond the capacity of any community to provide, namely, *certitude* about its future and perhaps even about life itself. The lack of *absolutely certain knowledge* about the future and life's meaning, which never disturbs the members of a healthy community, begins to trouble important segments of the community under attack. Truly reliable and incontestable knowledge about our destiny as human beings should be available to man, it is argued. For it not to be available is either a sign of our complicity in our ignorance, or clear evidence that the truth is being kept from us. And so, this is a situation that has to be remedied. We can wait no longer. Nay, we have waited too long. The point here is that the experience of a profound and ungovernable uncertainty – usually in times of crisis – calls forth a desire for certainty, and a desire for certainty calls forth a presumed incontrovertible answer, which has to be a pseudo answer, to be sure, for it can be nothing else.

But why do people who have lived with uncertainly become devotees of certainty? How is it that a people that has always lived with uncertainty

becomes unable to do so any longer? Is it that they become devotees of certainty solely because of the times and because they have lost sight of who they are, ...of what it means to be human?

37. In *The German Ideology*, Marx writes:

'In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not set out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men [h]as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life. In the first method of approach the starting-point is consciousness taken as the living individual; in the second method, which conforms to real life, it is the real living individuals themselves, and consciousness is considered solely as their consciousness.' See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), pp. 37f.

38. Unfortunately, this shift away from the common-sense understanding of life and of the world about us to an ideological understanding of the world finds support, ideological thinkers will argue, in, of all places, the world of the natural sciences. But does it really find support there? It is well recognised by all students of the natural sciences that progress in the study of physical reality, where 'progress' is understood in the sense of the development of a deeper insight into the structure of physical reality, became possible when, in the 16th and 17th Centuries, early natural scientists abandoned their common-sense understandings of the world about them and opted in favour of abstract conceptualisations of physical reality, conceptualisations which had a great deal to do with the abstract mathematical harmonies of the ancients. That was, for example, when the Aristotelian understanding of motion, and then the notion of 'impetus' of Beneditti, and similar notions rooted in the world of common sense, were replaced by the Newton's first law of mechanics, which was very definitely not rooted in man's everyday life experiences, and yet, this new abstract conceptualisation provided our ancestors with a deeper understanding of the physics of motion. (See Herbert Butterfield, *The Origins of Modern Science, 1300-1800*, (Toronto: Clarke Irwin and Co., Ltd., 1957) originally published in 1947, Chapter I; and E.A. Burtt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1924)).

Now, ideologists believe that they are engaged in the same type of shift that natural scientists engaged in when they suspended their common-sensical beliefs and opted for an abstract conceptualisation of the world about them. However, are they? It seems that ideologists seriously misread the problem at hand when they seek to associate their way of reasoning to that of the natural scientists. The first error they make relates to the fact that when natural scientists abandoned their common-sense understanding of physical reality in favour of an abstract conceptualisation of this same reality, they applied this abstract conceptualisation to a reality that *is*, i.e., to a reality that is not authored by them. Their abstract conceptualisations had to do justice to what is. These abstract conceptualisations were not presumed to be creatively imposed upon a plasticity that would accept any definition proffered by a natural scientist. The natural scientist was not willing something into being, and then pretending to investigate what he had just willed into being. He was, through reliance on his intellect, attempting to reveal what really was the case. The ideologist, on the other hand, unlike the natural scientist, proceeds with a belief in the primacy of the will over the intellect, and he denies the existence of givenness to reality, and this includes physical reality. The point here is that the capriciousness of willing, that the natural scientist shuns at all cost, becomes the driving force of the ideologist and ideological thinking.

In this connection, consider the world of T.D. Lysenko. T.D. Lysenko, it will be recalled, was the Marxist 'biologist' who, in the 1930s, argued that the Mendelian laws of heredity were bourgeois, and that they no longer applied in advanced Marxist environments such as the Soviet Union. With the Soviet leadership's support, he promptly set about to demonstrate how right he was by showing how in Soviet agriculture the Mendelian laws had been superseded in the progressive Marxist state that was the U.S.S.R. The result was that he became famous for contributing to the massive failure of Soviet agriculture. Clearly reality *is,* and one cannot creatively fiddle with it in the interests of realising one's dream world. It will not be opposed by any ideologist or ideological thinking. In this particular instance, a terrible price was paid to discover something that is so obvious.

As we have seen, for the ideologist, reality is a function of man's thought process. What this means is that the ideologist's abstract conceptualisations are not called upon to reflect and articulate exigencies that are independent of the mind of the ideologist. The ideologist conceives of himself as one who is free to construct any sort of reality he elects to construct, whereas the natural scientists are not constructing realities when they abandon a common-sense understanding of the world about them in favour of an abstract and often mathematical conceptualisation. Their conceptualisations, in and through their abstractness and mathematical character, have to do justice to reality. The difference is that the ideologist can literally fabricate any conceptualisation that he

chooses to fabricate, and even make claims about its explanatory power, when it, in fact, has absolutely no explanatory power at all. Indeed, how could it have any explanatory power, since in order for something to have explanatory power, it has to be about a something that has an integrity all its own. Explanatory power is about a something that exists independent of the explanation.

In addition, assuming that the problem described above did not exist, still there is a difficulty which the ideologist does not take into account. It is this. Can the approach of the natural scientist that is described above, and this is appropriate for the study of physical realities, enable us to understand social reality? The answer, I believe, is 'no, it cannot,' and the reason is because social reality does not have its existence as a reality in quite the same way as physical reality has its existence. Paraphrasing the words of Charles Taylor, social reality has real existence. It is not a subjectivity. However, we must also understand that it is, *in part*, constituted by the language that we use to speak about it, whereas physical reality is not. Physical reality exists, as it exists, on its own, and it is not constituted by our language. Stating this in a slightly different way, the language that we use to speak about physical reality is heavily symbolic, whereas the language that we use to speak about social reality is both symbolic and constitutive. As a consequence, if we are to render social reality correctly and do it justice, we cannot, in our efforts to conceptualise this reality, abandon outright (in the manner that David Easton's systems theory of political life, for example, speaks about inputs, outputs, feedback loops, etc., all terms that play no role in common sense everyday parlance about political life), or sever our thought in a serious way from, the common-sense discourse that we have used and continue to use to constitute and even reconstitute this reality. The point here is that because political reality is, as Taylor elegantly demonstrates, in part constituted by the language that we use to speak about it, as actors, we cannot hope to render that same reality in a completely different language, ...a pseudo-scientific language that can reflect and constitute none of the subtlety and richness of the social reality at hand. See Charles Taylor, 'Interpretation and the Sciences of Man.' *The Review of Metaphysics*, XXV 1 (Sept. 1971): 3-51.

39. Many of us fail to realise just how serious were the Nazi claims regarding race. We tend to think of the Nazi interest in race as being little more than a witless expression of Hitlerian madness. Yet, the truth is that Nazi 'scholars' conducted elaborate studies, in which they travelled far and wide to measure bone and cranial structures of peoples from various parts of the world and backgrounds in an effort to establish race as the pre-eminent explanatory factor of history.

40. Notice that the objective of this sort of ideological thinking is to discipline, control and ultimately suppress the 'corrupting' influences of the personal on knowing and the growth of knowledge, in short, to read man out of the knowing equation, and to replace him with an impersonal proceduralism that is supposed to guarantee a compliance that is absent where human preferences are present.

41. Observe what this ideological reasoning does. At the explicit level, it places emphasis on the primacy of sense data and the facts, but it actually does not get the facts about how we know right, and it does not care that it does not get the facts about the knowing process right, because ultimately it is more committed to its ideological understanding about how knowing takes place than it is to getting things right. The point here is that any close analysis of what actually occurs when scientific knowing takes place will demonstrate that it is not sense data and facts that are primary. It is the basis on which the selection of sense data and facts is made that is primary, and this is not something that is empirical or knowable empirically. This basis is located in something that is deeply personal, and draws on a discretionariness (a fiduciariness, Polanyi will say) that cannot be empirically motivated. So attempting to eliminate the human person and his or her discretion from the knowing process in an effort to overcome bias in knowing is not a step forward. It is a blinding of oneself to what actually takes place when someone knows in the scientific way, ...an eclipsing of reality in the interests of meeting the requirements of an ideology.

Stating this in a slightly different way, the ideology of positivist empiricism cripples the knower's consciousness of how he actually experiences knowing, in the sense that it draws the knower's attention away from the important role he or she plays in the development of scientific knowledge and places the focus on a matter of secondary importance, namely, the facts. The point here is not that facts in science are not important. Of course, they are. But the facts do not take decisions. Facts cannot take a decision. Man takes the decision, even when it is a decision about which sense datum is a fact and which is not, and which fact is to be credit and which fact can be safely ignore. Of course, this is an expression of preference, and so the positivist empiricist does not want us to say this, because it introduces a factor into the knowing equation that the positivist empiricists wishes to eliminate, namely, human bias and personal preference. And yet, at some level, the positivist empiricist, like the rest of us, is aware of the fact that natural scientists advance knowledge by relying on personal preference. How could it be otherwise? But this cannot be acknowledged because the ideology of positivist empiricism forbids it. So the positivist empiricist sets up a series of procedural requirements, under the rubric of methodology, designed to eclipse our awareness of man's reliance on personal preference in science. As with all forms of ideological thinking, the purpose of adding these procedural requirements is that they serve to discipline and control the personal, which is something that all ideological thinking sees as problematical. But they do nothing for our understanding of how the advancement of knowledge takes place, which is, of course, what is of concern to us. In fact, focussing on procedural requirements actually cripples our understanding of our ability to advance knowledge.

42. A *justifiable preference* is a preference that searches out and correctly identifies the clue to the real that is contained within the fact. The point is that a fact in

science does not point to itself. Indeed, it would not exist as a fact if that is all it did. A fact is not self-sufficient. It is not a fact if it does not direct us away from itself. A fact points away from itself and towards something else, namely, the real, and the ability to recognise the direction of this pointing (to read the clue, i.e., the meaning of what the scientist identifies as a fact) is very much a function of a particular scientist's deep connoisseurship and personal knowledge. It is the scientist's ability to read meaning that elevates what was till then a 'something' to the status of a fact.

43. It is not uncommon at this point in the argument for some to say that this characterisation of empiricism is incorrect, and that empiricism has gone beyond these views, that were characteristic of the 1920s and '30s. But the issue is not with whether the empirical plays a role in the advancement of knowledge. Of course it does, and British empiricism as opposed to continental empiricism does a good job of showing that facts play a role in the growth of knowledge. But what British empiricism does not do is ideologize this issue. The problem is positivist empiricism and whether it (a) correctly understands how knowledge is advanced, and (b) most importantly, with whether the social sciences have, in part, fallen victim to the ideology that is positivist empiricism or scientism. The argument here is that positivist empiricism does not allow us to understand how scientific knowledge develops, and that some social sciences have indeed fallen victim to scientism.

44. In this connection, see the writings of the Anglo-Hungarian physical chemist and philosopher of science, Michael Polanyi (1891-1976), particularly his work *Person Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, to which I referred above.

45. This phenomenon has been very well studied by psychologists, psychiatrists and artists. An especially readable examination of this problem is to be found in Arthur Koestler's work *Darkness at Noon* (1940).

46. There is a cost to all of this. One cannot engage in this game of self-deception and not expect to pay the price. And the price is paid by everyone, including the ideologists in our midst. In some of the less developed parts of the world, the price that is paid is usually easy to calculate. It is calculated in terms of the death and violence associated with the various efforts to impose an order and a reality that is at odds with the given order and the real. Here, we have only to list the many atrocities that have been committed in developing societies, in the name of different ideologies and 'beneficent dreaming,' in modern times. However, the price seems, for most people, more difficult to calculate when societies are developed and are described as open. Still, there is a price. It may not always take the form of the murderous activities that we have seen and continue to see in developing societies, but here too there is violence involved. It manifests itself in various ways and is often inner directed. One way in which it expresses itself is in the use of a great variety of drugs that many of our contemporaries take 'just to get through the day,' i.e., to treat what I have called 'cognitive dissonances,' but which are also often referred to as 'pathologies of the modern psyché' by physicians. Parenthetically, it should perhaps be noted here that one of the first rate students of the economics of ideological thinking is Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who in almost all of his works weighs and measures the cost of ideological self-deception.