

Stuart Hall and the Marxist Concept of Ideology

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Introduction

That one cannot find agreement about the Marxist concept of ideology is hardly surprising or news anymore. The disagreements affect almost every aspect of the concept: its content, its effectivity and its epistemological status which is manifest in a range of questions. Is ideology subjective and ideal (created by and existing in the minds of individuals) or objective and material (existing in material apparatuses and its practices)? Is ideology a determined and epiphenomenal superstructure or an autonomous discourse with its own effectivity capable of constituting subjects? Is ideology negative and critical (a distortion or inversion) or neutral (the articulated discourse of a class, fraction or party)? Do ideological elements possess an inherent class character or are they neutral and capable of being articulated to various classes? These questions continue to haunt theoretical discussion and have hardly received a unanimous answer. I do not think this lack of theoretical agreement, confusing as it may be, should be considered so intolerable as to prompt a desperate search for *the* Marxist concept of ideology. Even if one wanted to do that one would find it impossible, simply because one has to accept the fact that there are several major traditions within Marxism which construct different concepts of ideology. However, it is important critically to analyse and confront these different approaches and their particular claims to explaining aspects of social reality, not only with a view to showing which is most adequate but also to explore whether they are complementary in any way.

In part this reflection has been motivated by reading Stuart Hall's¹ article 'The Toad in the Garden: Thatcherism among the Theorists' (1988a) which seems to claim the practical

Theory, Culture & Society (SAGE, London, Newbury Park and New Delhi), Vol. 8 (1991), 1-28

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superiority of a particular conception of ideology in the explanation of Thatcherism. Hall tries to show that there is one interpretation of ideology (a neutral version of Gramscian, Althusserian and Laclauian inspiration) which best accounts for the Thatcherite ideological phenomenon, whereas there is another (the "classic variant" of the Marxist theory of ideology, such as we find in or derive from Marx and Engels's *German Ideology*) which cannot adequately explain it (Hall, 1988a: 41). The purpose of this article is to examine this claim, but more importantly, through it, to compare the analytical capabilities of the neutral and critical versions of the Marxist concept of ideology as represented by Hall in the first case and by my interpretation of Marx in the second. It must be clear therefore that my aim is not a critique of Hall's analysis of Thatcherism nor a systematic critique of Thatcherism from the point of view of Marx's concept of ideology, although I shall claim that this can and must be done in addition to, and not instead of Hall's analyses.

Politics as Articulation and Ideology as Interpellation

The tradition which Hall represents within Marxism can be traced back to Althusser through the mediation of the early Laclau.² Together with other Althusserians like Mepham, Poulantzas, Godelier and Pêcheux, Laclau and Hall criticize the notion of false consciousness and start from the premise that it is not the subject that produces ideology as ideas but it is ideology, conceived as a material instance of practices and rituals, that constitutes the subject. Yet whereas the former maintain the negative conception of ideology present in the early Althusser and emphasize the idea of ideology as an 'imaginary transposition', its opposition to science, and the fact that it interpellates individuals as subjects in a fundamental misrecognition which helps reproduce the domination system, the latter are unambiguously critical of Althusser's shortcomings and selectively synthetic in trying theoretically to fuse what was best in his approach with a Gramscian perspective. Laclau and Hall know Marx very well and, at least at the beginning, want to develop their theories within Marxism, but do not hesitate in abandoning both the original Marxian negative concept of ideology and Althusser's early negative version. The idea of a theory of ideology 'in general', the exclusive functional role of ideology as reproducing production relations and the opposition between science and ideology

are discarded and class struggle is reinserted at the centre of the problematic of ideology.

Yet this reinsertion is carried out in a way which entails a renewed attempt to depart from essentialism and class reductionism. The principles of this attempt are, first, that difference cannot be reduced to identity and therefore social totality cannot be conceived as constituted by a basic contradiction which manifests or expresses itself at all levels but must be thought of as 'a unity which is constructed through the *differences* between, rather than the homology of, practices' (Hall, 1981b: 32); and second, that although not every contradiction in society can be reduced to a class contradiction, 'every contradiction is overdetermined by class struggle' (Laclau, 1977: 108). Laclau starts by establishing against Althusser that ideology cannot be simultaneously a level of any social formation and the opposite to science. So he decides to abandon the negative connotation of the concept (1977: 101n). Hall underlines this point by defining ideology as 'those images, concepts and premises which provide the frameworks through which we represent, interpret, understand and "make sense" of some aspect of social existence' (Hall, 1981a: 31). Three aspects of this conception are highlighted. 'First, ideologies do not consist of isolated and separate concepts, but in the articulation of different elements into a distinctive set or chain of meanings' (1981a: 31). 'Second, ideological statements are made by individuals; but ideologies are not the product of individual consciousness or intention. Rather we formulate our intentions *within ideology*' (1981a: 31). 'Third, ideologies "work" by constructing for their subjects (individuals and collective) positions of identification and knowledge which allow them to "utter" ideological truths as if they were their authentic authors' (1981a: 32).

Both Laclau and Hall take Althusser's idea that ideology interpellates individuals as subjects as the basic explanation of how ideology works. Ideologies are not really produced by individual consciousness but rather individuals formulate their beliefs, within positions already fixed by ideology, as if they were their true producers. However, individuals are not necessarily recruited and constituted as subjects obedient to the ruling class, the same mechanism of interpellation operates when individuals are recruited by revolutionary ideologies. Laclau's key insight is that ideologies are made of elements and concepts which have no necessary class belongingness and that these constituent units of ideologies can be

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articulated to a variety of ideological discourses which represent different classes. The class character of a concept is not given by its content but by its articulation into a class ideological discourse. Hence, there are no 'pure' ideologies which necessarily correspond to certain class interests. Every ideological discourse articulates several interpellations, not all of which are class interpellations. In fact Laclau identifies two possible kinds of antagonism which generate two types of interpellations. At the level of the mode of production there exist class contradictions and class interpellations. At the level of the social formation there are popular-democratic contradictions and interpellations, that is to say, ideological elements which interpellate individuals as 'the people', as the underdog. The idea is that class interpellations work by trying to articulate popular-democratic interpellations to the class ideological discourse:

The popular-democratic interpellation not only has no precise class content, but it is the domain of ideological class struggle par excellence. Every class struggles at the ideological level simultaneously as class and as the people, or rather, tries to give coherence to its ideological discourse by presenting its class objectives as the consummation of popular objectives. (Laclau, 1977: 108-9)

Whereas Laclau never attempts to ascertain Marx's concept of ideology and the starting point of his own construction is a critique and elaboration of Althusser, Hall is explicitly aware of Marx's contribution and seeks to assess it (1983). The first problem he confronts is the nature of the 'distortion' it apparently entails. But even before he addresses that problem he has already established his own definition (quoted above) which totally leaves out the idea of distortion. This does not present a problem for Hall because (a) there is no fully developed theory of ideology in Marx; (b) there are severe fluctuations in Marx's use of the term; (c) we *now* use the term 'to refer to *all* organised forms of social thinking'; and (d) 'Marx did, on many occasions, use the term ideology, practically, in this way' (Hall, 1983: 60). However, to his credit, Hall recognizes that most of the time Marx used the term as a critical weapon against other religious, philosophical and economic theories and acknowledges 'the fact . . . that Marx most often used "ideology" to refer specifically to the manifestations of bourgeois thought; and above all to its negative and distorted features' (1983: 61). Having said this, Hall critically examines the theoretical bases of the classical version: (1) ideas arise from and reflect the material conditions; (2) ideas

are effects of the economic level and (3) ruling ideas are the ideas of the ruling class. In spite of showing the insufficiency and problematic nature of these propositions Hall proposes to be constructive, especially in relation to the issue of distortion, and discovers, for instance that the way in which Marx deals with the question of truth and falsehood in relation to Classical Political Economy is far more complex than the critics would have us believe. Distortion in this context would amount to eternalization and naturalization of social relations. Equally, Marx's analysis of the operation of the market and its deceptive appearances provides another source of sophisticated insights into the problem of distortion, this time as 'one-sidedness', 'obscuring' or 'concealment' (Hall, 1983: 67-73).

Ultimately Hall's effort to interpret Marx's notion of distortion aims at by-passing the distinction true-false, that is to say, at excluding from the definition of distortion the connotation of falsehood in the sense of illusion or unreality. In the second place, he aims to show that the 'economic relations themselves cannot prescribe a single, fixed and unalterable way of conceptualizing' reality, but that reality 'can be "expressed" within different ideological discourses' (Hall, 1983: 76). With both of these objectives I can agree except in his calling all discourses 'ideological'. This in itself is symptomatic of a theoretical decision which Hall has legitimately taken from the beginning but which one can easily lose sight of at this point, namely, the fact that his discussion and partial rescue of the notion of 'distortion' has not been done with a view to adopting Marx's critical concept of ideology. In fact Hall continues to uphold the definition he started with, a definition which leaves out the problem of distortion as inherent in the ideological phenomenon. Nevertheless, his effort to understand and accept the best senses in which Marx spoke of distortions, leaves one the impression that for Hall, at this stage (1983), Marx's critical notion of ideology has a place; it could be partially rescued from the critics even if it is not the way in which Hall himself proposes to deal with or use the concept.

Confrontation Before the Tribunal of Thatcherism

Reading 'The Toad in the Garden: Thatcherism among the Theorists' (1988a) leaves one a different impression. The point here, Hall states at the beginning, is not pure theoretical critique and refutation but to refer theories to the analysis of a concrete political problem,

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Thatcherism, in order to ascertain which theory is able to give a better account of it. In this practical confrontation the so-called classic variant of the theory of ideology derived from *The German Ideology* is said to be unable adequately to explain the Thatcherite ideological phenomenon whereas some of Althusser's key insights are said to be positively confirmed. One can only conclude from such a comparison that Marx's variant has lost its analytical capabilities to deal with new ideological developments and should therefore be replaced by a better theory. Hall presents four main arguments. First, the basic correspondence between ruling ideas and ruling class postulated by Marx overlooks ideological differences within the dominant classes and the fact that certain ideological formations, like Thatcherism, must vigorously fight against traditional conservative ideas in order to become 'the normative-normalised structure of conceptions through which a class "spontaneously" and authentically thinks or lives its relations to the world' (Hall, 1988a: 42). For Hall 'the conventional approach suggests that the dominant ideas are ascribed by and inscribed in the position a class holds in the structure of social relations . . . it is not assumed that these ideas should have to win ascendancy . . . through a specific and contingent . . . process of ideological struggle' (1988a: 42). The critique which Poulantzas (1976: 202) and Laclau (1977: 160-1) make of the classical Marxist theory for conceiving of ideology as the 'number-plates' on the back of social classes and for arguing that each ideological element or concept has a necessary class belongingness, expresses similar concerns.

Second, 'in the classical perspective, Thatcherism would be understood as in no significant way different from traditional conservative ruling ideas'. But Thatcherism for Hall is 'a quite distinct, specific and novel combination of ideological elements' (1988a: 42) which, although it integrates some elements of traditional Toryism, does so in a radically new way. Third, the classical theory of ideology can only explain the penetration and success of the ruling ideas within the working class by recourse to false consciousness. The popular classes are duped by the dominant classes, temporarily ensnared against their material interests by a false structure of illusions, which would be dispelled as real material factors re-assert themselves. But this has failed during Thatcherism because 'mass unemployment has taken a much longer time than predicted to percolate mass consciousness'. 'The unemployed . . . are still by no

means automatic mass converts to labourism, let alone socialism' (1988a: 43). False consciousness

assumes an empiricist relation of the subject to knowledge, namely that the real world indelibly imprints its meanings and interests directly into our consciousness. We have only to look to discover its truths. And if we cannot see them, then it must be because there is a cloud of unknowing that obscures the unilateral truth of the real. (1988a: 44)

In contrast to this view Hall argues that

the first thing to ask about an 'organic ideology' that, however unexpectedly, succeeds in organizing substantial sections of the masses and mobilizing them for political action, is not what is *false* about it but what about it is *true*. By 'true' I do not mean universally correct as a law of the universe but 'makes good sense'. (1988a: 46).

Fourth,

it is a highly unstable theory about the world which has to assume that vast numbers of ordinary people, mentally equipped in much the same way as you or I, can simply be thoroughly and systematically duped into misrecognizing entirely where their real interests lie. Even less acceptable is the position that, whereas they, the masses are the dupes of history, we — the privileged — are somehow without a trace of illusion and can see right through into the truth, the essence, of a situation. (Hall, 1988a: 44)

What can one say about these arguments? First of all, one must recognize that they are not at all new and that Hall had already expressed them in other contexts, even within the same article where he dealt at length with Marx's notion of distortion (1983). However, the celebratory context of that article and the careful scrutiny of Marx's texts allowed a far more balanced outcome. In the new version (1988a), before the tribunal of Thatcherism, the criticisms take over completely and very little of Marx's theory seems to be worth saving. Second, Hall's arguments against the classical variant show some confusion in that a flawed neutral concept of Leninist origin seems to be conflated with Marx's negative concept. Third, although Hall is careful to state that his criticisms are no reason to throw over some of the insights of the classical Marxist explanation (1988a: 44), his account of such insights is insufficient and rather partial (only a couple of paragraphs) whereas the accent is put overwhelmingly on the fact that Thatcherism has positively confirmed

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Althusser's key insights. In examining Hall's arguments I shall try to demonstrate three main points. First, that Hall's approach to ideology is important and necessary to the analysis of Thatcherism and indeed of any 'ideology' which succeeds in attracting widespread support. Second, that important and necessary as that analysis may be, it is still partial and limited, and must be complemented by the critical approach. Third, that Marx's theory of ideology is also indispensable to the analysis of Thatcherism although from a different point of view.

First, one can agree with Hall that the ideological unity of classes is non-existent and that Thatcherism had to fight to gain ideological ascendancy within the ruling classes, let alone the dominated ones. But this assertion presupposes a concept of ideology which is different from Marx's. For Marx ideology was not equivalent to 'the ruling ideas', nor, for that matter, to 'those images, concepts and premises which provide the frameworks through which we represent, understand and make sense of some aspects of social existence', as Hall prefers to put it. Marx did not speak of class ideologies or 'ideological discourses' in the sense Hall does. It seems to me that there are three problems with the way in which Hall argues. First, he chooses to ignore in this particular context the negative character of Marx's concept of ideology. Second, he imputes to Marx, and particularly to *The German Ideology*, a neutral concept, albeit a flawed one. Third, in so far as the ruling class is concerned, he identifies Marx's supposedly neutral concept of ideology with the dominant ideas.

Let us clarify these issues. In general, negative or critical conceptions of ideology refer to a kind of distorted thought, whatever the way in which we choose to understand such distortion. Neutral conceptions refer to political ideas, discourses and world-views which are articulated around some principles related to the interests of some social group, party or class. A negative concept of ideology is inherently capable of discriminating between adequate and inadequate ideas, it passes epistemological judgement on thought, whatever its class origin or the expressed intention of its supporters. An ideological idea is a distorted idea. The neutral concept of ideology does not, of itself, discriminate between adequate and inadequate ideas, it does not pass epistemological judgement on them but emphasizes that through them human beings acquire consciousness of social reality and links those ideas to some class interests or to some articulating political principle. Thus one can speak of

bourgeois ideology and proletarian ideology, liberal ideology and nationalist ideology without necessarily wanting to establish or prejudge their adequacy or truth.

Within the neutral conception of ideology critical judgement can be passed on ideologies, but always from the perspective of a different ideology. Thus when Marxists in the Leninist tradition criticize bourgeois ideology they do it from the point of view of proletarian ideology and what they criticize is its bourgeois character, not its ideological character which their own Marxist doctrine shares. In this conception, ideology of itself does not entail any necessary distortion. For the neutral version the 'ideological' is the quality of any thought or idea that serves or articulates group or class interests, whatever they may be. For the negative version, on the contrary, the 'ideological' is the attribute of any thought or idea which distorts or inverts reality.

The Interpretation of Marx

It is of course impossible to give a full account of Marx's theory of ideology in this article, but having dwelled for considerable time on this problem in the past,³ I can at least affirm that, in my interpretation, there is overwhelming evidence that he contributes a negative concept of ideology. When Marx speaks of ideology he always refers to a kind of distortion or inversion of reality. He never refers to his own theory as an ideology or proletarian ideology, nor does he ever consider the possibility of an ideology serving the interests of the proletariat. Marx and Engels always spoke of ideology in the singular and never referred to class ideologies in the plural,⁴ as Laclau and Hall do, following the Leninist and Gramscian tradition. Marx and Engels are always in opposition to ideology. In this they are absolutely consistent from their early writings to their mature writings irrespective of whether they are dealing with religion, German philosophy or the spontaneous economic and political forms of consciousness fostered by the capitalist market. In fact it is possible to maintain that the mechanism of ideology remains basically the same in all of these forms of consciousness which Marx successively analysed in his intellectual career.

Marx's early critique of religion first outlines such a mechanism: religion compensates in the mind for a deficient social reality; it reconstitutes in the imagination a coherent but distorted solution which goes beyond the real world in an attempt to resolve the contradictions and sufferings of the real world. As he put it, '*religious*

suffering is at one and the same time the *expression* of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature' (Marx, 1975: 244). Religion appears as an inversion because God, being a creature of the human beings' minds, becomes the creator, and the human beings, who create the idea of God, become the creatures. But this inversion in the mind responds to and derives from a real inversion: 'this state and this society produces religion, which is an *inverted consciousness of the world*, because they are an *inverted world*' (Marx, 1975: 244).

When Marx criticizes the German philosophers and left Hegelians the same mechanism of inversion is present. The German ideologists believed that the true problems of humankind were mistaken and religious ideas which they could destroy by criticism. They forget, Marx and Engels aver, that 'to these phrases they themselves are only opposing other phrases, and they are in no way combating the real existing world' (Marx and Engels, 1976: 41). Their ideological inversion consisted in that they started from consciousness instead of from material reality; instead of looking at German reality 'they descended from heavens to earth'. Again, this mental inversion responds to a real inversion in reality: 'If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical-life process' (Marx and Engels, 1976: 47). Similarly, when analysing the capitalist mode of production, Marx distinguishes the sphere of appearances (the market) from the sphere of inner relations (production), and argues that there is a basic inversion at the level of production, namely, the fact that past labour dominates living labour (the subject becomes an object and vice versa), and that this inversion 'necessarily produces certain correspondingly inverted conceptions, a transposed consciousness which is further developed by the metamorphoses and modifications of the actual circulation process' (Marx, 1974: III, 45).

These examples, taken from Marx's analyses at different points in his intellectual evolution, show a consistent pattern in spite of their different nature. In all of them there is a reference to an 'inverted consciousness of the world' which corresponds to an 'inverted world'. This inverted world is practically produced by a 'limited material mode of activity' as a contradictory world and is simultaneously projected into distorted forms of consciousness which conceal and misrepresent that contradictory reality. The role

of ideology is to help reproduce that contradictory world in the interest of the ruling class. But ideology is not the result of a conspiracy of the ruling class to deceive the dominated classes, nor is it an arbitrary invention of consciousness. It is rather a spontaneous or elaborated discursive attempt to deal with forms of oppression and contradictions which is unable to ascertain the true origin of these problems and therefore results in the masking and reproduction of those very contradictions and forms of oppression.

The contradictions Marx refers to in his treatment of ideology within capitalism, are all derived from or express an aspect of the principal contradiction of capitalism, namely, the contradiction which is constitutive of the very essence of the capitalist mode of production, the contradiction between capital and labour. These two poles relate in a contradictory way because they presuppose and negate each other. As Marx puts it, 'capital presupposes wage labour; wage labour presupposes capital. They reciprocally condition the existence of each other; they reciprocally bring forth each other' (Marx, 1970a: 82). But this mutual conditioning engenders mutual opposition because 'the working individual *alienates* himself; relates to the conditions brought out of him by his labour as those not of his *own* but of an *alien wealth* and of his own poverty' (Marx, 1973: 541). Live labour engenders capital (dead labour), but the latter controls the former; capital reproduces itself by reproducing its opposite, wage labour. It is this contradictory process of continuous reproduction whereby capital reproduces itself by reproducing its opposite that explains the origin and function of ideology. The process, in so far as it is contradictory and alienates the worker, needs to be concealed in order to be able to continue to reproduce itself.

The way in which ideology is produced as part of the process of reproduction of the capitalist main contradiction, can be ascertained by focusing on the way in which the two poles, capital and labour relate to each other. Although the production and appropriation of surplus-value occurs at the level of production, capital and labour first come into contact through the market. This contact through the market appears perfectly fair and equitable, for capital and labour exchange equivalent values. So the process of production and extraction of surplus-value is concealed by the operation of the market which becomes the source of ideological representations such as the idea of a 'fair wage', equality, freedom, etc. According

to Marx, the labourer's 'economic bondage is both brought about and concealed by the periodic sale of himself, by his change of masters, and by the oscillation in the market-price of labour-power' (Marx, 1974: I, 542). Because the exchange of equivalents by free individuals in the market is seen on the surface of society and conceals the hidden extraction of surplus-value in the process of production, it naturally tends to be reproduced in the minds of both capitalists and labourers as equality and freedom, the lynchpins of capitalist ideology.

There is no doubt that Marx proposes a form of opposition between science and ideology. If ideology is a distorted form of thought that remains trapped in appearances, science, on the contrary, is an intellectual activity which is able to penetrate the veil of appearances to reach the inner relations of reality. As Marx puts it, 'all science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided' (Marx, 1974: III, 817). But this opposition is not conceived in the positivist manner which entails that science can overcome ideology as truth overcomes error. For Marx science cannot overcome ideology because ideology is not simply an intellectual error, but it has its sources in a contradictory reality. Only the practical transformation of that reality, the practical resolution of its contradictions, can overcome ideology.

So, the emphasis is put by Marx not on ideology being a world-view, or a discourse consisting of articulated concepts and images by means of which we try to make sense of social existence; the emphasis is put on ideology being a specific form of distortion, not just false consciousness in general. The specificity of the distortion is its function of sustaining domination and reproducing the capitalist system by masking contradictions. So not all forms of distortion are necessarily ideological. And precisely because of this restricted and negative character, ideology cannot be confused with the ruling ideas. The confusion would entail that all ruling ideas are distorted. Marx never condemned the whole of bourgeois thought as ideological. He appreciated the scientific contributions of bourgeois authors just as much as the literary production of bourgeois artists. That he clearly distinguished between the ideological and other 'free' forms of consciousness of the ruling class is shown by his critique of Storch for not conceiving material production in historical form. Storch, Marx says, 'deprives himself of the basis on which alone can be understood partly the ideological component

parts of the ruling class, partly the free spiritual production of this particular social formation' (Marx, 1969: I, 285).

However, some ambiguities in Marx and Engels's formulations and, especially, the fact that *The German Ideology* was not published in the West until the 1930s, made it more difficult for the first generations of Marxists to apprehend the sense in which Marx and Engels had used the concept. In the absence of *The German Ideology* other, more ambiguous texts became central for the conceptualization of ideology such as Marx's 1859 Preface, Engels's *Anti-Dühring* and various letters and prefaces. Kautsky, Plekhanov and others began increasingly to use ideology in a neutral sense. Lenin, in the context of exploding class struggles in Russia and driven mainly by the urgent need to theorize the working-class critique of bourgeois ideology finally consolidated this usage when he wrote *What is to be Done?* He depicted a highly polarized political struggle which determined that 'the *only* choice is — either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a "third" ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or an above-class ideology)' (Lenin, 1975: 48). Ever since that moment, the critical concept of ideology all but disappeared from Marxism until under the influence of both Critical Theory and, paradoxically, the work of the early Althusser, it was rediscovered.⁵

So when Laclau, Poulantzas and Hall criticize the classical theory for conceiving of ideology as the 'number-plates' on the back of social classes and for overlooking ideological differences within the dominant classes, they are not criticizing Marx's concept but a version of Lenin's, and are proposing an alternative which, admittedly, improves on certain interpretations of Lenin's conception. However, by conflating Marx and Lenin on this issue, they fail to make a crucial distinction between two different traditions within Marxism and they do not seem to be aware of any difference between Marx and Lenin in relation to the concept of ideology.

Second, the charge that with Marx's theory of ideology Thatcherism would be understood as in no significant way different from traditional conservative ruling ideas misses the crucial point, again, that for Marx ideology and ruling ideas are not the same. By definition, Marx's theory of ideology did not and could not address the question of competing political outlooks within a ruling party. Hall's argument is right against an interpretation of the Leninist concept of ideology which rigidly imputes an ideology to a

particular class position, but not right against Marx's conception. But even addressing a neutral Leninist definition of ideology, the charge must be made with caution. True, Thatcherism and traditional conservatism are different forms of political thought corresponding to different stages of accumulation in the capitalist system. But one must not forget that there is also an element of continuity. Both ideological forms are concerned with the protection and expansion of the capitalist system under a different form. Mrs Thatcher was not presiding over any change of the mode of production, she was propping up and defending the same capitalist system at a different stage of development. The novelty of her position should not therefore be exaggerated.

Third, Hall criticizes Marx's alleged recourse to false consciousness in order to explain the success of ruling ideas, and its implicit empiricist connotations. First of all, it must be clarified that Marx never defined ideology simply as false consciousness or even used such expression. It was Engels who used this expression, and only once (Engels, 1975: 434). It is not that I am trying to deny that ideology for Marx and Engels involved a form of false consciousness. It certainly did, but it was not false consciousness in general, nor was it conceived as an illusion; it was a very specific form of distortion. The notion of false consciousness on its own is problematic and quite different from Marx's concept of ideology. In this I agree with Hall and other critics. First, it is an equivocal expression for it can convey both the idea of a distortion and the idea that such distortion is an invention or a delusion of individual consciousness, a mirage without any base in reality. I contend that Marx's concept of ideology entails the former but not the latter idea. I underline the fact that the problem here is ambiguity and not that false consciousness, of itself and necessarily, entails the connotation of deception by individual subjects.

Second, if ideology is simply defined as false consciousness the impression is given that it is a mere cognitive or epistemological problem which can be put right by criticism or science. Just like Habermas's idea of systematically distorted communication, the notion of false consciousness does not make any explicit reference to the material practices and antagonisms in social reality which contribute to its emergence. Ideology appears disconnected from the real social contradictions which give rise to it and therefore it can supposedly be dealt with at a purely discursive level without requiring any alteration of social reality. Third, and most

important, the expression 'false consciousness' is vague because it does not determine the kind of falsity which ideology entails. Its apparently universal and general scope seems to encompass all sorts of distortions and falsities as if they were ideological. In fact, ideology is equated with error and loses its identity as a distinct concept. It must be accepted that many errors and mistakes could exist which should not be necessarily treated as ideological distortions. For Marx the ideological distortion is specific and makes a necessary reference to the concealment of social contradictions.

If there are any remaining doubts about this issue Marx dispels them in *Capital*. It is not the ruling class directly that dupes the working class; the very reality of the market relations creates a world of appearances which deceive people. Contrary to Hall's version, Marx never thought that the material reality of capitalism would directly dispel the illusions of the workers. It was material reality itself that deceived them. But as Hall well realizes, neither deception nor liberation from deception is directly prescribed by economic relations. According to Marx, the operation of the market was

a very Eden of the innate rights of man. There alone rule Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, say of labour-power, are constrained only by their own free will. They contract as free agents and the agreement they come to is but the form in which they give legal expression to their common will. Equality, because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to himself. (1974: 1, 172)

These four principles were for Marx the basis of bourgeois political ideology. And as in all ideology, these principles concealed what went on beneath the surface where 'this apparent individual equality and liberty disappear' and 'prove to be inequality and unfreedom'. This is why unemployment and/or low salaries by and of themselves do not necessarily transform the beliefs of people. There is no 'cloud of unknowing' for Marx that obscures an easily seen reality. Such a view can perhaps be attributed to Bacon and his theory of idols or to Holbach and Helvetius and their theory of prejudices, but not to Marx. This is why, for Marx, what can dispel ideological forms are not critical ideas or science, but political practices of transformation.

As for the rest of the ruling ideas, it is not true either that Marx explained their success and penetration within the working class by

recourse to false consciousness. His explanation in *The German Ideology* is quite different. If the ideas of the ruling class are the ruling ideas it is because

the class which is the ruling *material* force of society is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it. (Marx and Engels, 1976: 59)

Hall seems to believe that for Marx 'the control over the means of mental production' is the reason why the masses have been duped. In fact Marx in this passage is not talking about ideology at all, but about the ruling ideas, which are two different things. But Hall does otherwise understand exceedingly well the point of this quotation when he describes some of the 'insights of the classical Marxist explanation':

The social distribution of knowledge *is* skewed . . . the circle of dominant ideas *does* accumulate the symbolic power to map or classify the world for others . . . it becomes the horizon of the taken-for-granted. Ruling ideas may dominate other conceptions of the social world by setting the limit to what will appear as rational, reasonable, credible . . . the monopoly of the means of intellectual production . . . is not, of course, irrelevant to this acquisition over time of symbolic dominance . . . (Hall, 1988a: 44-5)

For Marx neither ideologically distorted ideas nor correct ideas can be explained as emerging from an empiricist relation whereby the real world indelibly imprints its meanings, be they distorted or sound, directly into our consciousness. This assumes that the real world is simple and transparent and that subjects are rather passive recipients. For Marx, on the contrary, the real world of capitalism was not transparent; phenomenal forms created by the market concealed the real relations at the level of production. But subjects were not passive either, bound to be deceived or bound to scientifically understand reality; they were actively engaged in practices which, in so far as limited and merely reproductive, enhanced the appearances of the market, in so far as transformatory or revolutionary, facilitated the apprehension of real relations.

When Hall says that the first thing to ask about an ideology which succeeds in organizing a substantial section of the masses is not what is false about it but what about it is true, he overlooks two things. First, in talking about an ideology which succeeds in organizing

masses, he is clearly using a neutral concept of ideology in the Gramscian tradition. Marx worked with a different, negative concept and, therefore, to criticize him for not putting the problem of ideology in terms of political ideas which become popular does not make good sense. Second, even if one accepts Hall's Gramscian definition of ideology as useful, as I do, he does not seem to see the different but complementary contribution which Marx's concept of ideology could make to it. For why should we restrict ourselves to finding out what makes good sense in an ideology? Is it not also quite necessary to find out what is wrong and expose it? Assuming that Nazism and Fascism were ideologies in the Gramscian sense which, however unexpectedly, succeeded in organizing important sections of the German and Italian masses, was it not important to find out not only what was true about them, the good sense which seduced people into accepting them, but also to find out and expose what was false and did not make good sense about them?

Finally, Hall castigates Marx's theory for assuming that vast numbers of ordinary people could be duped into misrecognizing where their real interests lie, whereas a few privileged theoreticians could see right through into the truth. But this is a misunderstanding. For misrecognition, in Marx's terms, had nothing to do with the mental equipment or intelligence of people. The concept of ideology was not a device to label a part of the community as stupid or less intelligent. According to Marx, capitalists themselves, just as much as the workers, as the bearers and agents of the capitalist system, were deceived by the very operation of the market. As he put it,

The final pattern of economic relations as seen on the surface, in their real existence and consequently in the conceptions by which the bearers and agents of these relations seek to understand them, is very much different from, and indeed quite the reverse of, their inner but concealed essential pattern and the conception corresponding to it. (Marx, 1974: III, 209)

the confusion of the theorists best illustrates the utter incapacity of the practical capitalist, blinded by competition as he is, and incapable of penetrating its phenomena, to recognize the inner essence and inner structure of this process behind its outer appearance. (1974: III, 168)

The accusation that Marx's theory proposed an absolute distinction between the dupes of history and the few privileged or enlightened who can see right through into the truth, was dismissed by Marx very early in the *Theses on Feuerbach* when he argued that 'the educator must himself be educated' and criticized those who 'divide

society into two parts, one of which is superior to society' (Marx, 1976: 7). However, this does not mean that social scientists and philosophers cannot make the critique of common sense or cannot propose their theories with a claim to truth. It is not just Marx who is the only one who thinks he has a key to understand social reality (this is the most frequent criticism of Marx's theory of ideology). Surely other accounts of Thatcherism (including Hall's) are also propounded with a claim to render evident the essence of the situation, independently of whether or not it is so apprehended by the people. Why then deny the same right to Marx?

Neutral versus Negative Versions of Ideology

My argument so far has been to show that some of Hall's criticisms of Marx's theory of ideology do not apply because he does not adequately distinguish Marx's theory from other neutral versions. But this does not mean that Hall's Gramscian approach to ideology is inherently flawed. In order to see what is good in it, I would like now to reflect on the character and potentialities of the neutral and negative versions of ideology within Marxism. In its inception, ideology was one of a group of concepts such as alienation, contradiction, fetishism, exploitation; concepts which were inherently critical, that is to say capable of passing judgement on social realities which were deemed undesirable, unjust or 'inverted' to use Marx's expression. A neutral concept of ideology does not make direct reference to a single objective truth, but underlines the fact that the interests of different classes, fractions of classes or groups are represented or articulated by different ideologies. Thus you can speak of bourgeois, Thatcherite, neo-liberal, proletarian ideologies without necessarily wanting to establish or prejudge their adequacy or truth. Criticism is either avoided or confined to identifying the class or group character, the articulating principle (for instance the bourgeois or Thatcherite nature) of an ideology. Ideology does not inherently entail any necessary distortion.

If one accepts that a critical social science necessitates critical concepts then the neutralization of ideology is a real loss. However, there are different forms of neutralization. The Leninist neutralization of ideology within Marxism, later adopted by Lukács and Gramsci, was carried out in a context where the trust in reason, the acceptance of universal standards and the belief in the possibility of reaching the truth were not challenged or doubted. The contemporary attack on the critical notion of ideology coming from

post-structuralism and postmodernism has new and more disturbing connotations which seriously put in doubt those principles. Sabina Lovibond has understood very well this dimension of the problem even if she still refers to false consciousness:

To reject 'false consciousness' is to take a large step towards abandoning the politics of Enlightenment modernism. For it means rejecting the view that personal autonomy is to be reached by way of a progressive transcendence of earlier, less adequate cognitive structures. (Lovibond, 1989: 26)

The postmodern critique of the critical concept of ideology goes far beyond the scope and intention of the Leninist neutralization of ideology within Marxism. It questions our ability to reach any truth which is not context-relative, partial and localized; it doubts whether a true and total understanding of social contradictions can ever be achieved and hence the passing of judgement becomes impossible; it distrusts totalizing theories which propound universal emancipation. 'There is no reason, only reasons', Lyotard argues, or, what is the same, society is a series of language games, each with its own rules and criteria of truth, each incommensurable with one another (Van Reijen and Veerman, 1988: 278). For such a conception, a negative concept of ideology which pretends to know which are the contradictions in society and how they can be truly solved, shares with other 'meta-narratives' a totalitarian character: they are not only over-simplifications but also 'terroristic' in that they legitimate the suppression of differences (Lyotard, 1984: 82).

Nevertheless, it cannot escape the attention of an attentive reader of Lyotard and Baudrillard that they end up re-introducing a universal, but even more arbitrary, critical concept of ideology through the back door. In their onslaught against meta-narratives and universalizing theories they feel able to discriminate between those which fall and those which do not fall into those categories, in order to dismiss the former as ideological and unsound. In fact Lyotard says it in so many words. 'It is never a question of *one* massive and unique reason — that is nothing but ideology. On the contrary, it is a question of *plural* rationalities . . . ' (Van Reijen and Veerman, 1988: 279). Lyotard does not realize that he can affirm this only on the basis of another totalizing meta-narrative: 'the concern with "preserving the purity" and singularity "of each game" by reinforcing its isolation from the others gives rise to exactly what was

intended to be avoided; “the domination of one game by another” (Weber, 1985: 104).

Similarly, Baudrillard argues that since postmodernity is characterized by simulation, by the fact that we live in a world of images and pure simulacrum which makes reference to no other ultimate but concealed reality, a critique of ideology is no longer possible because ‘ideology corresponds to a betrayal of reality by signs; simulation corresponds to a short-circuit of reality and its reduplication by signs’ (Baudrillard, 1983: 146). However he also ends up re-introducing a critical concept of ideology through the back door. One example is his analysis of the Watergate affair which showed the scandals and illegalities of the Nixon administration. The ideological function of such wide media presentation, he argues, was to conceal or mask the fact that the system of government itself is fundamentally corrupt (Baudrillard, 1983: 26). In another example Baudrillard comments on a conference about ‘the end of the world’ in New York, 1985. For him this makes no sense because New York is already the end of the world. But the discussion about the idea of the end of the world masks this fact (Baudrillard, 1987: 286). Another example is Disneyland. It is presented as an infantile imaginary world to conceal the fact that the rest of America is infantile, to mask the fact that the real country is Disneyland (Baudrillard, 1983: 25). True it is not an inner, twisted, inverted reality which is concealed (the real contradictions in Marx’s terms); what is concealed is the fact that that which is presented as real, is no longer real but hyper-real, a mere reproduction of a model. What is masked is the fact that reality itself has been dissolved.

The change in the concept of ideology from a critical to a neutral notion is therefore less simple and innocent than it appears. In the context of postmodernism the change is celebrated as the triumph of incommensurable language games and the demise of the terroristic meta-narratives which are at the basis of the critical concept of ideology. Paradoxically, the aggressive postmodernist stand fails fully to eradicate, and implicitly postulates, the totalizing perspective it seeks to abolish and therefore ends up contradicting itself. On the contrary, the analyses within the Gramscian tradition, for instance those of the early Laclau and Hall, do not involve a loss of faith in reason and truth, and make a very important contribution to the understanding of how political discourses and currents of thought are formed or transformed, and how social groups seek to articulate their interests with those of other groups. The

critical concept of ideology, and therefore Marx's concept, is certainly inadequate to account for the formation, articulation and transformation of discourses, currents of thought, political ideas, in short, ideologies in the neutral sense. But then it was not produced to perform that task, but to criticize certain distortions. What is to be lamented is the fact that these two aspects, which are different and must be complementary, should dispute over the same concept of ideology. In fact they operate with totally different logics. Ideally, the concept of ideology should be restricted to only one of them, to avoid confusions. But what is behind the alternative concept must be maintained.

This is ultimately the reason why both the negative and the neutral concept of ideology have persisted within the Marxist tradition; they both perform necessary tasks within social science: one seeks critically to pass judgement on the attempted justifications and concealment of undesirable and contradictory social situations; the other seeks to provide an account of how certain political discourses in search of hegemony are constructed and reconstructed, expand or contract, gain ascendancy or lose it. I defend the importance of Marx's negative concept but I can see the value of the neutral concept, especially in its Gramscian variety. The contributions of the early Laclau and Hall to our understanding of Thatcherism have been absolutely crucial. Unfortunately many authors using the neutral concept do not accept that there could be two different concepts in the Marxist tradition which perform different tasks.⁶ Hall's position among them is unique because of his attempt to prove that Marx's concept does not work in practice when applied to Thatcherism. After trying to show that Hall was really criticizing a Leninist version of ideology and not Marx's concept as I understand it, it is necessary for me to address the question as to whether Marx's concept of ideology can be used to analyse Thatcherism.

Thatcherism and the Negative Concept of Ideology

For a critical conception of ideology it is not enough to be able to account for the successful way in which Thatcherite ideology has been able to articulate the interests of a wide variety of groups and sections of British society, it is necessary to show, critically, its shortcomings and inadequacies. Otherwise the analysis could easily become a political celebration of the achievements of Thatcherism. This criticism has been levelled at Hall's work by Jessop and other collaborators (1984) and Hall has replied to it that he never said

that Thatcherism had achieved hegemony, that he contrasted its ideological success with its economic failures and that he did not treat Thatcherism as ideologically monolithic, but fully acknowledged its contradictions (Hall, 1985). Hall's defence makes sense. The acknowledgement of the fact that the hegemonic project of Thatcherism contrasts with the lack of hegemonic drive of 'both the Labourist and the fundamentalist left', the recognition of the way in which 'Thatcherism has managed to stitch up or "unify" the contradictory strands in its discourse' and the assertion that 'the left have something to learn as to the conduct of political struggle' from the Thatcherite project (Hall, 1985: 120, 122, 119) I take to be empirically accurate propositions and in no way reasons to accuse Hall of defending and celebrating Thatcherism.

There is nothing wrong in trying to learn from the success of your adversary. Gramsci did it, and never concealed, for instance, the lessons he took from the Catholic religion. He admired the role which the catechism played in pedagogically imprinting the masses with the religious conception, he also recognized and appreciated the concern of the Catholic Church for keeping in one unified bloc the theologians and the common people, and its readiness to repress the intellectuals when they threatened to break that unity. However, although appreciating the hegemonic form he was simultaneously profoundly critical of its content. The Church wanted to preserve the unity between intellectuals and common people but never sought to elevate the common people to the level of the intellectuals, so Gramsci was able to criticize the religious conception as antithetic to that of the philosophy of practice which sought to construct an intellectual and moral bloc which makes possible the intellectual progress of the masses (Gramsci, 1973: 331-3). I am convinced that Hall, having appreciated the hegemonic form of Thatcherite politics has also been critical of its content, even though his emphasis has probably been on the first aspect. Yet he does not seem to recognize the specific role of Marx's concept of ideology in that critique. In wanting to rescue that role I am not arguing that this is the only way in which something radically new can be said about Thatcherism, I am just making the connection between Marx's concept of ideology and a certain necessary critical approach.

Marx's critical theory can make a limited but significant contribution to the understanding of Thatcherism as an ideological phenomenon. In fact, in so far as Hall has been critical of Thatcherism, he seems to know what this contribution is although he does not

connect it with Marx's concept. I can only sketch here the general contours of such an analysis. It seems to me that Thatcherism may be seen as a return, with a vengeance, to the old and quintessential principles of bourgeois political ideology which had been progressively obscured by years of social democracy, welfare state and Keynesianism. These principles can well be encapsulated in Marx's Eden of the innate rights of man: Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Mrs Thatcher's programme is basically saying, let us go back to the market, let it rule our lives. The market is fair, efficient, egalitarian, it provides wealth and freedom of choice. Hence her insistence on rolling back the frontiers of the state, on cutting taxes, on educational choice, on providing opportunities to buy your own house and shares in state enterprises, on making new proprietors and incentivating self-interest. The great conservative reformation is a return to the old ideological values of the capitalist system which seemed to have been partially forgotten.

Paradoxically, Hall is quite aware of this aspect of Thatcherism when he argues that

In some quite obvious and undeniable ways, the whole point of Thatcherism is to clear the way for capitalist market solutions, to restore both the prerogatives of ownership and profitability and the political conditions for capital to operate more effectively, and to construct around its imperatives a supportive culture suffused from end to end by its ethos and values. Thatcherism knows no measure of the good life other than 'value for money'. It understands no other compelling force or motive in the definition of civilization than the forces of the 'free market' . . . (Hall, 1988b: 4)

Even more, Hall is able to formulate the return to the ideological values of the market in practically the same terms as I have just done above:

our ideas of 'Freedom', 'Equality', 'Property' and 'Bentham' (i.e. individualism) – the ruling ideological principles of the bourgeois lexicon, and the key political themes which, in our time, have made a powerful and compelling return to the ideological stage under the auspices of Mrs Thatcher and neo-liberalism . . . (Hall, 1988a: 70)

Yet he fails to make the connection between this and Marx's concept of ideology.

Habermas (1972), Marcuse (1972) and other authors had been arguing for a long time that the traditional political ideology based on the market had all but disappeared from advanced capitalism.

The new legitimating ideology of capitalism was technocratic, it arose not from the free market but from state interventionism, it was the belief in the power of science and technology, and resulted in depoliticization and the emergence of new discursive barriers to freely achieved rational consensus. Although they exaggerated the ideological shifts and overemphasized the demise of the ideology based on the market, their approach pointed to some true changes in the capitalist system and its ideological legitimation. The construction of the welfare state after the war and the Keynesian policies of full employment seemed to go hand in hand with economic growth and were conditions very different from pre-war capitalism. The Thatcherite discourse breaks with this kind of interventionist, welfare, full-employment, rationalized capitalism and goes back to the supremacy of the market. So, the new ideological values can no longer be the idea of science, full employment and welfare. Now, once more, as in Marx's time, it is freedom, equality, property and self-interest.

Why has this happened? Basically, because capitalism itself has changed and entered into a crisis of accumulation and profitability which Mrs Thatcher has tried to solve by a return to the market forces. From 1945 to the end of the 1960s capitalism enjoyed a long period of expansion which some call the post-war settlement or the Fordist-Keynesian period. Since the beginning of the 1970s this system has been breaking up, the conditions of accumulation have radically changed and consequently a serious crisis of hegemony has developed which precipitated the political realignment which brought Mrs Thatcher to power. The new conditions for capitalist accumulation entailed an exacerbation of the traditional confrontation between capital and labour, both politically and economically. On the political front, the need for a new form of flexible accumulation required the dismantling of the traditional sources of trade-union power after years of corporatist co-operation with the system. On the economic front, flexible accumulation required a new shift towards the extraction of absolute surplus-value: longer working hours, erosion of real wages and the formation of a new underclass without work. But the return to many of the harsh conditions which existed before 1945 must be ideologically compensated for and here is where the values of the market: freedom, equality, property and self-interest return with a new lease of life. These are the conditions which helped crystallize Thatcherism as an ideological phenomenon which feeds from the traditional capitalist ideology Marx already knew.

However, as could be expected, there is no question of simply going back to the time of pre-welfare competitive capitalism which Marx knew. Because flexible accumulation, economic insecurity and the re-imposition of the market rules are bound to exacerbate contradictions and their manifestations such as unemployment, poverty, discrimination, criminality, national and regional divisions, new forms of violence, etc., the ideology of freedom and equality is not enough. At times of insecurity and fragmentation the longing for stable values leads to a heightened emphasis on the authority of basic institutions (Harvey, 1989: 171). Hence the new ideological forms which emphasize the sense of authority, hard work, law and order, family and tradition, Victorian values, patriotism: a strong nation which defeats the enemy within (trade unions) and the enemy without (Argentinians). These forms serve as devices to misunderstand and displace the real origin of those conflictive manifestations and to justify the way in which they are dealt with.

Thus unemployment is treated as laziness and pricing yourself out of a job, workers' strikes are transformed into a problem of public order. Criminality and new forms of violence are treated as the result of lack of authority in the family, not enough law and order, lack of Victorian values, etc. Terrorism is successful because of the free press and the excessive leniency of the law. Divisions and forms of discrimination are partly blamed on immigration and partly conjured away by patriotism and jingoism. Thatcherite ideology thus tries systematically to displace and conceal the real origin of British problems. It totally transfers or confines the principles of freedom, equality and self-interest to the economic sphere of the market while it attacks them in the political sphere. It erodes the political rights of the trade unions, strongly attacks civil liberties, tries to gag the press, expands the police force, etc. The authoritarian features of Thatcherite ideology are not arbitrary and contingent, they are necessitated to deal with the results of the operation of the free market. It is now necessary to 'protect' the newly acquired economic freedoms which are threatened by class struggles, criminality and racial discord.

Marx's theory of ideology does allow, then, some critical understanding of Thatcherism. This it does not only through the traditional analysis of the principles and values which inform bourgeois ideology, but also through showing how those principles, brought back into the economic sphere, are articulated with other authoritarian values which are introduced in the political sphere. In either

case these principles and values perform the classic role of ideology explained by Marx: they attempt to mask, explain away or justify the greater unfreedom and inequality which the Thatcherite government has brought about. Some may think that if this is all, then the contribution of Marx's concept of ideology to the understanding of Thatcherism is pretty skimpy and adds very little that we did not know before. This may be so, but it never was my point to maintain that Marx's concept would provide radically new insights into Thatcherism. What it does is to balance and complement the analysis made with the Gramscian concept: whereas the latter highlights the successful hegemonic and articulatory qualities of Thatcherism the former underlines the reality of unfreedom and inequality it has created but tries to conceal. Both are necessary aspects of the same complex phenomenon.

Notes

1. Holding at present Stuart Hall's old position as Head of Cultural Studies at Birmingham University and counting myself as one of his friends, I write about his conception of ideology with some trepidation. With such a prolific and distinguished author there is always the danger of unwittingly omitting an important idea or misrepresenting his true position. Be that as it may, I must state in advance my admiration and respect for Hall's enormous intellectual contribution to Social Sciences.

2. I mean the Laclau of *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (1977) prior to his most recent work on *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985) with Chantal Mouffe. Hall has explicitly stated his preference for the first book. See Grossberg (1986: 56).

3. For a full account of Marx's theory of ideology see Larrain (1979 and 1983).

4. This is a point that even a liberal, non-Marxist author like Boudon (1989: 37) has correctly perceived and which so many Marxist authors inexplicably fail to appreciate.

5. For a more detailed discussion of the transition from a negative to a neutral concept of ideology within Marxism see Larrain (1983: 46-69).

6. Apart from Hall see for instance Laclau (1977), Hirst (1979) and McCarney, (1980). For a critique of such position see Larrain (1983: 94-121).

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