

## **Ideology**

### **I . What is ideology?    *Ideology is a complex concept***

The word “ideology” was first used in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to define a “science of ideas.” Ideology can be thought of as a vision, as a way of looking at things. De Tracy believed his view of ideology could be put to progressive political purposes, since understanding the source of ideas might enable efforts on behalf of human progress.

Ideology today is generally taken to mean not a science of ideas, but the ideas themselves, and moreover ideas of a particular kind. Ideologies are ideas whose purpose is not epistemic, but political. Thus an ideology exists to confirm a certain political viewpoint, serve the interests of certain people, or to perform a functional role in relation to social, economic, political and legal institutions.

In social studies, an ideology is an idea that explains how the society should work and offers the basis for a certain group of people who pursue their interests. It can be a construct of political thought, often defining political parties and their policy. An ideology largely concerns itself with how to allocate power and to what ends it should be used. A certain ethic usually forms the basis of an ideology.

Ideology can be defined a consistent and integrated pattern of thoughts and beliefs or thoughts converted into beliefs, explaining man’s attitudes toward life and his existence in society, and advocating a conduct and action pattern responsive to, and commensurate with such thoughts and beliefs.

### **II. Is it indispensable for human life?**

Karl Mannheim elaborated further on the idea of the complex relation between reality and ideology by pointing to the human need for ideology. Ideologies are neither true nor false but are a set of socially conditioned ideas that provide a truth that people, both the advantaged and the disadvantaged, want to hear.

Ideology is simply a means by which a social group or an entire society achieves a measure of self-consciousness, by establishing a common identity or a set of collective goals. As such, ideology should not be thought of as liberating or oppressive, nor as true or false. It can be any of these things. The character of ideology is shaped by the

historical forces from which it emerges and is fashioned by the social and political needs it serve. Ideology has therefore come to be indispensable feature of human condition.

### **III. What is good help to or bad influence on human society and individual life?**

1. Ideology is the major device by which modern individuals find meaning and gain identity within explosive diversity, and social groups press their claims for survival and advantage. An ideology is a simplified map of a hopelessly complex and ever-changing society, through which people learn who they are, to which groups they belong and for what aims they should hope and strive.

An ideology sorts out friends from enemies, defining the latter in terms of its own categories and discrediting the latter's terms: ideology creates the Other on a grand scale. Identity and conflict are the two inseparable sides of ideology, testifying to the individual and social phases of human nature.

2. The negative view of ideology taken by Marxists might suggest a crude conception where ideology is a tool cynically wielded by the powerful to ensure submission by the powerless.

For Karl Marx ideology in capitalistic state presents a false picture of the world(False Consciousness) intentionally then people are led into believing that they are acting according to their free will, but actually they are not.

\*Historical lesson: Hitler used it to create a 'myth'

(Ruler = God or Savior, Gov' t = Church, People = Believer)

### **IV. What are the three necessary components to work as ideology?**

1. The Ends or Ideals (Ultimate values to achieve): What's our final goal, vision, hope, and what we will be.

Liberal Democracy focuses on this future oriented component.

2. The Analysis or Judgments (How to see the present society): Where we stand, and what will be solutions. Give explanations try to find out some solutions.

Communism focuses on this present oriented component.

3. The Myth or Rationalization of Ideology (Methodological way to Ideals) : What we were, and where we come from.

Fascism focuses on this past oriented component.

Without these three components, the ideology could not work well. Every different ideology puts focus on different component

## **V. Do you believe that ideology is dead in the 21 century?**

The idea of the 'end of ideology' became fashionable in the 1950s and 1960s. Its most influential statement of this position was made by Daniel Bell.

In *The End of Ideology*, Daniel Bell said that a post war consensus on capitalism and liberal democracy might spell the end of ideology. He views democracy as the political system most in keeping with the nature and needs of humans. History has been an evolution of political forms towards democracy and so once a state has reached democracy, all it has to do is avoid going backwards. However, the process to which Bell drew attention was not the 'end of ideology' so much as the emergence of a broad ideological consensus amongst major parties and therefore the suspension of ideological debate. In the immediate post-war period, representative of the three major western ideologies - Liberalism, socialism and conservatism - came to accept the common goal of 'managed capitalism'. This goal, however, was itself ideological.

Compared with 20<sup>th</sup> century, the influence of ideology in the 21 century actually weakened. However the world will never be free from ideology.