CHAPTER 1

Concept of Ideology:
The Liberal Perspective
The present chapter aims at presenting in brief outline the growth and development of the concept of 'ideology'. In common parlance, the term "ideology" means an ideal, a set of belief or a set of ideas which guide, shape and inspire not only man's life, but also, his cognitive enterprise. In this sense, there can be social, political, religious and economic ideologies. Further, ideology is also used in the sense of a norm or a standard. In this sense, ideology stands for a set of ideas that shape and direct theoretical enquiry of man in general.

It may not be out of place to mention in this connection that every age has its own sets of ideas, concepts or categories in terms of which man thinks. In this sense, the set of ruling ideas or master concepts can be termed as ideology of a particular age. But all ideas or ideologies for that matter are not genuine and scientific. In other words ideas and ideologies can be classified into two types:
(1) False ideology
(2) True or scientific ideology

For Marx, traditionally, ideology has stood for false consciousness. He uses the term ideology in a technical sense: Ideology is a set of ideas which are false and aim at deceiving people. People can be kept ignorant so that domination becomes smooth. As a result, Marx does not accept any traditional ideology rather he is against all such ideologies. So Marx upholds the cause of ideology-free-thought and ideology-free-society. It is only with Lenin that the concept of scientific ideology emerged. According to Lenin and other neo-Marxists the concept of scientific ideology can be incorporated into the body of Marxian theory without doing damage. As a matter of fact, the concept of scientific ideology is very much in tune with Marxian thought.

The history of European thought can be treated as the history of emergence of scientific ideology as opposed to false consciousness.

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Let me go into the history of ideology. Various thinkers from Machiavelli to Feurbach had implicitly used ideology as something that deceives people. My effort is to trace the Marxian concept of ideology through some and remarks of these thinkers. The term "Ideology" was first used by Destutt de Tracy at the end of eighteenth century. By the end of nineteenth century, the concept became fully developed, and many other thinkers started using it. Here apparently the concept of ideology is very new to human thought. But on a strict analysis of history it can be seen that the concept of ideology is not new to mankind. Rational men have always confronted the problem — at least a subjective reflection —, the problem or question of intellectual legitimation of social domination. This was always disturbing human mind, particularly, in class societies. Thus it cannot be said that this concept is new to mankind. Nonetheless, a study regarding ideology appeared only with the disintegration of medieval society.

N. Machiavelli (1469 - 1527) deals with the concept of ideology with reference to state craft in political observation and his analysis was
based on people from all walks of life; particularly, princes and common men. He studied their political behaviour closely. He says:

"as man's appetite change, even though their circumstances remain the same, it is impossible that things should look the same to them seeing that they have other appetites, other interests, other stand points........instead blaming the times, they should lay blame on their own judgements" (1)

While talking about domination, power and statehood, he brings the notion of religion and links it to power. He accused the people around him, particularly, the educated so called intellectuals as less freedom loving. Apparently, he is disgusted by seeing the way people take everything without even dreaming to question. Here he links religion with domination. Machiavelli says that people are ignorant because religion functions in keeping people ignorant. They are less freedom loving because the education is based on a different conception of religion. His criticism goes as follows:—
"Our religion has glorified humble and contemplative men, rather than men of action. It has assigned as man's highest good humility, abnegation and contempt for mundane things. This pattern of life, therefore appears to have made the world weak, and to have handed it over as prey to the wicked, who run it successfully and securely since they are well aware that the generality of men, with paradise for their goal, consider how best to bear, rather than how best to avenge their injuries" (2)

Machiavelli had very clearly understood the nature of state and its power. When he talks about using force and fraud in the maintenance of continued existence of power, it became evident. Another reference to ideology can be found in Machiavelli when he talks about using force and fraud in state politics. He asserts that there is hardly a case of humble men acquiring power,

"Simply by the force of open and undisguised force"

because this

"can quite well be done by using only fraud" (3)
Talking about princes, Machiavelli says that a prince can be anything in reality.

A prince or a ruler need not have all those supposed qualities of princes, etc.,

"but he should certainly appear to have them"
"His disposition should be such that if he needs to be the opposite, he knows how" because,
"every one sees what you appear to be, few experience what you rally are."(4)

Machiavelli's pains and agonies as well as complaints about 'human incapability of thinking, however did not go waste. His compliments are really supplemented and complimented by the growth and development of Science. As scientific knowledge became popular good amount of men at least, started thinking in different directions; while the rest followed it slowly.

With the progress of science and scientific knowledge, the questions of obstacles in intellectual endeavour were raised.
Such doubts about obstacles in man's intellectual enterprise was first raised, perhaps by none other than Sir Francis Bacon. These doubts arose in his work "Novum Organon" (1620) and in Rene Descartes' "Discourse de la methode" (1637). Bacon and Descartes, both were experimenting upon a new methodology. Descartes came with a methode of doubt (modes doubt) as a method of knowing. Descartes doubts everything. To start with, he even doubted himself saying that there is no criterion to differentiate sleeping from being awake. However, Descartes was quick to get over his doubt and to conclude that since he is a thinking being, he cannot doubt his own existence. However, Descartes remained in a more philosophical and deductive level whereas, Bacon went on to emphasize the roll of positive sciences challenging and questioning traditional approaches of medieval thoughts. He was criticizing the Aristotelian system of the formal logic. Bacon wanted to supersede Aristotle's organon by a new organon. He wanted to replace deductive approach with an inductive one. Bacon argues that real observational knowledge is not
possible so long as 'idols' or false notions obstruct human understandings. Such 'idols' or false notions prevent man from attaining or reaching true knowledge, and reality.

Bacon analyses such idols and he divides them into four classes or categories. He names them as:

1) Idols of the tribe,
2) Idols of the cave,
3) Idols of the market place, and
4) Idols of the theatre.

Explaining the nature and function of these idols as obstructions, Bacon says that among these four, the first two, i.e., the idols of the tribe and idols of the cave are innate, it is not possible to eliminate them absolutely. Their function in human intellect is such that human understanding resemble a warped mirror,

"whose shape and curvature change the rays of objects, distorting and disfiguring them" (5)

Such distortions, according to Bacon, are having their roots in human nature itself and the kinds of error brought to human understanding by
the idols of the cave is the idiosyncrasy of each individual as determined by his education, character and general disposition.

Speaking about idols of the tribe, Bacon says that it is in the natural tendency of human being to accept what has been already laid down as established, without ever attempting to question them — or critically examining them. To quote Bacon,

"Although this idol is most seductive in Science and philosophy, it is also the mechanism of superstition" (6)

In fact Bacon was very much concerned with superstitions and idols both in philosophy and science.

"Superstition was the source of harmful distortions for scientific knowledge in so far as it subjected the mind to uncontrollable forces and sacrificed rational discussions for the sake of arbitrary whims" (7)
Bacon correctly realized the confusions prevailing in philosophy and theology and held it responsible as damaging the sciences. Bacon was arguing in favour of a clear cut distinction between philosophy and theology. At this point, one can see that Bacon is extending Machiavelli's concern with the social effect of religion from the arena of political practice to the realm of science.

Let us now turn to the third idol in Bacon, the idols of the market place. It is rather acquired by human beings. The idol is formed as the result of human interactions. (the term market place signifies human interaction) Bacon says that these idols arise in relation to language, for it is through language that human interaction takes place.

"for it is through discourse that man associates" (8)
Here Bacon identifies the crucial role of ideology. His recognition of the idol as originating from human intercourse through language is perhaps one of the first acknowledgement of ideology as being socially determined distortion. It also raises the notion of social determination of knowledge.

Idol of the theatre springs from the authoritative and dogmatic nature of traditional theories. According to Francis Bacon, traditional philosophies are full of false notions and dogmas. This tendency in human is analogous to fictions presented in a theatre, where plays create fictitious worlds. 'Kathakali', the abstract dance from Kerala is a typical example, where the performer creates illusion through eye movements and various 'mudras' based on 'Natya shastra' of Bharatamuni. Bacon advocates that knowledge must be liberated from blind obedience to the old. Anything that is unacceptable to reason must be rejected. So it becomes imperative on us to reject such idols from minds so that we can reach the truth.

Bacon speaks of two idols as relatively innate. This view of Bacon amounts to
inconsistency. Given this view of idols being innate, it becomes impossible to get rid of them. His view of mind as a mirror which distorts reality makes intellect incapable of comprehending the reality. However, the division of idol as into four types create an impression that Bacon is inconsistent on this point. But I wish to point out that it is not the case. Certain idols are easily eliminated and certain others are relatively difficult to eliminate. Further, Bacon does not seem to take note of the distinction between two sets of false notions in form of ideology. One set of false notions are the idols which ultimately run as ideology and the other set of false notions are those which spring from man's relations to the material practices. The latter type of ideology is socially determined.

Bacon's influence on seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophers is important. It is because of this that Marx called him as the
"Father of modern science and English materialism" (9)

However, Marx does not spare him of his shortcomings. Speaking of the shortcomings of Francis Bacon, Marx says:

"In Bacon, it's first creator, materialism still holds back within itself in a naive way the germs of many-sided development. On the one hand, matter surrounded by a sensuous, poetic glamour, seems to attack man's whole entity by winning smiles. On the other, the aphoristically formulated doctrine pullutates with inconsistencies imported from theology." (10)

Bacon did influence most of the thinkers who came after him; particularly the 17th and 18th century philosophers. Philosophers of the French enlightenment period like Hobbes, Locke, Condillac, Helvetious, Holbach, Diderot etc., bear the Baconean mark of ideology. Condillac's "prejudices" is analogous to Bacon's idols; Holbach and Helvetious also used the term prejudice to stand for false ideology. What is common in all these
thinkers is that they are all concerned with the source of prejudice and superstition.

For Hobbes, sense object contact is the only source of knowledge and there is nothing beyond sensation in reality. Any claim to knowledge beyond material things is bound to be false; as nothing can be intelligible beyond material world. For Hobbes, there can not exist any idea of the infinite; the so called God. Hobbes claims that Fear and ignorance is the root cause of religious faith. He says that human capacity of knowing many things or finding solutions to many mysteries, questions etc. are highly limited. Because of this incapacity of knowing many things, man makes mistakes in the following way.

"Little or no inquiry in to the natural cause of things, yet from the fear that proceeds from ignorance itself, of what it is that has the power to do them much good or harm, are inclined to suppose, and feign unto themselves, several kinds of power invisible; and to stand in awe of their own
imaginations .......... And this fear of things invisible, is the natural seed of that, which every one in himself calls religion" (11)

Hobbes implies that religion is not rational. It is fear and ignorance which make people to accept religion. And this religion in the hands of rulers and priests enables them to continue their domination. Therefore, we can say that in Hobbes religion is used in the sense of false consciousness.

At this point, one can find that the conclusion that Hobbes draws from what may be called as modern empiricism is much more concrete and drastic than what Bacon arrives at. It seems to me that this is the reason why later Marx spoke about Hobbes saying that he,

"Shattered the theistic prejudices of Baconeian materialism" (12)

But still Hobbes believes that man needs religion for peace and stability. He joins the views of Machiavelli and says
"that man needs monarchs and religion so that common happiness and peace could be reached through ignorance and fear"

and goes to show that

"absolute power is not only reasonable, but also justified by scripture."

Thus though Hobbes recognizes religion as rooted in fear and ignorance, he does not advocate for the abolition of religion like Marx did later. Hobbes strongly felt that religion must exist, as it is necessary for human good — the common good of men. Though the bee stings it's honey is sweet — this was his attitude.

Those thinkers who followed Hobbes, particularly the French enlightenment thinkers have completely neglected the plus point of religion and they have attacked religion and priesthood vehemently. Commonly, they all have seen religion as the root of false notions and superstitions etc. only.

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Helvitiouss (1715 –1771) and Holbach (1723 –1789) gave very strong and powerful theories about 'priestly deceit'. They have rightly pointed out that priests wanted to keep people in ignorance, so that they can continue to be rich and powerful. They have seen an ' unholy' alliances of conspiracy between priests, who were extremely conscious of themselves. As the only remedy to this situation, Helvitiouss and Holbach finds 'education'. They say that the priestly deceit can only be destroyed by spreading of education. Holbach starts his intellectual enterprise of understanding, by a theory that man is unhappy. For him the reason for human unhappiness is

"Because he misunderstands nature. His mind is so infected by prejudices that one may think of him as ever condemned to error ......... Reason, guided by experience must attack at their source of the prejudices of which mankind has been victim for so long ....... Truth is one and necessary for man ........ it is necessary to unveil it to mortals .............. The chains which tyrants and priests forge are due to error .......... ignorance

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and uncertainty are due to 
errors consecrated by 
religion....." (14)

Thus Holbach feels that man is unhappy 
because he misunderstands nature. Religious 
prejudices are implanted in human mind to deceive 
him. But Holbach maintains that reason is capable 
of fighting this false consciousness. 

Helvetious speaks of virtues. He makes a 
distinction between virtues of prejudice and real 
virtues. He says that virtues of prejudice belongs 
to petty saintly people. By using these virtues of 
prejudices they keep people ignorant so that they 
can be made to serve their interests and needs. The 
virtues of prejudices imply ideology.

The theory of priestly deceit or priestly 
conspiracy very clearly indicates that what is 
behind these blindfolding of people religion. 
Behind these, power politics were the real 
objectives. Machiavelli and Hobbes identified and 
spoke of the function of religion as legitimizing 
what is not, i.e., social domination. But they
justified it for the sake of their prince, the sovereign. But now the unholy connection of religion and politics becomes better understood as the concept of ideology developed further. And slowly, the relation was acquiring a negative and critical stand. One can see this understanding in both Helvetious and Holbach, and their bitter expressions are perhaps the best examples. To quote Holbach,

"The dogma of the future life accompanied by rewards and punishments, is looked at after many centuries, as the most powerful, or even as the only motive capable of restraining men's passions .......... little by little this dogma has become the basis of every political and religious system, and today it seems as though one could attack this prejudice without breaking absolutely the bounds of the society. The founders of religion have used it for getting credulous sectarian members; legislators have looked at it as a restraint capable of keeping their subjects under the yoke ......... Nobody can deny that this dogma has been most useful for those who gave religion to the nations ............ it is the foundation of their power, the source of their riches, and the permanent cause of the blindness and terrors in which
their interest wanted mankind to be nourished. It is because of it that the priest became emolous and master of kings ...

" (15)

Here, Holbach clearly identifies the connection between the role of religion and politics. The whimsical bigotry of ideology by religion and the continued existence of ideology became very much important and necessary for kings. By and by, the kings started depending on the priests and by and by the priests were assuming more importance. Thus ideology, religion and priestly deceit became indispensable for the rulers. Holbach and Helvetious thinks in lines of remedy to this false consciousness — ideology. They thought that education could change the situation. They both prescribes, what may be called as 'virtues of education'. They felt that educated men can not be deceived, because they can not be enticed in to the questions of celestial rewards. They will neither need them, nor will they care about them. They thought that education can make a big difference, because only such citizens, the educated people can make

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"A vigilant virtuous, enlightened and just government, which seeks the public good, with good faith, has no need of fables, or lies for governing reasonable subjects." (16)

Helvetious also prescribes education as a remedy against false consciousness.

However he goes a step ahead. He indirectly speaks of the state apparatus and various other institutions in the society which indirectly, or directly influence or control education. Helvetius says that

"Since education everywhere is closely associated to the prevailing form of the government, it's principles can not be reformed without also changing the state." (17)

They have no doubt whatsoever in the efficacy of education. But this unlimited confidence of them has invited criticism from none other than Marx himself. Marx says that
"that circumstances are changed by men and that it is essential to educate the educator himself. This doctrine must, therefore, divide the society in to two parts, one of which is superior to society." (18)

Marx says that these philosophers have committed mistakes in their understanding. They could not understand man's real problems and thereby could not find proper solutions to it. Due to this mistake, they make exodus to external agents to comprehend the problem as well as solve it. In their confusion, what actually they have done is that they have substituted education for religion vaguely. They have put faith in omnipotence of education, further they have tried to discover a saviour in education, a new 'messiah' in education, and expected to solve the problem of ideology in one stroke. This process divides society in to two parts. If there is education, then there are educators. But how to educate the educators? These thinkers have not said anything on this.

However, Marx does not overlook their contributions. Marx does appreciate the struggle of
the French enlightenment thinkers against three powerful sources of ideology. They are Religion, Political institutions, and the Metaphysics of the 17th century. When Holbach and Helvetius were fighting against religion and political institutions, there was another thinker who was fighting against some thing else. It was Condillac, who was fighting against the metaphysical prejudices of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Malebranere. (19)

Their criticism had gone a long way in laying a strong foundation for the concept of ideology. Their attack on the concept of ideology, though the concept was yet to become explicit had tremendous influence on thinkers like Hegel, Bruno Bauer, Feurbach, and even on the dialectician Marx himself. Even with all these, a concept of ideology in the Marxian sense has not emerged.

The first person to use the term ideology explicitly, Destutt De Tracy (1754 - 1836), Engages himself in his intellectual endeavour in this back ground. When we look at the concept of Ideology that Tracy presents, on the face of it, we fail to comprehend any direct relation between Tracy's ideology and the idols of Francis Bacon. Nor is
Tracy's ideology has reference to the religious prejudices of the French enlightenment thinkers. We find that Tracy is concerning himself of the busy endeavour of synthesizing a new science. And he calls this science of ideas "ideology" (20). Tracy's science keeps a different objective. This science wants to trace and establish the origin of ideas. In his main concern of establishing the origin of ideas, he could not take care of religious and metaphysical prejudices. In effect, religious and metaphysical prejudices were set aside. Though Bacon and Condillac exerts certain influence on Tracy's ideology, it does not emerge as a corollary to Bacon's or Condillac's thought. In fact, it emerges as the opposite, it emerges as the science.

Any system of education becomes the foundation of education and moral order of society. Similarly, a science of ideas which is based on observation and which is free from prejudices must become the foundation of education and moral order. Reason plays an important part in Tracy's concept of ideology. He says that reason is the main source towards happiness. By Tracy's time, the French revolution had left its impacts in human
societies. He saw the disturbances as unwanted. After the revolution, they wanted people to establish peaceful societies. He believes that his book will be a contribution towards the cause of human peace. Tracy even says that his book should be taught in academies (21). Here we can find an analogy between the 'ideology' of Tracy and the 'omnipotence of education' in Helvetius and Holbach. When Helvetius and Holbach glorified education and argued that education is the remedy to all problems, Tracy advocates that his 'ideologues' are a solution to human problems. Tracy's enthusiasm rather equals these two thinkers.

Tracy's theory of origin of ideologies have some definite positive connotations. His ideologues is a rigorous science of ideas, which overcomes all metaphysical and religious prejudices. Further, it is expected to serve as a basis of education.

It may not be out of place to mention the first mentioning of ideology in the negative sense. This negative sense of ideology came from a source which nobody would have expected, it was none other that Napoleon himself who used the term ideology in it's negative sense for the first time.
It all happened when some intellectuals became reluctant to approve of the despotic needs of Napoleon. Reacting to this situation, Napoleon called them 'ideologists' with a derogatory meaning that they were unrealistic and doctrinate, and that they have no knowledge of politics.

After its first usage in the negative sense, it again took long for the negative meaning of ideology to be converged to its positive meaning. However, during 19th century, the emergence between ideology and its negative aspect became sort of completed. For a very long time, ideology did not have much significance either as a science of ideas, or as an unrealistic indoctrination. Finally, many thinkers started using the term.

Auguste Comte, a positivist (1798–1857) gives his theory in the line of Francis Bacon, which was set up two centuries before him. The striking similarities between Bacon's struggle against the idols and Comte's struggle to create a new science is of great importance, and interest. On the one hand we see that Bacon's struggle against the idols
that prevents human intellect from comprehending the reality and to create a science based on observation, and on the other hand in Comte we see another struggle of creating a new science which is based on empirical observations which could discover natural laws. To quote Comte:

"the theological and metaphysical states of any science possess one characteristic in common, the predominance of imagination over observation. The only difference existing between them under this point of view is that in the first, the imagination occupies itself with supernatural beings and in the second, with personified abstraction". (22)

Comte claims that he had discovered a law. He had discovered it from the historical study of human intelligence. Comte finds three different stages in human intelligence. All his conceptions and theories pass through these three stages. The first stage is the theological or fictitious, where all explanations are in terms of supernatural etc. as man becomes little more
scientific, he enters the second stage. The second stage is metaphysical or abstract, where passion for abstraction and speculative explanation becomes a preoccupation. Again man progresses in to the third stage, which is real scientific one. The third stage is scientific or positive. Comte says:

"Our conceptions and theories pass through three different historical stages, the theological or fictitious, the metaphysical or the abstract, and the scientific or positive". (23)

For Comte, with the discovery of his new law the first stage, and the second stage, the theological and the metaphysical era respectively, came to an end. Now, the new era of scientific, the era of positive philosophy has started. He further says that although positivism has emerged, only physical sciences have entered in to the new era.

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Social sciences are yet to enter the new era. Implicitly, Comte suggests that social sciences must transform themselves into social physics.

In the previous two era, the era of theological and metaphysical, both theological and metaphysical theories failed to restructure human societies in such a way that they could secure social welfare and human societies could become a happy one. They failed to secure permanent social welfare. Comte argues that in the new scientific era of positivism, positive philosophy would reorganize human societies, and provide permanent social welfare. In fact Comte is so sure that positive philosophy is the only alternative, and the only thing which can secure permanent social welfare. He believes,

"that ideas govern the world, or throw it into chaos. In other words, that all social mechanism rests upon opinions". (24)
We find a difference between Bacon and Comte here. Bacon's criticism made a distinction between progress in science and innovations in civil society, and applied his theories of idols to the former. Comte did not make any such distinctions, but on the other hand, he combines both, so that his critique becomes both metaphysical and political in character.

However, it will not be wrong to call Comte radical with respect to Bacon. Bacon is very careful about innovating political ideas. He feels that it could be dangerous. Bacon does not want to take chances, he does not want to change the social structure where the king rules. But Comte is not skeptical of changing the social structure rather he feels that the society is in a disorderly state and it is anarchic. He wants to reorganize the society completely. At this point we can find that Comte is completely agreeing with Hobbes' chief preoccupation with commonwealth. To quote him,
"The positivistic philosophy befriends public order by bringing back men's understandings to a normal state through the influence of it's method alone it dissipates disorder at once by imposing a series of indisputable scientific conditions of the study of political questions". (25)

Comte's positivism develops and finally culminates in Vienna Circle. The difference between science and metaphysics had developed into a grave opposition which finally started treating ideology as meaningless imagination and arbitrary metaphysical speculation which obstruct the knowledge to reality like the concepts of idols in Francis Bacon. For the French enlightenment thinkers, ideology was priestly deceit, and in positivism it becomes imaginary and irrational in character. But in both cases, ideology appears as an autonomous agent, which operates independently, and which misleads man's cognition to reality. The name what Marx gives 'external agent' is worth remembering here. They have thought of ideology as
something external, operating externally with the evil desire of stopping man from reaching truth.

The German idealist Hegel [1770 – 1831] was also involved in the discussion of ideology in a different manner. Hegel was facing a dichotomy. On the one hand, Hegel thinks and wants to prove that the subject of philosophy and theology are the same. For him, the subject matter of both is the question of the absolute. They both deal with the relationship between the infinite and the finite. On the other hand, Hegel is aware of the negative character which concrete and historical religion acquires. It is on the basis of this awareness that for the first time in the history it was said that the transmission of Christianity is responsible for man’s alienation from himself. Here, Hegel wants philosophy to come to the rescue of religion by explaining the dialectical evolution of the opposition between the finite and the infinite.

Ludwig Feurbach [1804 –1872], was the most important of the left wing of Hegelians who radically criticized the ambiguities in Hegel. Feurbach calls Hegel’s God as psychological
projection of perfection. It is due to this psychological projection of perfection that man becomes alienated from himself. Man thus becomes alienated, because, with the idea of God, he becomes alienated from his goodness, as all goodness becomes that of God. Under such situation, de-alienation consists in only one thing, in overcoming, or getting rid of God and religion.

Religion, for it's existence, depends on promises of celestial rewards, promises in heaven, notions of eternal happiness etc. But once man turns into earthly happiness, religion could be surpassed. Feuerbach believes that God is only a reflections of man's essence and once philosophy has discovered his real nature, there will be no need for this projection.

Previously, religion was thought of as priestly lie. The priestly deceit was completely based on imagination, and it has no base whatsoever. As against this, Feuerbach says that religion is the essence of man, human essence. Only thing, the relationship is being inverted, and explanation of which gets it's locus shifted from
supernatural to man. This is an important contribution of Feuerbach. Now religion is no longer arbitrary, but it has a concrete base. This particular phenomenon of shifting the locus of religion from arbitrary to concrete made tremendous impact on the emergence of the concept of ideology. Thus we can see that with Feuerbach, criticism of religion takes new dimensions. To this extent, we can treat Feuerbach as the last link between traditional religious criticism and the concept of ideology.

Feuerbach, in spite of of his important contributions is not without problems. Later, Marx criticized him for making his conception abstract from historical process. Marx says that Feuerbach does the abstracting mistake of fixing

"the religious sentiments as something by itself".

Marx accuses him, saying:-

Feuerbach "does not see that 'religious sentiment' is itself a social product, and the abstract individual whom he analyses belongs to a particular form of society" (26)
Marx says that Feuerbach does not see the 'dialectical relationship' in which man and religion exists.

With Marx, all fields of intellectual endeavours had a "break". Practically every field of knowledge broke away from traditional ways to the new, Marxian way, which popularly is known as scientific way. This break could be seen in all areas of study as human understanding itself changed into scientific understanding. Our concept of ideology also undergoes changes with Marx. Ideology surpasses the critique of religion and catches up with more proper understandings. With Marx, ideology came to assert its negative and critical character. This does not mean that religious criticism is done away with. The importance of a critique of religion can not be underestimated in Marx. He had made it very clear in the famous passage which speaks of religion as the opium of the people.

"the criticism of religion is pre-requisite of all criticisms". (27)

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But at this point Marx was still a Feuerbachian and is yet to produce his theory of ideology. Marx's theory of ideology subsumes not only religion, but all forms of disturbances and obstructions. Finally when Marx came up with his critique of ideology, he not only emphasized a negative connotation of the term ideology, but also introduced a new force of critique in his definition, with reference to historical contradiction in society.

In this chapter, We have made an attempt to look at few thinkers very briefly. From Machiavelli to Feuerbach, we have traveled through Bacon, Helvetius, De' Tracy, Napoleon, and Comte. We were trying to comprehend the underlying currents of ideology in these thinkers. In our endeavour, we came across phenomena such as idol, prejudice, religion, and ideology itself. what was common in all of them was, they were almost always seen as psychological distortion at the level of cognition. They fail to find the crucial connection between mental distortion and the historical development of man's social relations. All these previous
thinkers have accounted ideological distortion by passions, superstitions, individual interests, religious prejudices, or man's necessary self alienation. But they have never related ideological distortions to another important and crucial phenomenon, which is historically necessary social contradictions. As a result, ideology, and reason had appeared as un-historical phenomena, and we can see that ideology and reason as struggling against one another at theoretical level. It is due to this confusions that education is thought of as a remedy to ideological distortions. On the other hand, the struggle between reason and religious prejudices was thought as having something like a universal character or it was misunderstood as the human nature. Up to the period of enlightenment, prejudices were seen as having upper hand. From then on, reason would bring progress and happiness by liberating from prejudices. Though all these thought structure took place, man and society was always treated as something static. Marx later analyses this situation as "history was conceived of as succession of stages, it's institution artificial fetters, which reason finally manages to get rid
off. Thus history was supposed to have arrived at it's plenitude.

It is the crucial contribution from Marx which became successful in showing the precariousness, and historical relativity of bourgeois society, and due to this, the connection between the concept of ideology and the questions of social contradiction inherent in that society. Thus with Marx, the concept of ideology became newly and differently formulated and the new formulation of the concept of ideology has shed all forms of psychologisms. Therefore, it can be said that with Marx concept of ideology came of age.
NOTES


2. Ibid. p.278.

3. Ibid. p.311.


6. Ibid. Aphorism LXVI, p.50.


8. Ibid. Aphorism XLIII, p.49.


10. Ibid. p.151.


16. Ibid. p.347.


22. Ibid. pp.XVIII-XXIX.


24. Ibid. p.71.

25. Ibid. p.83.

26. Ibid. p.213.
