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A bibliographical note on ideology and cultural studies

The following bibliography lists English-language sources which present (1) theories and histories of the concept of ideology; (2) development and discussions of the Marxist concept of ideology; (3) contributions to the study of literature and ideology; and (4) contributions to the study of popular culture and ideology. Since the two following bibliographical essays deal with Althusserian approaches to literature and film, I will only note here those Althusserian contributions which I believe are of central importance to contemporary discussions of ideology and culture. Moreover, I will focus on those analyses of ideology which are most relevant to the theamatics of ideology and cultural studies, and omit, for the most part, the voluminous literature on political ideologies, as well as ideology and law, economics, education, and the other dominant ideological regions. The focus is necessarily selective; in general, only the most important books on the topic are listed, although sometimes articles and journals are cited.

(1) The concept of ideology. Important theories of ideology include Destutt de Tracy, *Elements of Ideology* (Paris, 1801-13); parts of which are translated in *Ideology, Politics, and Political Theory*, ed. Richard H. Cox (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1969). Developing out of the Enlightenment attack on religious and metaphysical ideas, the word was coined by de Tracy to designate the "natural history of ideas." Napoleon, however, attacked the new "science," which was potentially in opposition to every form of authority, denouncing the "ideologues" as isolated worshipers of reason. Ideology thus underwent a semantic change and became a term of abuse. Its pejorative sense was taken up by Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology*, vol. 5 of the *Collected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1977). Here, ideology is conceived as a system of illusory beliefs, arising out of the economic infrastructure, which generates, "in the brain," an understanding of the world that is an inversion of reality. The ideas of an ideology appear universal and rational—even natural—but are really historically specific ideas used to legitimate a given social order.

In *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1936), Karl Mannheim distinguishes between "ideologies" which preserve existing society and "utopias" which call for its radical transformation. Like Marx, he relates ideologies to the world views of social classes but calls for "free-floating intellectuals" who would rise above all perspectives in the name of an ideology-free "truth." For Mannheim, Marxism is merely another ideology, influencing later perceptions of itself. Jürgen Habermas' "Science and Technology as 'Ideology',"


Marxists tend to follow the “classical” Marx-Engels view that ideology functions to maintain the hegemony of the ruling class by legitimating the dominant mode of production, institutions and values. Althusserians wish to formulate a “scientific” concept of ideology, whereas Lukács, Gramsci, the Frankfurt School and others criticize ideologies of scientism and positivism. Reich, Gabel and some of the Althusserians discussed by Sumner attempt to develop the psychological aspects of the concept of ideology, while Poulantzas and Laclau develop concepts of political ideology from positions close to Althusser. Marcuse, Kosik and others listed in the next two sections develop theories of ideology and culture. Provocative
criticism of the Marxian concept of ideology is found in Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (New York: Oxford, 1977) and Seliger's book cited above. The following journals have devoted issues or sections to the Marxian theories of ideology: *Working Papers in Cultural Studies*, no. 10 (1977); *Ideology and Consciousness* (almost every issue); and *Jump Cut*, no. 17 (1978).


Lukács, Caudwell and Goldmann take a fairly orthodox Marxian view of literature as representing the ideologies of the dominant or the oppositional class. Although there are problems with this theory, their historical studies are often excellent. Benjamin, Adorno, Williams and Fisher frequently analyze cultural contradictions within literature, and often stress oppositional values even within "bourgeois literature." This tendency has been challenged by Althusser-inspired critics—e.g. Macherey and Eagleton—who argue for a "science of the text" and tend to see literature primarily as a vehicle for hegemonic ideologies. Roland Barthes and various semiotists and structuralists presented in the *Sub-Stance* and *Yale French Studies* issues, as well as the Coward-Ellis book, have challenged the dominant modes of interpretation, and have offered new perspectives on the text and ideology. Fredric Jameson criticizes what he considers the formalist elements...
in these approaches in the books cited above and in “Ideology of the Text,”
Salmagundi, no. 51-52 (Fall 1975-Winter 1976). John Fekete criticizes the
formalist elements and ideologies in the standard modes of criticism in the
Anglo-American world, such as “New Criticism,” Frye and McLuhan. The
anthology Aesthetics and Politics discusses Marxist debates over popular culture and
cultural theory. In his last published work before his death, Marcuse defends the
progressive elements in bourgeois culture against various “modernist” or “antiart”
tendencies, which he thinks sacrifices the emancipatory elements of art. In
addition, the following journals frequently have articles dealing with literature and
ideology: Daicriti, New German Critique, New Left Review, Minnesota Review, Ideologies and Literature, Red Letters and Social Text.

(4) Ideology and popular culture. Walter Benjamin, Illuminations, op. cit. and
Reflections, op. cit.; T. W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, The Culture Industry,”
in Dialectic of Enlightenment (New York: Seabury Press, 1972); Siegfried Kracauer,
From Caligari to Hitler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947); T. W.
Adorno, “Television and the Patterns of Mass Culture,” in Mass Culture, eds. B.
Rosenberg and D. M. White (Glencoe: Free Press, 1957) and Introduction to the
Sociology of Music (New York: Seabury, 1976); Leo Lowenthal, Literature, Popular
Culture, and Society (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1961); Roland Barthes,
and Wang, 1978) and The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies (New York: Hill
and Wang, 1979); Marshall McLuhan, The Mechanical Bride (Boston: Beacon Press,
1967); Cahiers du Cinema, “John Ford’s Young Mr. Lincoln,” in Movies and Methods, ed.
Bill Nichols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976)—this anthology
contains many useful articles on ideology and film; Ariel Dorfman and Armand
Mattelart, How to Read Donald Duck (New York: International General, 1975);
Cultural Studies, no. 5 (Autumn 1972); Robert Jewett and John Lawrence, The
American Monomyth (New York: Doubleday, 1977); and Douglas Kellner, “TV,
Ideology, and Emancipatory Popular Culture,” Social Text, no. 45 (May-June
1979).

Benjamin’s essays “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”
in Illuminations and “The Author as Producer” in Reflections are brilliant
arguments for the intervention of socialists in popular culture and the mass media
to combat bourgeois hegemony. Adorno and Horkheimer’s essay “The Culture
Industry” is frequently seen as an attempt to combat Benjamin’s overly optimistic
views of the media by arguing that the culture industries are already instruments of
class domination. Adorno’s essay on television extends the argument to that
medium, and the essay by Kellner criticizes Adorno by analyzing contradictions
within television and the possibilities for Left intervention. Kracauer’s study sees the
German film as expressing the anxieties and nightmares of the German people during
the Weimar Republic, which helped prepare the way for fascism by habituating the
public to tyrants, irrational forces, violence and antidemocratic solutions to problems.
Possibilities of radical use of film are discussed in James Roy MacBean’s
study of Godard, Film and Revolution (Bloomington: Indiana University Press,
1975). The Cahier du Cinema article provides a Marxist “ideological reading” of
John Ford’s Young Mr. Lincoln, while Roland Barthes’ books provide a semiological
approach to the ideology of film and popular culture; this method is systematized
and expanded in the Camargo article. Jewett and Lawrence’s book applies myth-
genre criticism to a study of American culture, and contains a sharp and
illuminating critique of dominant mythical-ideological themes and patterns in
American culture. Adorno's *Introduction to the Sociology of Popular Music* provides a critique of ideology in popular music; Leo Lowenthal's book contains a classic study of the ideologies in American magazine biographies; and Dorfman and Mattelart provide a brilliant ideological critique of Donald Duck comic books. The following journals often have articles on popular culture and ideology: *Working Papers in Cultural Studies, Screen, Screen Education, College English* 38.7 (March 1977), *Cinéaste, Jump-Cut, Camera Obscura, Ciné-Tracts, Cultural Correspondence, Left Curve, Discourse, Social Text* and *Tabloid*.

**Addendum**

As *Praxis* goes to press, several new and forthcoming books on ideology and related issues should be mentioned. Jorge Latrín's *The Concept of Ideology* (Atlanta, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1979) is a lucid historical account of the main theoretical formulations of the concept from its origins to structuralism. Several essays by Paul Hirst on ideology, representing different stages of his attempt to come to terms and to offer a critique of Althusser's theory, have been collected in *On Law and Ideology* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1979), including his article on "Althusser and the Theory of Ideology." This is the first volume of a series ("Language, Discourse, Society") of books under the editorship of Stephen Heath and Colin MacCabe. Forthcoming volumes will include: Stephen Heath, *The Turn of the Subject*; Colin MacCabe (ed.), *The Talking Cure: Essays on Psychoanalysis and Language*; and *Stating the Obvious: From Semantics to Discourse*, a translation of Michel Pêcheux's *Les Vérités de la Palais*.

Other recent titles on culture polarized around the work of Althusser include: Simon Clarke (ed.), *One-Dimensional Marxism: Althusser and the Politics of Culture* (London: Allison & Busby, 1980); and Terry Lovell, *Pictures of Reality: Aesthetics, Politics, Pleasure* (London: British Film Institute, 1980), "a critical examination of recent developments in film theory... [which] argues that questions of pleasure, of audience involvement, and of politics are significantly interrelated.”

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