

The Relationship Between Ideology and the Proletariat

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The thesis we seek to address will understandably elicit some incredulity from Marxists, as we defend in this essay that the proletariat, in a manner of speaking, does indeed have ideology. The concept of ideology as specific to Analytical Marxism is commonly known as a pejorative one. Although ideology can be broadly defined as any collection of normative theories or doctrines used to describe the world, the sense of ideology as known to Marxist study renders it seemingly irreconcilable with the proletariat. In this uniquely Marxist sense (which is that sense in which ideology will be understood throughout this essay), ideology is necessarily class ideology. This class ideology has two essential properties: it propagates a false consciousness, and almost exclusively services particular class interests.¹ In appropriating the general definition of ideology toward classed ends, class ideology thus becomes an effective means by which the interests of a dominant class are enforced and maintained. As such, ideology is false consciousness when it is internalized. This is applicable to both the capitalists whose interests are furthered by their internalization of class ideology, and the proletariat who further capitalist interests by internalizing class ideology. Because the proletariat are optimistically understood as the catalytic group responsible for bringing about a rejection of capitalism resulting in Communism, they thus initially seem to be wholly opposed to 'having' ideology. Although we will later elaborate on what is meant by 'having' ideology, for now it is sufficient to say that to 'have' ideology is to subscribe to the false consciousness and fictitious reality that further capitalist interests.

The methodology that this essay pursues in arguing for our rather unintuitive thesis then, will be one in which the functions unique to class ideology and the proletariat will be first sought and established. As a social class, the proletariat will not perform a

function per se, and so what we will mean whenever we refer to the 'proletarian function', will be its behaviour, practises, and characteristics. If it can be then shown that the function of ideology is identical to the function of the proletariat class, then the proletariat does indeed have ideology. If the contrary is found to be true and the function of ideology is dissimilar to that of the proletariat, then it can be concluded that the proletariat does not effectuate ideals. For instance, if it can be shown that the ideological function is that of subjugation and preservation of the exploitative capitalist reality, and it can be correspondingly shown that the proletariat under capitalism inevitably submit themselves to systematic repression, then this consistency in function will indicate the presence of ideology in the proletariat. This approach will determine the progression of the essay in the following manner: First, the emergence of the ideological institution will be disclosed in order to determine the function of ideology, succeeded by an establishment of the function of the proletariat. Next, we must introduce criteria of social consciousness by which the proletariat can be rendered divisible into three distinct proletarian stages for analysis. Because ambiguities arise in both the persistence of a continued 'proletarian' proletariat, as well as the semantics of our argument, these will be both subsequently addressed. We will then conclude the essay with the promised evaluation of functional consistency between the three identified proletarian stages and ideology as so to determine the extent to which ideology is possessed by each proletarian instantiation.

To understand the function of ideology, it is perhaps best to begin exegetically with the means by which ideology develops. It will be possible to determine the function of ideology once we have schematically outlined this context in which it is integrated. The

Marxist conception of a social whole is partitioned into an economic “base” comprised of the totality of production relations (but to the exclusion of the productive force terms contained by relations of production)² and a “superstructure”; which is itself divided into a “politico-legal” State and legal constituent, and an ideological constituent.³ In this manner, the instantiation of productive relations as exploitative and commodified capitalist relations facilitates the superstructural levels of capitalist State and ideology. Although the relations between the social constituents of State and the reified productive relations of the base reciprocally facilitate each others’ cohesion and reproduction (in that State as a repressive apparatus functions to violently enforce iniquitous productive relations and economic social relationships find their expression in political and legal forms),⁴ the relationship between the State ideological apparatus and the economic “base” is one of functional explanation.⁵ The base is functionally explained by the superstructure. This is to say that, in accordance with rules of functional explanation, the capitalist situation was such that an economic basis developed as so to furnish the stabilising functions of a superstructure. The superstructure thus requires the support of the economic base, and is correspondingly strengthened and weakened to the extent that it “promotes or frustrates” the operation of the economic relations that sustain it.⁶ Situated within this macroscopic ordering of base and superstructure, the relations of production (that comprise the economic base) and ideology (a superstructural institution) that this essay will address can likewise be expressed as terms in a statement of functional explanation. In order for ideology to functionally explain productive relations, however, such relations of production cannot be ordinary, non-exploitative productive relations; rather, ideological relations of production must be reified capitalist economic relations. As such, this functional relationship can only be seen upon the reification of economic relations, as it is this very reification that promotes false consciousness and with it, ideology.

In order to demonstrate that reified relations of

production and ideology do enter as terms into a functionally explained relationship then, we must first describe reification and its entailments. Reification is the reduction of economic relations to more material forms by privileging the material yield of labour—the commodity, over the relations of production (such as that existent between labourers and that of the labourer and capitalist) actually responsible. Because relations of production comprise the economic base, they are the fundamental units of production (excluding their productive force terms) to which the origin of commodities must be attributed. With reified economic relations, however, instead of the commodity being viewed as a product of these economic social relations, it is accredited with bringing about the very social relation in fact responsible for it. In being regarded as secondary to the commodity, the labourers involved in these economic social relations soon come to see their work as not occurring between two private individuals, but rather “material relations between people and social relations between things.”⁷ Reified economic relations thereby present themselves as independent of human actions by rendering their essentially human economic relations interactions between objects instead. The relations of producers to one another come to assume the appearance of interactions between commodities. This privileging of the commodity product of labour promotes the illusion that it is the commodity that motivates the capitalist economy and not the economic social relations. Eventually, it is not merely the social relations that are reified, but the participants in the interactions themselves: following the alienation of human labour (in which the productive capacity is commodified and marketed), human beings become mere appendages of a capitalist machine with both the commodification of their productive capacity and their resulting labours abstracted into a measurable quantitative form of monetary units. In this manner, reification deprives those economic relations of their origins as human interactions and mystifies the transaction of labour for wages, as the amount of labour a product inheres is unapparent. The event of surplus value incursion then, goes largely unexplained and unnoticed. Reified economic

relations thus favour capitalist interests, as they conceal the exploitative qualities of capitalist production from the proletarian labourers.

Capitalism promotes these untruths of reification as objective, “conscious expressions”⁸ of reality that result in the existence of a greater societal *false consciousness*. Ideology is an expression of reification at this aggregate level of consciousness. In this manner, ideology becomes a system which represents the ideas of the dominant capitalist social group. The social consciousness promoted by ideology, however, does not accord with reality, and neither encourages the discovery nor the accurate expression of reality. The concomitant notion that arises, that the mere presence of ideology in a class necessarily entails the possession of ideology by that class—that ideology is ‘had’ as it were, will be detailed later on. For our purposes of establishing the function of ideology, however, it is necessary to assert that ideology does not possess transformational abilities on its own. Although intellectually and conceptually influential, ideology is nevertheless a mere set of ideas. In order to effectuate change, it must exist within a State apparatus. The State as we asserted earlier, functions repressively (frequently through force) to maintain the representation of the reified relationship of individuals to their actual conditions of existence. Ideology then, is functionally expressed through the implement of State—the Ideological State Apparatus. Ideology is thus both repressive in that it is an expression of reified relations that are in themselves repressive in their conservation of exploitation, and in that it functions repressively through the State apparatus. Ideology, then, as we have shown is both intrinsically repressive and functionally repressive.

Next, the self-repressive function of the proletariat must be demonstrated. Although the proletariat are certainly exploited and oppressed by their reified relations of production as we discussed earlier, they are most unique not just in their historical situation (as inheritors of a revolutionary mantle), but also in their perpetuation of the repressive capitalist relations of production. In this manner, the

proletariat function self-repressively. This is accomplished, however, through the dominant ideological State apparatus. The dominant State apparatus exists as the “educational ideological apparatus.”⁹ This installation of the bourgeoisie ensures the reproduction of the existent exploitative relations of production by the proletariat that in turn guarantee proletarian repression in the succeeding generation. This is not to say that the educational apparatus serves *just* the purpose of instilling a self-repressive ideology into the proletariat, but rather that the educational apparatus injects *each* class with its corresponding ideology: the exploited are imbued with an ideology appropriate to their maintaining an exploited agency, whereas the bourgeois exploiters are instilled with stratagems of repression. Having shown that the function of the proletariat is uniquely self-repressive, we can now assess how this self-repressive function compares with the function of ideology. As we recall, if they are found to be consistent, then we can conclude that the proletariat do indeed ‘have’ ideology; thereby proving our thesis.

Next we will examine the uniquely revolutionary quality of the proletariat in becoming aware of their commodified state and how we are from this able to distinguish at least three distinct ‘stages’ of proletarianism. In order to have this potential for bringing about the visionary ideal of Communism, the proletariat must first have the transformative knowledge that they are able to do so. Although this is a sensible stipulation, the conditions under which such knowledge can be attained are troubling. The proletarian class consciousness is uniquely equipped to conclude that it is capable of socialising the means of production and thereby dissolving reification; and with it capitalism. No other class is comparably capable, Marx thinks, because the rigorous exploitation of the proletariat also confers upon them a productive discipline and organisation that has been lacking in every exploited class hitherto.¹⁰ As such, the historical position of the proletariat is unprecedented, and according to Marx, they must be the terminal exploited class. The ideal consciousness that the proletariat would achieve, however, that would allow them the knowledge of their unique

historical position, and thus of their transformative abilities (for one must be aware of one's potential for freedom, before one begin exercising efforts at its attainment), is merely an "imputed" consciousness.¹¹ The reason for this is that the state of consciousness where the proletariat come to have the necessary and transformative comprehension of their unique social situation is one that they would possess only under very ideal circumstances (as capitalists effectively oppress through concealment of their oppressions). These ideal circumstances are to be found only in a Socialist or Communist historical epoch in which concealed, exploitative capitalist institutions no longer exist. Correspondingly, consciousness then ceases to be classed, but rather becomes a 'human consciousness'. In short, it seems that the proletariat can only have the necessary knowledge to bring about revolution once revolution has been brought about already. The uniquely revolutionary nature of the proletariat then, hinges upon their realisation of a transformative knowledge of which they can become only theoretically aware. It is only through this attainment of correct consciousness coupled with the ensuing knowledge of their alienation and exploitation by capitalism that the proletariat may go about affecting revolution. This circular manoeuvre of reasoning is worrying; it seems that the correct consciousness that would allow the proletariat to apprehend their exploitation and instigate revolution is an acumen that is only achievable in a Communist state.

Such an unsound argument is not that which Marx advocates. In order to remedy this circularity, Marx introduces the intermediary state of Socialism that divides impending revolution into progressive stages. As a precondition to Communism, the Socialist state is characterised by the apprehension of the underlying essence in the appearance of capitalist reality. Although the transparency of reified reality will ultimately prompt complete revolution—'complete' revolution being defined as the final engendering of a class that does not lead to a new form of exploitation, as well as the presence of a collective 'human consciousness'—this is an incipient step that precludes complete revolution. Such non-reified knowledge will be promulgated by

dialectical materialist theories (such as that of Marx's) that aide in bringing about a self-aware "anticipatory class consciousness."¹² In this step then, although there will be many structural similarities to Communism, it will not yet be Communism in that its proletariat consciousness will be developmentally incomplete (a partial 'class consciousness' and not the necessary 'human consciousness'). If Communism is the ideal political state corresponding to an ideal collective consciousness—that of 'human consciousness', and we evaluate a political state's extent of success in having attained the Communist ideal based on the developmental state of their collective social consciousness, then we can regard Socialism in this sense as a 'weaker' version of Communism. In this manner, the proletarian achievement of a visionary Communist ideal progresses through three successive stages: the incipient capitalist proletariat, the subsequent Socialist proletariat, and the final Communist 'proletariat.' It also becomes evident here that continued reference to the proletarian group by a designation of "proletariat" grows increasingly paradoxical: how can we continue to denote the proletariat as proletarian if it decreasingly exemplifies proletarian attributes? This concern will be addressed later on. The three distinct proletarian stages that we have identified based upon our criteria of social consciousness, however, are to act as standards of comparison against which we will assess identity with the ideological identity. Each of these three proletarian stages then, will be assessed for the extent to which ideology is present in them.

It must be acknowledged that although the proletariat in capitalism serve a consistently self-repressive function, its functioning in this way is dependent on its continued proletarianism. That is, in order to function as the proletariat, the proletariat must continue to instantiate qualities that identify it as the proletariat. As we have seen, however, the gradual dissolution of the class system also brings about the demise of the proletarian class form. The likelihood thus arises that with such a seeming reduction in proletarian cohesion, there follows a decline in proletarian functionality as well. Although

this complication might appear to introduce indefensibility into our argument, it is not irreconcilable, and will be resolved with forthcoming clarification.

Class in the Marxist sense is characterised by a social order in which members of different classes are entitled to different property rights, and certain classes are iniquitously forced to forfeit property rights to other classes. The creation of such a social order will inevitably give rise to exploiting and exploited social groups—the bourgeois and a proletarian classes. As the structure of the State advances from a capitalist to a Socialist form then, the classed social order it maintains dissolves accordingly. The reason for this is that the form of the classes is determined largely by its situation within the State just as much as the structure of the state depends on the existence of a class structure. As we mentioned earlier, the State initially arises to arbitrate the irreconcilable interests of an emergent class system but the State ultimately becomes harnessed as an instrument of class rule by the very class system that invited its existence.¹³ The existence of State then, becomes dependent on its being instrumentalised by class interests.¹⁴ This reciprocity means that one cannot undergo change whilst the other remains unaffected. The function of the proletariat, then, will vary when such functions are determined at each of the distinct stages of political development (from capitalism to Communism). As such, the function of the proletariat as a self-repressive class during the capitalist epoch will differ from the function of the proletariat at a Socialist stage. In spite of such potential discrepancies in function between the individual proletarian stages, the unifying function of the proletariat as a revolutionary catalyst remains consistent. Even though the proletariat class may cease to be qualitatively proletarian, this does not detract from their overarching function as a catalytic social group. Additionally, any analysis of the proletarian function cannot be abstracted from its corresponding historical contexts. If the proletariat indeed evolve in accordance to the changing political contexts in which they are contained, then our thesis of assessing the presence or absence of ideology

must necessarily consider these contexts. Thus, if the proletarian function is apt to change throughout its developmental process, then it is the consistency of this evolving function that we must assess at each of its main historical stages against the function of ideology.

Although we've clarified that the proletarian function develops commensurately as historical epochs progress, such a clarification invites a particularly damaging objection: if the function of the proletariat varies according to each economically distinct historical epoch, then to the extent that a social group is identified by its function, would it not be the case that as we approached post-capitalist societies (terminating in Communism), there would be no proletariat of which to speak? Because it is true that the proletariat becomes increasingly less 'proletarian' in nature as Communism is approached, it would seem appropriate to object that we cannot evaluate the functional compatibility of later proletarian stages with ideology, as there is no characteristically 'proletarian' proletariat to be analysed. The success of such an argument would limit our analysis to that of the proletariat in capitalism, as capitalism would be the only stage of economic development in which we could be certain of the proletariat existing. Such an analysis would be incomplete, as it is unclear that the proletariat *do* cease to exist in the immediate post-capitalist society of Socialism. As such, in order for us to offer a thorough assessment of functional compatibility between the proletariat and ideology, then we must perform this assessment for *all* possible instantiations of the proletariat at each corresponding stage of economic development from capitalism to Communism (as a proletarian group does not exist in pre-class society). This next section will be thus spent determining whether a proletarian group can be said to exist in post-capitalist society. The means by which we will go about doing so will involve a procedure like that of a binary classification test; in this manner, our eventual exclusion of the possibility that the proletariat could *wholly* cease to exist in post-capitalist society, will allow us to confirm that *some* semblance of proletarian group is inherited by post-capitalist

societies. If we can prove that this is the case, then the objection that we are left without an analysable substrate in post-capitalist societies remains salient; it does however, become invalid.

Because Marx never quite addresses the state of the proletariat in Socialism, we can only make reasoned inferences by analysing the conditions responsible for bringing about and maintaining proletarianism in capitalism. This is to be found in the class system of which the proletariat are constitutive. Without a capitalist class system, the proletariat could not exist. By examining the class system that conditions the existence of the proletariat then, we can concomitantly make observations about the success with which the proletariat persist in post-capitalist societies. We know for instance, that differences in biologically conferred capacities result in natural labour divisions that condition the capitalist class system.¹⁵ To the extent that the manifestations of labour division necessarily correspond to their stages of economic development (such labour divisions coming to structure a class system in capitalism), we can garner a qualitative understanding of the proletariat in Socialism by way of the Socialist expressions of natural labour division. How then, do labour divisions instantiate themselves in Socialism? Since we know that Socialism inherits a transitioned capitalist class system, then to understand the macroscopic changes in the capitalist class system that result from a Socialist requisition of the class system (and thus the means by which labour division is expressed in Socialism) we must first apprehend the changes that occur in the underlying mechanisms of the class system. In regressing a causal step, we can discover how the capitalist class system as a reflection of its underlying mechanisms, is reformed in Socialism by virtue of Socialist reformation of its more basic constituents.

When we seek then, to discover what is responsible for the class system in capitalism, we find the answer to be the institution of capitalist State. From this, there are two means by which the State's relationship to the class system can be characterised in its: either as a condition of class exploitation, or as

an instrument of class rule.¹⁶ The State conditions the capitalist class system by providing the social structure in which exploitation can be maintained: that of a system of property maintained through legal relations of ownership. In this way, these systems of ownership that promote distributive iniquities of property engender a *capitalist* class system based on exploitation. The capitalist class system, however, nevertheless remains an expression of natural labour divisions that result from biologically differing human aptitudes; it is just that such an expression in capitalism assumes an exploitative form. When we examine Socialist transformations endured by the State (regarded as a condition for the capitalist class system) as a means by which to determine how these changes are reflected by the class system, we find that the “withering away of the State” in Socialism predicted by Engels seems initially to entail the abolishment of the class system as well.¹⁷ In doing away with the conditions originally responsible for bringing about the capitalist class system, it seems intuitive that the proletariat class system, and with it, the proletariat, will follow in being done away with as well. When we consider, however, that the State acts also as an instrument of the dominant class, then it becomes unclear that the class system disappears with the dissolution of State. As an instrument of the class system, the State functions to preserve the capitalist relations of production conducive to exploiters¹⁸—his is performed through occasionally violent apparatuses of power and enforcement. Such a relationship, in which the State is an effect of the capitalist class system, will not allow us to conclude that the proletariat cease to exist in Socialism. In lieu of the ‘withering’ away of State that accompanies the advent of Socialism, the aspects of the class system that cause State could remain even if their effects were dissolved. For instance, if one of the means by which State was harnessed as an instrument of class rule was a judiciary system that performed regulatory functions of society, but that ruled always in favour of the capitalists, we can see how doing away with this State institution would leave the underlying class system intact. In determining the differences in Socialist and capitalist expressions of labour division then, we can thereby conclude that

the expression of labour divisions inherited by Socialism from capitalism is one that would differ from the capitalist class system, but nevertheless retain certain tendencies of capitalist class. Because the State is as much an effect as well a precursor to classes, we are able to exclude the possibility that the class system ceases to exist altogether in Socialism, even with the certainty that the State will 'wither away'. In doing so, we are thus able to further ascertain that the proletariat do not cease to altogether exist either in post-capitalist societies, as with the persistence of some semblance of the class system, ensues the persistence of some proletarian group.

Additionally, we can guess that in the economic progression from capitalism to the projected Communist conclusion, the cohesion of the proletariat as an exploited class decays accordingly. In this regard, the objection is correct. However, in order to justify that our thesis, which must pursue the functional compatibility of even later proletarian groups with ideology, is valid, we must substantively recover the existence of the proletariat in these post-capitalist stages. Thus, although we have proven that the possibility of the proletariat to wholly ceasing to exist in post-capitalist societies cannot be excluded, it remains to be seen that the proletariat *do* positively continue to exist in post-capitalist societies. In order to do so, we must find some purpose of proletarianism that resists Socialist transformation, and hence continues to bind proletarian group members together. Doing so would furnish us the means to prove the persistence of the proletarian group in such post-capitalist stages.

To firmly refute the objection that the dissolution of the proletariat leaves us without an analysable substrate this claim, we must now acknowledge the dual role of the proletarian as both a *class* as well as a catalytic *group*. For we must remember that society can be divided into groups due to divergent interests but it would be misleading to think that such groups are immediately *classed* in the Marxist sense without entailing the classed social order that makes this possible. When society is rendered

increasingly classless, the proletariat accordingly lose their cohesion resulting from class. Here, the additional catalytic function of the proletariat lends structure and permanency to the proletariat such that they are still able to retain a function that persists beyond the dissolution of State, and thereby retain their cohesion as a group. Although the proletariat might cease to be classed in an oppressed and exploited sense (with the onset of Socialism), and might even cease to be proletariat altogether, they are still lent a *group* status by their catalytic function. Such a diminished classed quality does not equate to a diminished ability to effectuate catalytic function, as the two functions that the proletariat effectuate (the *classed* function being one of self-repression) exist with functional independence of one another. The dually self-repressive and catalytic functions of the proletariat then, ensure its survival as an object of analysis for the purposes of our argument in spite of its partial dissolution as a class in Socialism. Continued reference to the 'proletariat' in the post-capitalist stages of Socialism and Communism then, is something of a misnomer as in those instances the proletariat possesses its catalytic functions, but not the entirety of their self-repressive capitalist function or exploited status. Because we are nevertheless obligated to analyse these post-capitalism 'proletarian groups' in our thesis, for the sake of consistency, we will continue to refer to post-capitalism proletarian groups as the 'proletariat'; with the acknowledgment, however, that the only proletarian quality that these proletarian retain with certainty is catalysis.

An additional ambiguity in our argument emanates from the terminological distinction between the "having" ideology, and a "presence" of ideology. To avoid inconsistency, it will be necessary to resolve any definitional discrepancies, but we can do so only whilst remaining faithful to the concept of ideology. In examining the nature of ideology, we see straightaway that due to the inevitably dominant quality of ideology, there is no such terminological distinction between "having" ideology and an ideological "presence": from a mere presence of ideology in the proletariat it will follow that that ideology is dominant, and thereby "had" by the

proletariat (or more likely impressed upon them). The reason for this is a result of the capitalist State's relationship with ideology in which ideology is expressed in the form of a State apparatus.

The State institution is an authority responsible for reconciling class disputes in capitalism. Arbitration of such inter-class disputes, however, occurs always to the advantage of the bourgeoisie. In this manner, the State institution entitles the bourgeoisie to different property rights and furthers iniquitous economic relations to the detriment of the proletariat. Although the State emerges to fulfil a necessary social role, it is insufficient that it should merely exist. We've mentioned already how it is that the State emerged as an authoritative institution, but not yet accounted for how the State persists in capitalism. Certainly the State could have existed as a one-time arbiter of irreconcilable class disputes, but it has instead persisted and expanded its influence in the form of constituent political, legal, and philosophical institutions. Although we know that the capitalist State preserves the interests of the exploiter class, we have not yet explained that this results from the fundamental nature of the capitalist State to *reproduce the dominant relations of production*.¹⁹ The enduring nature of the State apparatus is thus embedded in the capitalist reality. The State alone, however, is merely an abstract concept. In order that it might exert influence, the State must act through its constituent apparatuses; among these, is the Ideological Apparatus. If ideology then, is articulated through the State as an apparatus, then it too must be necessarily authoritative.

In accounting for the persistence of the State institution then, we have concurrently explained for the inherent hegemony of ideology: to maintain its ascendancy, the State must exercise its hegemony through the Ideological Apparatus. Although the State Ideological Apparatus exists in forms of religion and family, it finds its most effective manifestation in education. It is through this particular form that the State can effectively perpetuate itself through the reproduction of productive relations. The relationship between State

and ideology then, is one of reciprocity: ideology finds expression through the State, but the State employs ideology as an implement of repression and dominance. And insofar as ideology expresses itself through the State as an Ideological Apparatus, it is also the ruling ideology. Thus, the mere presence of an ideology as expressed through the State, uniquely ensures its dominance. For the sake of our argument then, it is acceptable to interchangeably refer to ideology as either being 'had,' or being 'present' as the same inference of ideological dominance can be drawn from both.

In the greater context of a progression toward Communism then, there are at least three discernible stages of proletariat that we can evaluate for functional consistency with ideology: the pre-revolutionary capitalist stage, the intermediary Socialist stage, and the ideal Communist stage. The function of each of these political stages then, must be individually assessed for compatibility with the repressive ideological function to determine consistency, and from that the 'having' or 'not having' of ideology by that proletarian stage determined. In the first pre-revolutionary capitalist stage, the proletariat under capitalism possesses a self-repressive function as we have determined already. This repressive function, albeit self-imposed, is nevertheless shared with the ideological function. Ideology is thus present in the capitalist proletariat, and by virtue of its hegemonic property, also the ruling ideology. As for Socialism, the presence of ideology is less easily determined in the Socialist proletarian group, as we cannot be certain that with the 'withering away' of State, the system of classes is dissolved as well. Because Socialism can act as either as a condition of class exploitation, or as an instrument of class rule, we cannot conclude the extent to which the proletariat acts-self-repressively in Socialism. If we attempted to determine the extent of ideology in the proletariat by an alternative method, utilising the extent to which the social consciousness has been 'humanised' to determine ideological, false consciousness, we would similarly falter. The dissolution of class as we know, is determinant of the corresponding social consciousness; the complete absence of a class

system in the Communist ideal, will be reflected in its 'human' consciousness. In being unable to ascertain the presence or absence of an exploitative class system that would in turn determine the quality of social consciousness at hand, this alternative method is equally unviable. We can only conclude then, that the extent to which the Socialist proletariat possesses ideology is indeterminate. Lastly, it has been fairly self-intimating throughout our argument that the Communist ideal should be entirely free of any capitalist residues. Correspondingly, the Communist 'proletarian' group will be without ideology.

We can thus conclude that ideology is possessed by the pre-revolutionary, capitalist proletariat, exists indeterminately in the Socialist proletariat stage, and is altogether absent in Communism. This increasing absence of ideology in the proletariat class as it progresses toward achievement of Communism, is due to a dissimilarity in the respective natures of ideology and the proletariat: whereas ideology is conservative of the capitalist reality, the function of the proletariat is *also* that of a unique revolutionary class. Additionally, we could not merely determine the presence of ideology in the proletariat, as it was evident that the proletariat do not exist in a consistent form, but rather exhibits great qualitative dynamism in the course of its progression toward a Communist ideal. Indeed, because the proletariat is intrinsically catalytic, we must also account for their antecedent capitalist form, as well as their Socialist and Communist manifestations.

NOTES

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12. *Ibid.*: 117.
13. *Man and Society*, p. 365.
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