

OUTLINE. Lecture 19. Sociology 621. WHAT IS IDEOLOGY?
November 5, 2013

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Multiple uses of the term “Ideology”

2. Ideology and other aspects of social relations/practices (recapitulation)

2.1 Ideology as a practice, contrasted with political and economic practice.

DEFINITION of ideological practice: Ideological practice is the social process through which (conscious) subjectivity is formed through the real activities of people engaged in social relations in which what happens to them – lived experiences – are transformed into cognitive products.

2.2 Once again: Type vs Dimension of practice

2.3 Ideology, Culture, Consciousness, Nonconscious subjectivity

- Patriarchal ideology VS Patriarchal culture
- Bourgeois ideology V Bourgeois culture

2.4 Key dynamic issue: contradictions between ideological and cultural practices

II. THERBORN’S ANALYSIS

1. Basic objectives & definition:

- the historical investigation of ideology.
- To expand the concept of ideology to encompass nonclass subjectivities/subjects.
- To give an account of the content and specific forms of “interpellation”
- the fundamentally contradictory character of the process of subject-formation

ideology = *“The operation of ideology in human life involves, fundamentally, constituting and patterning how human beings live their lives as conscious, reflecting initiators of acts in a universe of meaning....In this sense, ideology constitutes human beings as subjects.”*

2. Conceptual Distinctions on the Terrain of Ideology

2.1. Modes of “Interpellation”

1. The meaning of interpellation = subjection & qualification

Subjection = the effects of ideology on individual subjectivity;

Qualification = effects of such subjectivity on the individual’s insertion into social relations.

2. Modes of interpellation: answers to three questions: What exists? What is good? What is possible?

2.2 Material Matrix of Ideology: discursive and nondiscursive practices; sanctions & affirmations

2.3 The Analysis of Contradictions and Transformations of Ideology

1. Intergenerational perspective: Transformations of ideologies always presuppose an existing ideology

2. Key idea: Changes in social structures

(a) change the forms of sanctions/affirmations and

(b) generate disjunctions of subjection and qualification.

3. Contradictions & the temporality of change

4. Can new ideas and ideological struggle “change people’s minds”?