

OUTLINE. Lecture 18. Sociology 621. March 27, 2017

WHAT IS IDEOLOGY?

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: *Ideological practice* is the social process through which lived experiences are transformed into cognitive products – beliefs and values -- integrated into a person’s subjectivity.

2.2 *Once again: Type vs Dimension of practice*

2.3 *Ideology, Culture, Consciousness, Nonconscious subjectivity*

- Patriarchal ideology versus Patriarchal culture
- Bourgeois ideology versus 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

Definition: *“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?

3. Ambiguity in “what is good”: beliefs versus dispositions

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

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 →

- change the forms of sanctions/affirmations and
- generate disjunctions of subjection and qualification.

3. Contradictions & the temporality of change

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