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IDEOLOGY AND POLITICAL ASSOCIATION

An account of ideological understanding
in terms of its relationship to political
authority and practice.

T.J. Robinson

Thesis submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the University
of Durham.

February 1982

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an account of ideology as constitutive of manners of political life. I begin by discussing the uses of the term 'ideology' in the writings of Marx, Weldon and Oakeshott. I identify these uses in terms of their common normative form and then pass to a consideration of my own approach to the subject (introduction). Chapter one argues, in terms of a distinction between doing and making, that ideology cannot be understood as a theoretical idiom. In Chapter two I seek to show that the idea of political authority is unintelligible without the concept of ideology. Chapter three argues that ideology is an ethical understanding related to political practice in terms of the sentiments or motives in which people act. In Chapter four it is argued that the authority of political actions is connected to manner or style in conduct, and that ideological understandings are symbolised in style or manner of action. In Chapter five I attend to the subjectivity of ideology by an examination of ethical reflection. Chapter six considers the question of the objectivity of ideology. I argue for a certain form of ethical relativism and show the relevance of this to the understanding of political practice. In conclusion I discuss the relationship

between language and the idea of the state as
ethical association.

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PREFACE

In the course of their studies students of politics are often invited to consider ideologies or political doctrines. For the most part such consideration is historical, but in addition and perhaps improperly students are drawn to the evaluation of particular ideological doctrines. Unfortunately such attention is not often matched or supplemented by inquiry into the nature of ideological understanding. By and large ideology is not taken seriously by political philosophers. This thesis attempts to redress the balance. Its aim is to describe the essence of ideology by considering its place in political activity and association and its character as ethical understanding.

Paradoxically, perhaps, the aim of this thesis is not its end. The arguments in it arise from and are directed towards the central question of political philosophy: the nature of political authority and obligation. The attempt to be clear about this question has led me to the consideration of ideology. This concern permeates the account of ideological understanding advanced here and it is well, I think, to ponder somewhat upon this fact because other writers on ideology have not had, or at least have not had entirely, this end

in mind. For example, Marx's interest in ideology arose out of his attempt to show that beliefs which purported to be timeless and objective were, in a special sense historically relative. In somewhat similar vein Karl Mannheim in Ideology and Utopia was concerned to show how what he took to be sociological determinants of our social and political understanding could be transcended. Neither Marx's nor Mannheim's interests are pursued in this thesis. However, the concerns of Weldon and Oakeshott with ideology are closer to my own, though not coincident. Both these writers use the term 'ideology' to refer to forms of thinking which, they argue, are disruptive of rational political conduct. For Weldon this was the attempt to provide 'foundations' for political authority, while for Oakeshott an ideology was the natural product of those of a 'rationalist' turn of mind. Both Weldon and Oakeshott aimed, then, at describing what rational political conduct consisted in, and their uses of the term 'ideology' were correspondingly normative. 'Normative', in that if we accept either of their accounts it behoves us, at the least, to treat ideologies with suspicion.

The examples of Marx, Mannheim, Weldon and Oakeshott show the different interests which have prompted talk of ideology, and not to be aware of these may cause linguistic

confusion. The interest in ideology shown in this thesis is not the same as the interests of the four writers mentioned. Given this, the following objection may arise. If, for example, I am not concerned to pursue a line of inquiry initiated by Marx what can entitle me to use the term 'ideology' with any justification save the arbitrary fact that it pleases me so to do? Moreover, surely yet another use of the term only adds to the anarchy already surrounding its employment? In reply to this objection I begin by noting a linguistic fact. In this thesis I shall be speaking of social and political doctrines, and nowadays people are commonly given to calling these 'ideologies' rather than using the old fashioned words 'creed' or 'faith'. And, despite the fact that ideology is an ugly word, I have no objection to this practice which leads me to stipulate otherwise. Secondly, at a theoretical level what I have to say is of sufficient general import for it to have a bearing upon other discussions of ideology.

During the course of my work I have enjoyed the intellectual patronage of many people. My principal debt is to David Manning who has supervised the writing of this thesis. Also in the Department of Politics at Durham University I acknowledge the support of Alan Milne, Charles Reynolds and Henry Tudor. In addition I should like to thank three friends and erstwhile colleagues,

Alan Irving, Jeremy Rayner and Iain Torrance. Thanks are also due to Mrs. Dorothy Anson, Mrs. Jean Richardson, Mrs. Tricia Wears and Miss Julie Bushby for typing the thesis.

Except for a brief period the work for this thesis was completed in the Department of Politics at Durham University and I should like to record my enjoyment of that context. Finally, I mention with thanks Tommy Wilson, the landlord of The Dun Cow - a 'hostelry' agreeably close to the Department of Politics!

INTRODUCTION

(The philosopher is not a citizen of any community of ideas. That is what makes him into a philosopher.) - Wittgenstein

I: Ideology in the Context of Dogmatic Understanding

'Ideology' is a sufficiently ugly word for it to be used both as jargon and as a term of deprecation. Marxist sociologists speak a great deal of "ideological hegemony" to explain the disposition of the working classes not to ferment revolution, a disposition which to many does not appear at all strange. Conservatives distrust ideologists because of their rationalism, their penchant for abstract or theoretical understanding, and, perhaps most of all, for their moralising. For liberals ideological thinking is, for the most part, irrational thinking.

'Philosophy', on the other hand, is not an ugly word. However, for my purposes it is ambiguous: for philosophy is often thought to be intra-practical, the highest guide to le prix des choses¹, so that while philosophers may be praised for their intellections, they also come under scrutiny in terms of the desirability of their moral and political evaluations and prescriptions. So, somewhat paradoxically, may Aristotle be both praised and decried and Mill disparaged and yet approved. It is, I think, a moral interest which leads us to speak of "philosophies", of, for instance, Marx's philosophy, Hegel's philosophy or Mill's philosophy. It is as though by assent to a particular "philosophy" we commit ourselves (at the least) to the approval of a way of life.



Mere intellectual concurrence, however, affords us only the possibility of further argument, yet more discussion. Ethics and political philosophy, as branches of philosophy, may appear to stand as bridges between theoretical and practical understanding. To Michael Oakeshott in Experience and its Modes such a status was intolerable.² He identified ethics (and political philosophy) as pseudo-philosophical experience. Here I wish only to note an apparent ambiguity.

Because unfortunate ugliness, unlike perplexing ambiguity, does not require investigation I have chosen to speak of 'ideology' rather than 'philosophy' in this thesis. I make a show of this choice because what I understand as ideology is also sometimes conventionally understood as political philosophy. For example, T.H. Green's Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation can, from the conventional point of view, rightly be regarded as a work of political philosophy, yet by the end of this thesis I hope it will be clear why it is possible to see it as a contribution to the liberal tradition of ideological reflection.

The term 'ideology' is not merely ugly. It has served to express diverse meanings in multifarious accounts of politics. Some of these senses demand attention and in this introduction I delineate and criticise them. I do this not with a view to giving an exposition of the writings of others (this is not an exercise in oratio obliqua), but in order both to clear and to set the stage for my own account of ideological understanding.

Surprisingly, given its ugliness, the term 'ideology' was invented by a Frenchman. It was coined by Destutt de Tracy at the end of the eighteenth century. For de Tracy, who was a materialist, ideology was a science: an inquiry into the origin of our ideas about the world. It is a fact that today ideology is not understood to be a science. If someone is interested in the origins of our ideas he will turn either to sociology or to psychology; ideology is not understood to be an inquiry or study.

The dismissal of ideology as a science was, in fact, quickly secured. Napoleon, although initially attracted to de Tracy's brain-child, found it politic to sever any connection with it, equating ideology with doctrinaire and utopian ideas.³ And the derogatory force of the word has not only been retained but in some cases amplified by theorists who have used the word to refer to special kinds of thinking about politics. Such kinds of thinking have, for various reasons, been held to be defective. However, one qualification is needed here.

The layman's sense of the term 'ideology' (if it is allowed that there is one sense) is not pejorative. Also the dictionary definition is most neutral in tone. Lastly, Sir Ernest Gowers, in The Complete Plain Words, sees it as a perfectly acceptable substitute for the old fashioned words, 'creed' and 'faith'. In contrast, those who have sought to provide a theoretical understanding of ideology, however diverse and incompatible their views, are unanimous in their suspicion if not their open hostility to it. In this introduction I will consider some of the reasons why ideology has been understood to be a defective form of understanding.

To elucidate these reasons I shall refer, briefly, to the writings of Karl Marx, T.D. Weldon and Michael Oakeshott. But to begin, consider Socrates' rejection of oratory in the first part of Plato's Gorgias.

In this dialogue Socrates, in characteristic fashion, asks Gorgias for the object with which oratory is concerned (449). Gorgias replies that its object is speech and agrees that a teacher of oratory is concerned to make men good at speaking (449). Upon being pressed for further stipulations to tighten-up the definition Gorgias comes to the conclusion that oratory is productive of conviction and that 'the subject of this kind of conviction is right and wrong' (454). At this point Socrates introduces the familiar Platonic distinction between knowledge and belief and leads Gorgias to say that oratory produces conviction solely in terms of belief. At this point Gorgias is doomed, and it takes but little further argument for Socrates to conclude that,

...when the orator is more convincing than the doctor, what happens is that an ignorant person is more convincing than the expert before an equally ignorant audience. (459)

This conclusion paves the way for Socrates' final claims on the matter of oratory: that it is a 'knack' not an art, and that it merely produces a kind of gratification and pleasure (462).

It is not my concern here to either question or approve Socrates' account of oratory. Rather, I want to discuss its form; for I believe that the accounts of ideology offered by Marx, Mannheim, Weldon and Oakeshott all share this form.

Socrates does not doubt that there are orators about, what he questions is the status of their exercise. He claims

that the appearance of oratory belies its reality. Under the pretext of talking genuinely about matters of right and wrong the practice of oratory can only succeed in lulling an audience into a false sense of certainty and understanding concerning these matters. Now, as long as there are people who wish to persuade others (for whatever reason) of the rightness or wrongness of a point of view, and while there are people sufficiently credulous or stupid to be taken in, there is no good reason for thinking that the practice of oratory will not continue. But for Socrates what is afoot is a fraud: the generation of conviction in the realm of belief not of knowledge. In short, oratory is a specious or bogus exercise and any rational man, if he was concerned with right and wrong, would practice oratory only at the cost of intelligibility, for he could not, at one and the same time, take seriously his concern for right and wrong and pursue oratory.

'Oratory' as it is referred to in the Gorgias, is an example of a normative expression. Another example of a normative term or expression is 'lying'. For the moment I want to consider what this means. The telling of a lie has both an intellectual and a moral component. First, a lie is the expression of a thought that is not true. Secondly, because lying is an act intention is involved; the person asserting the false thought knows the thought to be false. The combination of these two components is the criterion for the act of lying. It is the combination of the intellectual and moral components that makes 'lying' a normative term. This point can be differently stated (as it has been by D.Z. Phillips and H.O. Mounce in Moral Practices⁴) by

considering the sentence 'Lying is wrong'. While 'Lying is wrong' is not the same kind of thought as 'Red is a colour' (in that it requires more than merely semantic knowledge to accept it), it is not in any sense clear that wrongness is the property or consequence of an act of lying. The thought, 'Durham has a castle', being true, tells us something about the world, as does the thought 'Inflation causes unemployment', if it is true. In contrast, the thought 'Lying is wrong' tells us about the nature of the activity referred to as lying. Its wrongness is inherent.

Analogously, it seems to me, Socrates has attempted to show what is inherently wrong with oratory. The practicing of oratory is a fraudulent activity: this is Socrates' conclusion. And anyone who understands this conclusion understands the thought 'Oratory is wrong' in the way that someone might understand the thought 'Lying is wrong': as a judgement telling us about the nature of an activity.

Being a judgement concerned with "doing" the thought 'Oratory is wrong' is determinative of rational conduct. This can be expressed in the form of a prescription: 'If you are concerned with matters of right and wrong then oratory is out'. This prescription is grounded in the belief that oratory is a form of delusion. And, being so, its being undesirable is manifest in the combination of an intellectual component and the failure to uphold a moral relationship (to oneself or others) in the activity. This can be otherwise expressed by saying that lying and deception are absolutely wrong, their wrongness inhering in the actions themselves.

My conclusion is, then, that the sentence 'Oratory is wrong' can express a rule of rational moral conduct. It is

in this sense that 'oratory' is a normative term. The term 'ideology', as employed by Marx, Weldon and Oakeshott is the same as 'oratory' in the form of its meaning. Ideological thinking is not determinative of rational political conduct, although it may first appear that it is. If we accept any of the accounts of ideology by these writers it is clear that we cannot take ideology seriously as a form of understanding. We may take it seriously as a phenomenon in the political world, and we may, in various ways, denigrate its presence, but we cannot ourselves take it seriously as a moral and intellectual engagement.

At this point I should like to pause in order to note a cause for some puzzlement. The dismissal of ideology as an intellectual engagement is closely associated with the presentation of what are, prima facie, ideological idioms. For the conservative the ideological approach to politics is one which courts disaster (as evidenced in the French and Russian Revolutions), far better the limited style of politics which involves no wholesale, premeditated programme or doctrine concerning mankind. For the liberal ideology is to be condemned for its irrationality. Ideological arguments are invariably bad arguments and are produced by ignorant and unreasonable men. Lastly, for the marxist, ideological thinking indicates a defective consciousness which has not, perhaps because it is unable, grasped the objective reality of class struggle. That ideology is deprecated within what are termed ideological idioms is not, I think, surprising. Ideologists have as one of their principal concerns the rebuttal of alternative positions. Sometimes this is done by meeting arguments head on, but on other occasions it is

done by categorising arguments as thinking of a certain kind, as, for example, 'rationalism' or 'bourgeois ideology'. Marx spent some time describing a way or kind of thinking which he held to be inherently defective and which he thought characterised much of the thinking about politics to which he was opposed. At this point I refer to The German Ideology in order to show how Marx's castigation of a way or kind of thinking mirrors Socrates' rejection of oratory in Plato's Gorgias.

Consider the following passage from The German Ideology:

In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say we do not set out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process... Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence... Life is not determined by consciousness but consciousness by life.⁵

What Marx does then, is, something different to what ideologists do, yet both Marx and ideologists have (ostensibly) the same end in mind: an evaluation of man's moral and political circumstances. Ideologists, however, are not merely mistaken about the world, their way of thinking about the world is wrong. They produce (and can only produce) conviction in the realm of belief about the world, not in the realm of knowledge.

As in the case of lying and oratory it is not possible to separate the intellectual and moral components of Marx's denigration of ideology. Ideological understanding for Marx

is, one, intellectually defective as a kind of thinking about human circumstance and activity and, two, the practice of ideological thinking can only lead to delusion and the impoverishment of one's self and relation to the world and other people. Unlike lying we do not have the consciousness of deceit on the part of the agent, but we do have the fact of our deceiving ourselves and others by thinking in a certain way. This impoverishment of our lives, analogous to the impoverishment that Socrates identifies in the lives of Polus and Callicles in the Gorgias, is startlingly characterised in another passage where Marx speaks of philosophy - for him a sub-species of ideology:

Philosophy and the study of the actual world have the same relation to one another as masturbation and sexual love.⁶

The inseparability of the intellectual and moral components in Marx's critique of ideology, which ensures that his use of the term is normative, means that Marx, like Socrates, is involved in the delineation of an ethic of belief. He is concerned to prescribe a certain kind, or way, of understanding the world (the way described in The German Ideology) and to deny the validity of other ways (for example, religious understanding, which is for Marx is wrong as is oratory wrong for Socrates). This prescription is peculiarly ethical in that the kinds of understanding have to do with the rightness and wrongness of how a man conceives of his own conduct and that of others in terms of the moral worth of that conduct.

Lest the idea of an ethic of belief be obscure consider the following example. Two people are discussing a piece of music which has a religious theme. The following question is posed: Can the music be appreciated independently of

religious sensibility? Such a question, it seems to me, can occasion both philosophical and dogmatic reflection. Philosophical, in that one can inquire into how religious sensibility can and cannot qualify appreciation. Dogmatic, in that one can argue for or against the value of the music being dependent upon a certain religious sensibility or understanding. These two kinds of argument, philosophical and dogmatic, may be related (for example, philosophical argument may be employed in the evaluation of dogmatic argument), but they are nonetheless different kinds of argument. My claim is that the dogmatic form of argument prescribes an ethic of belief, in that its conclusions point to how we should value or appreciate an object or event.

It is in this sense that Socrates' account of oratory and Marx's account of ideology are locatable in the dogmatic form of argument. Both attempt to determine not only the value of activity but how we should go about evaluating activity in terms of its rightness or wrongness.

It is in this way, for example, that the term 'proletariat' has a dogmatic or doctrinal significance. It is not a term first employed in the neutral or amoral description of the relationship between owner and worker (a relationship which is only subsequently evaluated), it is a term enabling a specific evaluation of that relationship; it forms part of an ethic of belief which is employed in the dogmatic appraisal of a relationship. It is analogous in the form of its meaning to the Christian understanding of 'adultery', a sexual act which violates the consecrated relationship of marriage.

Marx's use of the term 'ideology', then, occurs in the context of the prescription of an ethic of belief. Its

sense is dogmatic. The two other political thinkers whom I wish to refer to in this introduction - Weldon and Oakeshott - also speak of ideology principally in prescribing an ethic of belief or understanding in political conduct. Consequently, their uses of the term 'ideology' are also normative. 'Ideology', for both of them has a dogmatic form of meaning. Weldon's attack on the ideological form of thinking is made at length in The Vocabulary of Politics, and it is to this text that I now turn.

Weldon's overall argument can be divided into three sections which correspond in an interestingly analogous way to the three conversations which Socrates has in Gorgias. To begin with, Weldon's argument is straightforwardly epistemological. He attempts to show that it is impossible to determine theoretically "foundations" for political authority. There are, for Weldon, no principles or theorems underlying political association. The second part of the argument is an attempt to diminish our tendency to attribute ethical significance to very general facts about political association, facts that we would be better just to accept. This point is best evidenced in Weldon's remarkable claim that to "ask 'Why should I obey the laws of England?' is the same sort of pointless question as 'Why should I obey the laws of cricket?'". Lastly, Weldon emphasises what he sees as the purely practical elements of political life, elements that 'theorising' may obscure. For, Weldon argues, it is ideologies which "tend to confuse and distract our political thinking and to make us forget that governing at any level is essentially a matter of judgement and decision by statesmen and rulers not a matter of theoretical reasoning."⁷

Once again I think it is clear that the concept 'ideology'

occurs within the context of the prescription of an ethic of belief, the recommendation of a way of thinking about politics. Ideology is undesirable because it is a bogus form of theorising about politics. It is an idiom of political thinking that we employ only at the cost of irrationality.

In the writings of Oakeshott too, the term 'ideology' is employed to refer to a defective form of political understanding. For Oakeshott ideological thinking is occasioned by 'Rationalism'. The 'rationalist' denies the existence of practical knowledge, asserting "that, properly speaking, there is no knowledge which is not technical knowledge."⁸ This leads to his denigration of the role of traditions of behaviour, the repositories of practical knowledge.

And to fill its place the Rationalist puts something of his own making - an ideology, the formalised abridgment of the supposed substratum of truth contained in tradition.⁹

In the essay 'Political Education' Oakeshott makes it clear that a belief in ideology, that is, a belief in "an abstract principle or set of related principles which has been independently premeditated"¹⁰, is spurious. Ideology, thus defined, is a theoretical impossibility. Unlike Marx and Weldon, Oakeshott is disinclined to emphasise the practical consequences of an ideological style or manner of political activity, but he is still prescribing an ethic of belief. He is concerned to show that certain manners of political deliberation and practice are inappropriate to the business in hand. Ideology is a form of delusion.

To summarise: for Marx, Weldon and Oakeshott the term

'ideology' has the same form of meaning as the term 'oratory' for Plato. The practice of ideology, like the practice of oratory, necessarily leads to irrationality in conduct. For ideology, like oratory is a disruption of the conditions of reasonable activity. It is something that, although initially attractive, we must learn to do without. It creates an appearance which, in fact, veils reality, be that reality "class struggle", the "matter-of-factness" of political authority, or the intimations of a tradition of behaviour. Ideologies are, on this account, damaging myths, damaging in that they obscure the correct terms of political association and, hence, disrupt the rational form of such relationship. In their form they are analogous to lies (which similarly disrupt human relationships); they are not, necessarily, deliberate deceptions, they are manners of thinking which seduce, but the end of the seduction is not a satisfactory understanding of the political world, which was promised, but a fraudulent knack which affords neither true understanding nor ability. The promise of wisdom remains unfulfilled.

In this thesis I have not sought to contrast ideology with a true or appropriate understanding of politics. My use of the term has no normative sense and I have not sought to provide an ethic of belief. Instead I have used the term ideology to refer to a form of thinking which I argue is, in a significant way, logically necessary to the concepts of political association and activity. In the second part of this introduction I attempt to characterise the way in which I have attended to ideology in this inquiry.

II: Ideology in the Context of Political Philosophy

In this section I consider the way in which I have attended to ideology in this thesis. I begin by examining the view that the proper relation of philosophy to ideology is a critical one. Such a view has plausibility because it appears perfectly natural. Political philosophy, as it has been practiced, has been largely concerned with giving an account of how politics should be conducted, considerations of how it actually is conducted being for the most part secondary. Given this it seems reasonable to assume that a philosophical account of ideology will be normative in character: criticising existing ideological understanding and perhaps proposing more satisfactory understandings. I do not think that this is the proper form of the relation between philosophy and ideology; or, more modestly, it is not the relation exhibited in this thesis. So, to begin I want to object to the idea that the philosopher's task is, or is exclusively, the criticism of ideology. Later I say some more positive things about the philosophical understanding of ideology.

The criticism of understanding takes three principal forms: first, attendance to the propositions which compose it in terms of their truth or falsity or validity; secondly, the consideration of the validity of the arguments which constitute the natural movement of the understanding, and, thirdly, reflection upon the concepts and distinctions it employs or fails to employ. Of these three forms of critical attendance it is the last two which seem to call for the peculiar skills of the philosopher. Familiar examples are

Karl Popper's criticism of Marx's historicism and Isaiah Berlin's objections to the idea of positive liberty. And what, it may be asked, are these if not ideological doctrines subjected to the scrutiny of the philosopher's intellect? Consider another example: does not the philosopher's objection to the distinction between self- and other-regarding actions strike at a tenet central to the liberal persuasion? My answers to these questions are both in the negative: the philosopher does not have such a contribution to make to ideological understanding.

Consider, for example, the liberal ideological persuasion. Central to it is the belief that there is a sphere of activity which should be immune from legal regulation; if a person should wish to peruse pornographic magazines in the comparative isolation of his home then let him do so; condemnatory public opinion or legal prohibition are alike intolerant and unwarranted. Now, Mill's distinction between self- and other-regarding actions is a rationalisation of the image constituting such a persuasion. And being a rationalisation it is not the image itself. It is a rationalisation in that it is the expression of an image in the form of an intellection. Not to distinguish between an ideological image and the intellection which is its rationalisation is to be led to the erroneous belief that ideology is to be found in books and in the discussions of the clever and erudite. Rather, it is to be found in the enactments of the members of a political practice. On this account conservatism, for example, is just as much an ideology as liberalism or socialism. The fact that its adherents are not overgiven to the rationalisation of their understanding is irrelevant.

No doubt the distinction I have stated, between ideological images and their rationalisation, is as obscure as it is blandly stated. And, given the character of political philosophy as it is practiced, it courts objection. The arguments for the distinction are contained in the bulk of the thesis. However, something of its sense can be understood in terms of an analogy. It is sometimes said of theology that it is faith seeking understanding. If this is so then that understanding is secondary to the faith and is not a substitute for it. If it is to stand as a determination of the faith then it must needs be conjoined with authoritative pronouncement within the Church. It is the offices of the Church that command authority in matters of faith, not the rationalisation of the faith in theological consideration.

Such an analogy is hardly a sufficient justification for the distinction I uphold. Yet I will let it stand for the moment for I will pass now to an elucidation of philosophical understanding which, in its attention to ideology, does not bear a directly critical relation to it.

Philosophy, as an academic discipline, is often subdivided according to the particular interests of those who pursue it. Thus undergraduates in the philosophy departments of universities take courses in philosophy of science, moral philosophy, philosophy of religion and political philosophy, to name but some divisions. Such dividing (in terms of subject area) is not, I think, natural to philosophy. It is wrong to think that there is some philosophy which is scientific, some which is moral and yet other parts which are religious or political. We cannot move from a subject matter to the logical character of a discipline, and to think that we can

destroys our grasp of the coherence that a discipline requires. If there are divisions which are natural to philosophy then these are, I think, metaphysics, epistemology and ontology. I am conscious of having argued within these divisions, though I have not been self-conscious of them as divisions. I have attempted to construct arguments which are philosophical in character in order to shed some light upon the nature of ideological understanding. And I have done so solely with a view to removing my own confusions about it. This, then, is a work in philosophy and the object of my attention has been political association considered as a generality. If philosophy is reflective then the object of my reflection is political association, yet my reflections do not derive their character from anything about, or to do with, such association. Were such a process to occur we would have not philosophy but dogma or ideology.

I make such an emphatic statement of this distinction because of the character of my subject matter. I do not in this thesis tackle directly the question of the relation of philosophy to ideology. This is not because I do not think there is one, but if there is I think it must be asymmetric. For if philosophy is the unencumbered movement of thought ideology is not; it is necessarily distracted by the concerns of agency. If conceptual questions arise in ideology they cannot be attended to solely from the point of view of their inherent interest. So while philosophical questions may arise naturally in ideology they cannot be dealt with outside of the free movement of thought. This means that while the philosopher may be peculiarly equipped to evaluate substantive ideological understandings - just because they are "understandings"

the ideologist can make no relevant contribution to philosophical understanding, for he destroys the considerabilities of the discipline by his concern with agency. The ideologist has no more contribution to make to political philosophy than does the phrenologist to the philosophy of mind.

To speak, then, of ideology in the context of philosophy is to refer to the form of attention to ideology. What characteristics does this form have?

Formally, a form of attention to something is the interest shown in it. For example, I may have an interest in two bricks from the point of view of their relative load bearing capacities. Here the form of interest is one of utility and is manifest in the question, 'What function can these bricks perform?' Alternatively, I may attend to the two bricks in terms of their respective visual aspects. Here the form of interest is aesthetic and is expressed in the question, 'What visual experience do these bricks afford?' If we introduce into the example the fact that the interests in the bricks were occasioned by the intention to build a house we see how the forms of interest are sub-species of practical reason.

This simple example is an interesting one because it raises the difficult question of the relation of a form of understanding to the object of understanding. This is a concern with categories. Clearly it is possible and may be appropriate to consider bricks from the points of view of their utility and visual aspects, but equally clearly it is impossible to consider bricks from the point of view of their moral goodness. Such a question cannot arise for the reason

that to talk about morality is to talk about the will.

The general upshot of such distinctions is that in attending to something we presuppose a characteristic which determines both how we attend and isolates an aspect of that which we attend to. If we extend the example of the two bricks it is clear that a brick cannot be the object of logical investigation, but can be the object of both geometrical and natural scientific interest. On this account categories may be seen as forms of discrete interests in objects of attention. Philosophy is one of these forms. It is an interest which postulates understanding in the object of attention, and pays attention to that understanding in terms of its conceptual character. This is not to say that understanding may not be attended to within the confines of other categories; we may, for example, be interested in understanding in terms of its wisdom or truth.

One of the implications of this view is that the natural movement of philosophical thinking is a movement away from the particular case. The particular becomes secondary in that, for example, substantive ideological understandings appear as instances of what is general and are of interest in so far as their consideration throws light upon what is general. This is one of the reasons why a philosophical interest in ideology is the most general interest possible: it is not discrete attention to any particular ideology. Another reason for the general character of philosophical understanding is that it attends to the internal characteristics of a form of thinking. Again, taking ideology as an example, the philosopher does not attend to it as an outcome of something external to it: the logical structure of ideology is not to be

elucidated philosophically be seeing it as causally or contingently related to something outside itself. Thus the expression 'bourgeois ideology' is alien to philosophical understanding in that it postulates reference to a causal link between economic circumstances and certain ways of thinking. Rather, attention is made to the internal characteristics of the understanding. Such a procedure is clearly evidenced, for example, in Frege's 'The Thought', where the object of attention is not this or that thought but what makes a thought a thought; and this is revealed not in terms of the thought as a causal outcome, but in terms of the structure internal to it, a structure which defines its general identity.

In this thesis, then, ideology is attended to in terms of its form, that is, its internal and general characteristics. Such attention aims at an elucidation of the nature of ideological thinking. It does not aim at the determination of the wisdom of specific ideological understandings. Yet the wisdom of substantive ideological understanding does not stand completely independent of questions of form. I turn now to a consideration of the nature of the connection between the form of ideological understanding and the wisdom which ideological thinking aims at.

The form of ideological understanding is difficult to determine because it is obscured by the various rhetorical characteristics of particular ideologies. I have attempted to bypass this obscurity by deriving my account of ideology from the nature of political association. Such an account provides an abstract conception of ideological understanding; and a conception of this kind, determining as it does the kind

of wisdom which is aimed at, sets limits to what can be sensibly said within ideology. A consciousness of such limits is evaluative in implication: the limits may be transgressed in actual thinking, thereby debilitating the pursuance of wisdom. It cannot be denied, then, that a philosophical conception stands as a means by which the exercise of ideological thinking can be evaluated. Such evaluation stands to philosophy as technology does to natural science. In evaluating we halt the natural tendency of philosophy towards generality and attend to the particular case. Moreover, the particular case is no longer an example secondary to understanding, but becomes the principal object of attention. The philosopher does not, I think, cast aside his peculiar wisdom in such a case, but he turns from the direction in which that wisdom is to be found. He is a philosopher, to use Michael Oakeshott's description, on a holiday excursion; or, if that metaphor does not suit, he has exchanged the grey for the green. He no longer aims merely or only at clarity in his conception of things.

Finally, then, ideology in the context of political philosophy is an understanding abstracted from the ambience of its substance and natural movement. What remains is form: its conceptual structure. Grey in such abstraction, it returns to life only in the circumstances which it both nurtures and is nurtured by: the circumstances, I shall argue, of self-enactment in politics. Philosophy stands to ideology as anatomy does to the movement of the human body. It discerns the "how" of movement, but is not itself that movement, nor the experience of it. It is the solely intellectual apprehension of that which is not intellect alone.

Notes to Introduction

1. Michael Oakeshott, Experience and its Modes, Cambridge, C.U.P., 1933.
2. Ibid, and in his later work. See, particularly, 'Rationalism in Politics' and 'Political Education' in M. Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics, London, Methuen, 1962, and On Human Conduct, Oxford, O.U.P., 1975, pp. 27-31.
3. D.J. Manning (Ed.), The Form of Ideology, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1980, p. 2.
4. D.Z. Phillips and H.O. Mounce, Moral Practices, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970, Ch. 1, 'Practice and Decision'.
5. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1970, p.47.
6. Ibid, p. 103.
7. T.D. Weldon, The Vocabulary of Politics, Hamondsworth, Penguin Books, 1953, p. 172.
8. M. Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics, London, Methuen, 1962, p. 11.
9. Ibid, p. 4.
10. Ibid, p. 116.

CHAPTER ONE: THE MYSTIQUE OF IDEOLOGY

Whatever the merits of Bradley's view that "that which tells us what in particular is right and wrong is not reflection but intuition",¹ it has to be admitted that it is unfashionable. The ethical understanding of politics has become the object of discursive or reflective thinking. In other words, ideology has become the domain of the intellectual; it is the province of the theorist. Such a circumstance tends to surround ideology with a pseudo-mystique, and ideologists become venerated, or otherwise noted, for their intellections. But intellection is secondary to ideological understanding; it is parasitic upon it. It is an error to think that ideological understanding is based upon, underpinned by, or derived from theoretical understanding. Nevertheless, the error is understandable: the rhetorical characters of many ideologies, particularly liberalism and socialism, suggest that the merits or demerits of ideological understandings are to be determined theoretically. I shall argue in this chapter that such a view is indefensible and that ideological understanding cannot be substituted for by the findings within a theoretical idiom. I argue this case by discussing rationality and causality as categories of explanation and by distinguishing between the activities of doing and making. I begin with rationality.

We use the term 'rational' to commend the performance of actions and circumstances. In saying of the performance of an action that it was rational we imply that, one, there were reasons for its performance and, two, since 'rational' is a normative expression, those reasons were good ones. Similarly, some circumstances admit of rationality: Modifying the two conditions we can say that the laws prohibiting intentional killing constitute a circumstance for which there are reasons, and those reasons, most would agree, are good ones. In the following discussion I shall be concerned with the kinds of reason we can have for acting, and, in

particular I shall attempt to show the peculiarity of ideological reasons.

As I have noted, rationality is a normative expression. Actions and circumstances can be both explained and justified in terms of it. I consider now, one distinction between explanation and justification.

If we want to explain an action or the coming about or obtaining of some circumstances we may refer to reasons. This means that we subsume what is to be explained under the category of rationality, as distinct, for example, from the category of causality. However, given that rationality is also a normative concept it is important to distinguish explanation within this category from justification. Put formally, the explanation of an action succeeds if it is true, that is, if it makes reference to the actual reason or reasons why an action was performed; on the other hand the justification of an action succeeds if it is shown that the reasons for which an action was performed were good ones. It follows from this that the class of justifications will fall within the class of explanations, but the latter is not coextensive with the former: that we succeed in explaining an action does not mean that we succeed in justifying it. The class of actions which are explained but not justified will consist of actions towards which we are either indifferent or critical.

From these considerations it would appear that justification follows explanation. But this is not always the case. The postulation of a principle may reverse this order. Probably the most famous example of such a supposition is the economic principle that relative advantage implies relative wealth. This principle defines economic activity. It is given the following formulation by John Hicks:

The consumer, who acts according to the Economic Principle, chooses his purchases so as to maximise utility.²

What the adoption of such a principle enables is a theoretical representation of activity. Such a procedure conflates explanation and justification by identifying that which is to be explained as the maximisation of utility. In short, what is a good reason for an action becomes what it is to have

an economic reason for an action.

Explanation on the basis of a theoretical representation of activity proceeds by attributing a general identity to conduct. But what is the ground or nature of such an attribution? One answer to this question may be that the ground of the principle is that it is a generalisation from actual conduct. But such an answer is problematic. First, it suggests that the economic principle is akin to a statement of the profit motive, a statement which amounts to a general psychological claim about the motivation of particular groups of people. Such a suggestion would mean that economics was a branch of psychology. This is wrong because the economic principle identifies a type of action in pursuit of aims, not a type of motive and its means of satisfaction. Secondly, and perhaps more forcefully, it is characteristic of generalisations to admit of falsification and it is difficult to see what would count as a falsification of the economic principle. While it is the case that we may find that people generally, do not, in fact, zealously pursue profit, we can only find that the economic principle is inapplicable, not that it is false.

Against this second point it may be objected that it is contingent that a consumer chooses his purchases so as to maximise utility. What this objection does is reinstate the distinction between explanation and justification. Now, it was just the conflation of explanation and justification which set up the possibility of representing activity theoretically. It follows from this that the economic principle cannot be treated as an empirical generalisation; it must be taken as a definition constituting economic inquiry. It is not a proposition which can be tested; it sets up the possibility of inquiry involving testing. As a principle it is analogous to the principle of uniformity in nature which underlies natural scientific inquiry.

While explanation aims at truth (that is, in the case of rational connections it aims at establishing the reasons for the performance of actions) justification has a critical relation to its subject matter. It involves, therefore, reference to an idea (or set of ideas) which should be observed in activity. Such an idea (or ideas) constitutes what I shall call a normative conception of activity. Thus, using the distinctions set out above it is possible to construct the following example.

A pushed to the front of the queue

Explanation: A pushed to the front of the queue in order that he was served more quickly than if he had not. (This establishes a rational connection; it asserts an intelligible relationship between reason and action).

Critical relation to action: A's action was wrong because it constituted a rude disregard for the people in the queue.

In this case it is a moral conception (the moral relationships of a queue) which forms the basis of the condemnation of A's action. If, excuses notwithstanding, A admits the conception of a queue referred to then his action is irrational for he could not have had good reason to act as he did. He must admit that he ought to have acted otherwise.

Although the example I have given refers to a moral (or, non-instrumental) conception of activity, the notion of a critical relation to conduct is not coextensive with moral understanding. Consider the following example.

At a management meeting M urges a particular policy (which is not adopted).

Explanation: M urged the policy because he thought it to be the best policy.

Critical relation to action: There was no possibility of this policy being adopted because of opposition from others present at the meeting.

Now, ulterior reasons notwithstanding, if M knew the impossibility stated he ought not to have urged the policy that he did because his consideration that it was the best policy is rendered nugatory

by the fact that there was no chance of it being accepted. If M admits this last fact then his action was irrational. He should have urged a different policy which, although not the best, had a chance of being accepted. M's conception of what it is to urge a policy is at fault.

From the preceding considerations it is possible to abstract the following definition of a rational agent. A rational agent aims, in his deliberations, at having good reasons for what he will do. It is the application of a normative conception of what he is doing which will determine whether his reasons are good or bad. A normative conception may be moral in character, in that it sets out moral considerations, or it may be instrumental, that is, it will set out factors relating to effectiveness. The man who successfully takes both these kinds of conception into account is sagacious.

Given these considerations I now pass on to a discussion of the justificatory role of theoretical understanding.

We have seen that justification involves the establishment of a critical relation to activity. Also, I have argued that the establishment of such a relation involves reference to a normative conception of an activity. I now discuss how such conceptions may be informed by theoretical understanding. To begin I will supplement my definition of a rational agent. Above I stated that a rational agent is a person who aims, in his deliberations at having good reasons for what he will do. Now, what a man, in these circumstances will do is what he intends to do. To talk of an intention is to imply a rational connection between what a person does and his deliberations. Talk, in this sense, of what a person wills to do is not coextensive with what a person shall do. Faced with a situation of great danger a person may panic, but it cannot be said that he intends, on being confronted with such a situation, to do those things

which we identify as panicking. So, we may identify the outcome of deliberation in activity as the exhibition of intention in action. It is in the intention that we find the outcome of the understanding arrived at in deliberation. From this it follows that to consider the place of theoretical understanding in normative conceptions of activity is to consider how an intention may be theoretically informed. In the following discussion I subdivide the notion of activity in terms of the ways in which intentions may be informed by theoretical understanding. I will proceed by considering various forms of such understanding; I begin with the principal form in the area of theory, namely natural science.

To consider the nature of natural scientific understanding within the confines of a dissertation on ideology is to sail close to the wind. The questions raised and the problems encountered are as vexing as they are difficult. Nevertheless the attempt must, I think, be made for the following reasons. Much of what passes as contribution to social and political understanding seems to enjoy authority because of a vaguely assumed scientific status. Moreover this status (and the importance attached to it) is in no small measure connected with the evident success of natural scientific inquiry in the past two hundred years. It follows from this that to consider the epistemology of theoretical understanding of social and political life (as it has been practised) one must also consider the problems of explanation in the natural sciences. This, to my mind compelling, reason notwithstanding it may be hoped that the example of natural science may illuminate our understanding of the idea of theory.

From the philosophical point of view natural science is not a body of knowledge and belief but a language of inquiry aiming at explanation. Not all those whom we may justly identify as scientists are engaged solely or at all in explanation; some are engaged in description and classification. But in so far as science is theoretical in form its aim is explanation.

Generally, explanation consists of the establishment of a connection between an event (or events) and a prior event (or events), or between a circumstance (or circumstances) and a contemporaneous circumstance (or circumstances), which connection is not contingent in nature. In science the principal form of such explanatory connections is the causal relation. To assert that a causal relation holds is to assert a non-deductive necessary connection of the form, if not - A then not - B.³ Such connections are asserted in theories, theories which enable the explanation of events and circumstances in terms of causal laws. Causal laws can be employed in the explanation of specific natural events and circumstances in terms of the postulate of uniformity in nature. This postulate is analogous to the economic principle mentioned above. It sets up the possibility of a theoretical inquiry into the features of the natural world. In particular it allows for the crucial role in scientific inquiry of the experiment, whereby general claims can be tested.

As well as providing general descriptions of causal relations in the natural world knowledge of laws of nature has another role. From such knowledge there follow prescriptions about a certain kind of human activity, an activity which I shall call 'making', and which, below, I shall have cause to distinguish from 'doing'. It is as prescriptions that knowledge of the laws of nature amounts to the informing of an intention by theoretical knowledge. What we have here is technology, or applied science.

The discrete activity which I have called 'making' provides us with the paradigmatic form of the relation of theory to practice. Making in the sense meant here, involves bringing about specific causal configurations, either sequential or contemporaneous. Making may be rational by reference to two things: experience and theoretical knowledge. No doubt it is experience and not a theory describing the

dynamic viscosity of silica which cautions us against bedding the foundations of a house in sand. Alternatively, in fields of making which are potentially complex and demanding of exactitude, for example, missile construction, the calculations involved will require reference to the knowledge of causal relations afforded by physical and chemical theories, theories which are not generalisations (which, prescriptively, result in maxims) from the experience of building rockets.

The informing of intention in making something, or bringing something about, by theoretical knowledge is analogous to prediction. Both manners of reasoning are technological. Perhaps the most familiar form of technological prediction is weather forecasting. What is postulated in this activity is a determinable system of dynamic causal interaction. It is determinable in that its parameters are measurable and the quantities can be taken as values in a theory describing the course of such causal interaction.

The object of natural scientific inquiry then, is a world in which things happen or are the case in accordance with causal laws. It is a world in which things are as they are or happen as they happen. Natural laws, unlike civil laws, are not prescriptions with which events or circumstances ought to be accordance but are sometimes not. However, such a world is not because of this independent of agency. Agency is related to it in terms of the category of making (or bringing something about), and it is from knowledge of causal laws that there follow certain prescriptions about such making. I shall call these prescriptions 'technological oughts'; they are recommendations which are grounded in theoretical knowledge. The modal siblings of the technological 'ought' are the predictive 'will', or 'should' where a probability is assigned to some future event.

Intentions are informed by theoretical knowledge when we are

engaged in the activity of making, for making postulates a world which is intelligible in terms of causal relations. I now consider the implications of this conclusion for an account of what is involved in viewing the human world in causal terms.

Within the confines of natural scientific inquiry the expression 'causal law' means the same as 'natural law', but not all causal explanations aim at establishing natural connections. We employ formulae of the form 'if not -A then not - B' to explain non-natural events and circumstances, for example, the economic phenomena of unemployment and inflation. The theoretical dimensions of such explanation vary. From economic models there follow prescriptions for the achievement of certain ends. It is within this field of inquiry that non-natural causal connections have been most successfully theorised. In contrast, political studies can be characterised in terms of the paucity of its theoretical achievements. This can be explained, I think, by the fact that causal formulae concerning politics have radically indeterminate application conditions. (This indeterminacy is a mark of something more important: a confusion between doing and making. I will discuss this below).

The prescriptions which follow from causal formulae are of the kind which determine the most effective means to a given end. That is, they relate to how a circumstance may be brought about or caused to obtain. Prescriptions of this kind are technical in nature in that they are pertinent to activity within the category of making.

Given these considerations I turn now to the distinction between 'making' and 'doing'.

Engagement in the activity of making, the employment of means in the pursuance of ends presupposes two things. First, a knowledge of causal formulae and, secondly, the capacity to bring about causal relations - what distinguishes making from doing is the irrelevance of

value to making. This latter distinction is categorical in character. In actual conduct a substantive action may be something that can only be understood by reference to the categories of both making and doing. This is characteristically the case when the activity engaged in involves relationship between persons. The clearest sense in which activity falls only within the category of making is exemplified in the performance of a mechanical task which requires relationship solely with inanimate nature. In contrast, activity in the human world requires the combination of making with doing. Consider, for example, the business man. The activity he is engaged in clearly falls within the category of making. He is a man who aims at the creation of wealth and so he must needs aim at the achievement of advantage in the pursuit of it (given that wealth is relevantly finite). As such he must have knowledge of causal formulae and be in a position to put that knowledge to use. However, the activity of the business man unlike that, say, of the engineer, involves relationship with other people. This relationship is not a contingent one. It is a logical one in the sense that a seller presupposes a buyer. And this logical relationship is not one that can be understood purely in causal terms. What rules out this possibility is that it is unintelligible to say that people (or persons) can be treated purely as means and not as ends. This means that relationship with other people involves reference to rules which are irreducible to causal formulae indicating means towards ends.

Against this it may be objected that what I have said above amounts merely to a moral prescription as to how business men should behave; in short, it does not belong to the concept 'business man' to aim at 'doing well' as well as 'making well'. But I do not find such an objection telling because it implies a curious and unnatural account of moral agency. Consider the relationship of employer and employee. Such a relationship is governed by certain rules specified in a

contract. Now, say the employer in the interest of pecuniary gain violates some of these rules and that his violation goes unchecked. Would we want to say that in his capacity as a business man he has succeeded but as a moral agent he has failed? Certainly he has succeeded in the activity of making and failed in the activity of doing, but this failure is still the failure of a business man because it is only possible given the contractual relationship of employer and employee.

Lest this example be unconvincing consider the case of politics. The idea of a ruler who does not command power (of whatever kind) is unintelligible. Yet the idea of a ruler cannot be solely defined in this way. A ruler exercises his power in the direction of his subjects. His subjects, though, are his subjects only in virtue of a rule-constituted relationship. Thus if a ruler contravenes that relationship he cannot be said to rule well.

So far I have implied that the understanding exhibited in doing is an understanding of rules. Such an implication is rather general and ambiguous so I want to spend some time in examining the nature of such understanding.

It is a clear, but limp, definition of doing to say that it is engagement in activity understood in terms of rules. This definition is exemplified in the case of a relationship between, say, two persons being governed by formalised rules with which the parties to the relationship are obliged to comply. In short, the breaking of a contractual relationship is, in itself, a failure to do well. However, the nature of the understanding that may be shown in doing is not exhausted in terms of reference to formal rules, let alone contracts. It may also be specified, in terms of values, acknowledged identities or beliefs. At its most sublime the understanding exhibited in doing is, perhaps, religious in character. Not doing well is understood as

an offence against God. Here the relationship threatened is unconditional and its terms all pervasive. It is a relationship which is delineated in terms of doctrines which leave no element of man's existence self-subsistent. Religious affections and their correlative intellectual formations specify the understanding that is to be exhibited in doing.

The conditionality of contractual relationship and religious belief are the opposite extremes of a range of understandings which may specify doing in activity. I pass now to the examination of one ideally discrete form of understanding in that range. It shares some characteristics with religion in that it is doctrinal and involves a commitment which is not contractually assumed nor capable of legal specification. It is, however, different from religious understanding in that its principal concern is political association. I shall term this understanding 'ideology'.

In the last paragraph I spoke of the distinctiveness of ideology as ideal. However I do not think that ideology is merely ideal. Since the writings of Machiavelli and Hobbes we have become practically familiar with distinctions in the political realm between the sacred and the profane. Such distinctions vary both between and within political cultures, but the existence of such distinctions enables identification of a discrete form of political reflection which I term ideology. The object of such reflection is doing in politics. It is doctrinal in character and its relation to conduct is in terms of the prescriptions which follow from doctrines. These prescriptions specify the conditions in which the exercise of political power is sublimated in right conduct. In this section I want to examine the character and bases of such prescriptions.

First, I note that what I have said about ideology is at odds with the generally accepted use of the term. An ideology is usually

understood to be a programme which purports to be theoretically based. Furthermore, since ideology is defined at once as a classificatory and evaluative term, such programmes are often thought to be defective either on substantial or categorical grounds. I shall argue that ideologies are not theoretically informed programmes and that while they have, within certain limits, prescriptive generality they do not have - although rhetorically they may appear to have - explanatory generality.

Consider the following paradigmatic example of an ideological belief. 'The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles'. Such a belief implies that the holder understands political circumstances and affairs to be the expression or outcome of class antagonism. I want now to consider this belief in terms of its grounds and its prescriptive and evaluative implications.

According to what I have termed the commonplace view of ideology as theoretical understanding the belief I have instanced amounts to a general claim about causal relationships in the political world. Thus events and circumstances in that world will be explained by reference to antecedent events or more basic circumstances. The prescriptive implications of such an account will consist of techniques whereby a certain class may gain political ascendancy. Within Marxism however, it is not only that, "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past."⁴ There is a causally related world which is partially independent of volition, and it is a knowledge of this which enables the evaluation of particular programmes for action. The world implied in such a conception is one which is capable, within certain limits, of being engineered. It is a world understood according to the category of making. And the making that is to be done is to be

assessed in terms of the ends sought and the rationality of the means employed in the pursuit of them.

As an account of ideological understanding the above may seem plausible particularly with reference to some varieties of socialism. But such a view does give rise to difficulties, some of which I will consider. I begin with the question of the intelligibility of the ends sought.

The term 'end', in relation to seeking, is a rational notion, for no one can commend the seeking of an end which is not in itself desirable. Within some varieties of socialism the end sought is communism. From a descriptive point of view this end is readily intelligible. Simply defined it is a system of society without private property where each member works according to his ability for the common benefit. Such a description does not indicate the desirability of such an arrangement, and given that the term 'end' here is a normative expression we are in need of an account of the desirability of the end. In other words: the end must be intelligibly desirable before we can consider whether we have any interest in actually pursuing it.

In some circumstances the desirability of an end is manifest. In all but the most peculiar of cases it is inconceivable that we should not aim at good health, for such a state is a pre-condition of engagement in activities regarded as fulfilling. However, ideologically appraised ends are not of this kind. The end of good health stands in no need of general justification, but the end of communism does. How, then, may the desirability of the end be shown?

It is in the meeting of this question that the idea of ideology as a general causal understanding of the world breaks down. This is so for the simple reason that the desirability of the end sought is something that is elucidated within the ideological understanding itself. In other words, the evaluation, as distinct from the plain description, of the end,

is specified within the ideology. It is intelligible only in terms of the doctrinal considerabilities of the ideology. If this is so the distinction between means and ends, set up by the category of making, breaks down; for the end sought can only be intelligibly desirable given the ideological understanding.

If this conclusion is correct it is, I think, incumbent upon us to consider an analysis of ideological belief from the point of view of the category of 'doing'. As I have understood it here, within the category of doing we are concerned with the relationships that obtain between people in their activity. Those relationships are relationships because they specify the non-causal identities of persons, identities which are moral in the sense that we are non-instrumentally obliged to acknowledge them. I have also indicated that relationships of this kind may be given doctrinal definition. Given this I now want to consider an account of a ideological belief in the light of the category of doing.

The Marxist or socialist belief concerning politics and class antagonism defines the identities it is incumbent upon us to acknowledge. In this it presupposes a doctrine because there are not identities which are legally, sociologically or economically defined. At first glance this latter claim may seem patently absurd, for it may appear that the writings of Marx enjoin us to acknowledge, in our conduct, other people in terms of their class identities. Such identities may be defined legally, for example, in terms of the political rights possessed by a class, sociologically, by a description of the nature of a certain class and its influence upon political affairs, and economically in terms of the command of a class of persons over the factors of production. However, all such definitions are irrelevant to ideologically determined identity, an identity which is understood in

acknowledgement. Within the writings of Marx such an identity is theorised in terms of the notion of alienation. The essence of man is described in terms of his relationships to nature, his species being, other men and his productive activity. Alienation occurs when the terms of these relationships are disregarded in activity. Assuming a good deal of argument it follows from this that for a member of the proletariat not to associate in an exclusive political relationship with other members of that class is to disregard these relationships. This is the sense in which Marx understands that a class that is merely in itself can become for itself. Such association is within the category of doing. The end, the absence of alienation, is a morally coherent set of relationships between people. But what sets up the possibility of such a circumstance is the doctrine defining man's essence.

Against this account of ideological belief it may be objected that Marx's delineation of the essence of man in terms of the notion of alienation amounts to a theory of human nature. As such it stands or falls as a true or a false description of that nature. Analogously, Hobbes account of the human condition in Leviathan would stand or fall (the coherence or logic of the argument notwithstanding) by the criterion of what he says about human nature being true or false. (An implication of this account is that ideologies are true or false theoretical accounts of the world). My reply to this objection is an extension of the argument concerning the intelligibility of ends.

Consider the familiar claim from Hobbes's Leviathan that 'covenants without the sword are but breath'; a claim which we understand as a deduction from Hobbes's consideration in Parts I and II of Leviathan. Now, as I have claimed that politics involves the exercise of power, I do not deny that Hobbes's proposition can be seen as the statement of a causal relation which a ruler would disregard at the cost of stupidity

and at his own peril: if there is no power (to keep men all in awe) then agreements will not be observed. However, Hobbes's claim is not only the stating of a causal law. Hobbes is concerned with the notion of civil obligation, its nature and extent. As such he is considering the condition in which the exercise of power is rightful; or, as I stated above, in which it is sublimated in right conduct. It is in his delineation of the relationship of sovereign and subject that Hobbes states those conditions.

These conditions are derived from his conception of man, but his conception is not a theory of man's nature in the sense that the theory is true or false of man independently of the beliefs that men may hold and which determine the rationality of their conduct. (In fact Hobbes's descriptions of man's nature give us a symbolic conception of a set of beliefs which actual men may hold or not hold; this constitutes, in part, the rhetoric of Leviathan.) I will explain why I think this is so by considering the relation of belief to conduct.

Conduct, as I understand it here, is a rational notion. Conduct is good or bad in terms of the reasons an agent can give for his actions. An agent in his deliberations aims at having good reasons for doing what he will. To determine what he shall do an agent must needs, then, consult his beliefs. Some of these beliefs will concern causal relations, but others belong to the category of doing; they are beliefs about the conditions which are to be upheld in relationships with others. Now, say for example, that the relationship in question is that of ruler and ruled and that one of the beliefs about this relationship is that the ruler is in some way an appointee of God. This is a doctrinal understanding of a relationship and it is one which (arguably) excludes the account of sovereignty given by

Hobbes. The criterion of authority and obligation in Hobbes is a certain kind of power. It is the power that accrues to a feigned or artificial person because of the covenantal agreement of natural persons. Hobbes's deductions exclude the religious conditionality of political authority; in other words they exclude the object of the belief I instanced above.

Now, it is doctrines which formulate the character of political authority and it is from such doctrines that we can deduce the beliefs about its conditionality. These beliefs determine what is rational conduct. So it is adherence to a doctrine which will determine how a person will aim at having good reasons for doing what he will. If what he is doing is considering his actions from the point of view of obligation then he must have an idea of what that obligation is not only in terms of its fulfilment conditions, but in terms of an evaluation of fulfilment: an evaluation which gives content to the formal 'ought' of the analytic statement that obligations ought to be fulfilled. In Leviathan Hobbes gives us a ground of such evaluation:

The obligation of subjects to the sovereign is understood to last as long and no longer, than the power lasteth, by which he is able to protect them.⁵

The point is that this is a doctrinal ground and that a different doctrine may indicate a different ground, and both (theoretically) can determine the rationality of conduct. It is adherence to doctrines which sets up the frameworks within which a person may deliberate towards having good reasons for action. So, given that the relation between belief and conduct is a rational one there cannot be a theory of human nature from which rational conduct may be deduced. The determinants of rational conduct can only be deduced from doctrinal conceptions and such understandings, unlike theories, postulate adherence.

The above considerations justify, I think, my initial claim that

the ideological understanding can be characterised by its prescriptive generality and the absence of explanatory generality. Ideology is doctrinal, not theoretical, knowledge. As it happens ideologists do talk in the language of general explanation, but if, as I have argued, conduct is a rational notion, then this phenomenon must be understood as rhetorical in substance and explanatory only in form. If my argument is correct then the mystique of ideology does not reside in any implicit claim to scientific status. In the remainder of this thesis I shall attempt to display the virtues which it does engage.

Notes to Chapter One

1. F.H. Bradley, Ethical Studies, Oxford, O.U.P., 1967, pp. 193-94.
2. J. Hicks, Causality in Economics, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1979.
3. I have employed, here, the formulation of J. Hicks, op.cit., p.8.
4. K. Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', in K. Marx and F. Engels, Selected Works, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1970, p.96.
5. T. Hobbes, Leviathan, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1968, p. 272.

CHAPTER TWO: IDEOLOGY AND POLITICAL AUTHORITY

In his article 'Man and Society in Hobbes and Rousseau'¹ Peter Winch formulates what he takes to be the central question of political philosophy:

The central question of political philosophy concerns the nature of the authority of the state. The concept of such authority generates characteristically philosophical puzzlement because it seems to involve a paradox: on the one hand it seems to involve a power to override the will of the individual citizen, while on the other hand its existence seems in a certain sense to depend on the wills of the individuals who are subject to it, in that they can decide to acknowledge it as legitimate.²

In this chapter I shall address my discussion to the paradox presented by Winch. I do not intend to resolve this paradox in any way that has practical application, rather I wish to throw some light upon it by locating the place of ideology in political life. I shall argue to the conclusion that the paradox formulated by Winch presents us with a false dichotomy, that is, that the terms 'power' and 'decision' cannot be successfully used to depict the character of political authority. To accomplish this task I shall first indicate what I take to be the significant features of the paradox. Secondly, I will consider the concept of political authority from three distinct viewpoints which I term moral, practical and ideological. I will argue here that moral and practical considerations are contingently related to political authority, and thereby do not touch the paradox but that ideological considerations are necessarily related to the justification or criticism of the

rationale of political authority. Thirdly, I shall attempt to display the character of ideological considerations and their relation to political authority by locating them in their appropriate context or ambiance. Lastly, I will illustrate my thesis by reference to Mill's thoughts on representative government, to show why he thought that such a constitution was in an ideological sense special.

1. Political authority, it is generally agreed, implies a directive and legislative capacity defined by, and operative within, a legal system constituting a state. The problem facing a political philosopher, according to Winch, is how an account may be given of legitimacy in relation to this capacity. Various accounts have been given and one of the more perspicacious is that offered by Rousseau in The Social Contract, and I turn to this text in order, first, to exhibit some of the concerns characteristic of the problem, and secondly, to show various points of disagreement I have with Rousseau so as to set the stage for my own account of legitimacy and political authority.

At the beginning of The Social Contract, Rousseau describes his task:

My purpose is to consider if, in political society, there can be any legitimate and sure principle of government,³ taking men as they are and laws as they might be.

Legitimacy, for Rousseau, is a moral notion: it cannot be defined in terms of non-moral concepts such as power or force. Arguing to the conclusion that the expression 'the right of the strongest' is incoherent, Rousseau states clearly the distinction he has in mind:

If I am held up by a robber at the edge of a wood, force compels me to hand over my purse. But if I could somehow contrive to keep the purse from him, would I still be obliged in conscience to surrender it? After all, the pistol in the robber's hand is undoubtedly a power. Surely, it must be admitted, then that might does not make right, and that the duty of obedience is owed only to legitimate powers.⁴

What Rousseau is saying here - and plainly enough - is that although I have good reason to hand over my purse any reason that I might have cannot have a moral character; I am not obliged in conscience. However, Rousseau does not make sufficient distinctions for either his purposes or mine, for he does not distinguish moral relationship from authoritative relationship. Both relationships have, to my mind, an ethical character, but they are nonetheless distinct for the following reasons.

What I wish to argue is that the legitimacy of a demand is different from the legitimacy of a command in that the former, unlike the latter, does not presuppose an authoritative structure. Both demands and commands involve the use of the imperative - say for example, 'Hand over your money' - and if my reason for complying with the imperative is a calculation of the likely consequences of not complying, in short if my reason does not have an ethical character, then, I think, we need have no distinction to make between them. A distinction does arise, however, if the reason for compliance with the imperative has an ethical character. I will work through an example to show why I think that this is so.

If I have borrowed an amount of money from someone, and subsequently the lender demands its return I may comply with this direction for two reasons: first, aversion to the likely

consequences of not returning it, and secondly, for the reason that the money is owed to him. The latter involves the upholding of a moral relationship, and is thereby, a non-instrumental reason in conduct, while the former is a reason for an action arrived at through calculation, and is an instrumental reason. However, in so far as my reason is the moral one it is not performed from any "duty of obedience" because the lender is not in a position to command me to return the money, the activity of commanding presupposing a superior-inferior relationship.

My objection to Rousseau, then, is that although the task he sets himself is to account for a directive capacity of the political kind, he sets his problem in terms not of authoritative, but of moral relationship, and thereby confuses the issue. However, Rousseau's distinction between the form and substance of a demand does offer an analogy with authoritative relationship in that we can distinguish taking notice of a command, because it is a command, and taking notice of it in terms of calculating the consequences of compliance and non-compliance. This basic contrast between the recognition of legitimacy and the recognition of power can be further illuminated by citing Aquinas on belief:

Now whoever believes assents to someone's words; so that in every form of belief, the person to whom assent is given, seems to hold the chief place and to be the end as it were; while the things by holding which one assents to that person hold a secondary place.⁵

Now, Aquinas may be wrong, generally, about belief, but what he says does, I claim, apply to authority, and it does so by distinguishing between the constitution of a relationship and the performance of the action that the relationship makes the

the right action, that is, what he calls primary and secondary places. The primary place, in the instance of a command, is the obligatory nature of the action, while in the case of the robber's demand the only thing that I can intelligibly be concerned with is, what is, in the context of a legitimate relationship, the secondary place, that is, the content of my action and its possible consequences.

The same point can be put differently by noting the difference in grammar between the expressions 'act of compliance' and, say, 'act of running'; for while the latter specifies an action in terms of its content, the former indicates not an action, but a characteristic that an action may have in virtue of a rule or command. When an action has as a reason for its performance that it is an 'act of compliance' then we have the form, at least, of authoritative relationship.

The distinctions made in the above discussion do not, of course, define legitimacy in any ethically interesting sense, but they do, I think, indicate at least one important point which I will develop further in the next section of this chapter. The point is that forms of obligation are discrete and not to be understood in terms of each other. Much confusion has arisen through a failure to distinguish between what I have called primary and secondary places, that is, the failure to note that the expression 'act of compliance' does not refer to a specific action. Such confusion is, I think, exemplified by the claim that "the obligation to obey the law can only be a moral obligation"⁶ for we may only have a moral obligation to do or refrain from something and that something cannot be

considered at the same time as an obligation non-morally specified. This is clearly expressed by Socrates in the Apology:

'Gentlemen, I am your grateful and devoted servant, but I owe a greater obedience to God than to you; and so long as I draw breath and have my faculties, I shall never stop practising philosophy and exhorting you and elucidating the truth for everyone that I meet...

What Socrates does here is choose between sources of obligatory requirements; he does not decide that he has a moral/religious obligation not to comply with the law (while on most occasions he has a moral/religious obligation to comply), rather he claims that he has a moral/religious obligation to continue practising philosophy, and that is what is most pertinent or applicable to his conduct. (Socrates was not, as has sometimes been claimed, a dissident.)

What then, in the light of the preceding discussions, are the significant features of the paradox formulated by Winch? Given that correct and pertinent distinctions have been made between power and authority, it is, I think, clear that the real difficulty resides in the relationship between acknowledgement and legitimacy. In order to explain this relationship I shall consider some of the features of the account of civil association given by Michael Oakeshott in On Human Conduct.

If we agree, with Oakeshott, that "civil association is not organic, evolutionary, teleological, functional or syndromic relationship but an understood relationship of intelligent agents"⁸, then we may inquire into the nature of that understanding and endeavour to discern how it is related

to the obtaining of such a relationship. Oakeshott's answer to this question appears to suggest that the understanding is, in part, constitutive of the relationship:

Since the civil condition is not enterprise association and since cives as such are neither enterprisers nor joint enterprisers, it follows that they are related solely in terms of their common recognition of the rules which constitute a practice of civility.⁹

What I want to concentrate upon here is the sense of the term 'recognition'. It is not, in a straightforward way, the cognitive sense; it is not as if I identify somebody or something as known before. Rather, I suggest, the sense of 'recognition' is that of 'acknowledgment', and if this is so two considerations come to mind. First, 'recognition' indicates that a significance is attributed to that which is taken notice of, (in this case I see myself, in the relevant circumstances, as a civis). Secondly, the act of recognition amounts to a realisation of the nature of that which is acknowledged. The latter point is important because it indicates how the practice of civility is constituted not by the rules alone but by the recognition of them, and yet the recognition is not constitutive of the practice in virtue of the recognition being a performance necessary to the existence of the practice, rather it is a judgement concerning the obtaining of a specific relationship. I am suggesting then, that the sense of the term 'recognition' in this instance is to be located, to speak metaphorically, between the straightforwardly cognitive and the performative senses. I can specify this point in another way by saying that the criterion of a practice of civility would be that participants in the practice

would take as a reason for or against an action being performed its being either in compliance or not in compliance with the rules of that practice; and this reason, albeit probably needless to add, would be non-instrumental.

I should now like to consider Oakeshott's remarks in a more general way, in order to bring out my main point lest it be lost in a welter of distinctions. Clearly his remarks are not stipulating solely a legal relationship, although they include this. The sentence 'They are related in terms of the rules which constitute a legal system' is not equivalent to the sentence 'They are related in terms of their common recognition of the rules which constitute a practice of civility', and the lack of equivalence is, I believe, to be found in the differences between a tautology, or analyticity, and a substantive proposal. The tautology I have in mind is as follows: 'If a person is the subject of a state then he is obliged to comply with the laws of that state.' This is a tautology because from the point of view of being a subject laws are the kind of rules that should be complied with. We do not have any good, or any bad, reasons for saying a subject is one who should comply with the laws of the state he is the subject of, for being a subject means being subject to rule by law, that is being obliged to comply with the law.

If what I have said above is correct then two points follow. First, the expression 'practice of civility' is not equivalent to the expression 'legal system', unless common recognition of the rules is a criterion of a legal system, and this supposition is manifestly false. Secondly, we are in need of a specification of the mode of discourse within

which the term 'cives' has a use, because it does not occur within the terms of specification for a legal relation. In this mode substantive proposals can be made.

What I want to claim at this point is that Oakeshott is making a proposal belonging to the ideological mode of discourse, and by ideology I understand a concern with the following question: What reasons can be given for justifying or criticising the general prescription that one should act such that one's actions are in compliance with the law? I emphasise the point that the prescription is general in order to indicate that the question demands an explication of the reasons that can be given for and against the identification of my will with that of the will of a subject, a will which is, as such, abstract or ideal.

In order to remove the obscurities that may surround this position I shall now proceed to characterise what I take to be the ideological mode of discourse by contrasting it with two other considerations which may come into play in the context of legal obligation.

2. In the above discussion I claimed that compliance with the law is not itself an action, rather it is a characteristic that an action has in virtue of a rule. I have suggested that any action's being in compliance with the law may be seen as a reason for performing it. In this section I shall discuss the relation of this suggestion to moral, practical and ideological considerations in conduct.

My first claim is that a reason for a action being that the action is in compliance with the law cannot be a moral

reason for performing it; I shall work through an example to show that this is so.

The term 'theft' can be seen as a notion which has both legal and moral senses; my taking, without permission, the possession of another person is both illegal and immoral (in most circumstances). From the legal point of view I am subject to arrest and punishment, and from the moral point of view to condemnation and remorse. The two senses of the term 'theft' indicate different practices in that either one can be sustained without reference to the other. I can offer, then, two reasons for not taking, without permission, the possession of another person: it is morally wrong and it is illegal, and these are substantive reasons in that they do not entail each other.

My position on moral reasons for action involves the claim that a moral reason can be evaluated from the point of view of an action upholding relations which are themselves morally specified. For example, if a man gives as a reason for an action that it is the fulfilment of his duty to a friend then the rationality of the action depends upon its being an exhibition of what is involved in friendship.

Although the above discussion of morality involves an implicit rejection of any utilitarian account of moral reasoning, in the case of practical considerations concerning legal regulation it is, I think, tempting to see the law as signifying the likelihood of our suffering harm in virtue of the sovereign's superior physical power. Talking of the four sources or sanctions of pleasure and pain Bentham states of one source:

If at the hands of a particular person or set of persons in the community, who under names correspondent to that of judge, are chosen for the particular purpose of dispensing it, according to the will of the sovereign or supreme ruling power in the state, it may be said to issue from the political sanction.¹⁰

Now, difficulties with the idea of a felicific calculus notwithstanding, the model here is relatively simple and exhibits the second kind of consideration I have in mind, that is, the practical, or more exactly, the calculating. In this manner of thinking an action not being in compliance with the law is a reason for refraining from it because the suffering which might be incurred as a consequence of the action outweighs the benefits accruing from performing that action. I may like driving my car at 100 m.p.h., but I do not like being fined £50.

If this analysis is allowed we can easily dispense with the expression 'compliance with law' as figuring in a reason for an action in any interesting or distinctive sense. What we have is an example of a means-ends calculation, or argument, which views the law as an object in the environment which can constrain me in the exercise of my will both physically and rationally: physically in that there is a force independent of me, and rationally in so far as my knowledge of the likelihood of constraint and punishment will enter into my calculations. Thus 'law' is equivalent to 'politically determined deterrent to my performing certain actions' and falls into the same class of considerations that determine, for example, that it is the likelihood of serious injury that stops me driving my car at 100 m.p.h.

My contention then is that neither moral nor practical considerations can provide general reasons for acknowledging political authority. In the context of both considerations the peculiarly obligatory character of the law is irrelevant. The lack of connection between legal and moral claims in conduct is recognised by E.F. Carritt:

I believe that, on reflection, we think we ought to obey and support a state (or any person or organisation) so far as we think that by doing so we shall be most likely to provide for other people what we ought to try to provide for them... The claim of any actual state to our obedience is, at best, one among others, at worst, nil.¹¹

Carritt, here, makes the point, but there is, I think, one ambiguity which needs comment. The expression 'we ought to obey' is conditional not upon the legitimacy of the ruling or directive capacity, but upon the consequences of acting in a specific way. So Carritt, in saying 'we ought to obey', means 'we ought to act as subjects just in so far as so acting brings about a moral end specified independently of your being a subject'.

This is not, I think, all that may be meant by the expression 'we ought to obey'. Consider the differences between the following two sentences: 'God wills the good because it is good' and 'Good is what God orders'. The first implies that we may have a specification of what is good which is independent of reference to God, while the second rules out this possibility. In the first sentence, then, the relationship between God's will and the good is contingent, while in the second it is conceptual or necessary. What I wish to suggest is that the ideological concern is that which

seeks to provide a necessary relationship between the laws of a state and rational conduct, or, alternatively, seeks to deny the possibility of such a necessary connection. An example of the latter ideological concern is found in the works of Karl Marx.

For Marx, to cite an action being in compliance with the law as a reason for performing it is not just irrelevant, because we want moral or practical reasons for an action, but because it is marred as a disclosure of man's nature. Attributing ethical rationality to the sovereign-subject relationship (with the exception, perhaps, of the dictatorship of the proletariat) is, at least implicitly, to presuppose something about man's nature which is, according to Marx, false.

How is it that such a distinctive concern with political authority and its relation to conduct arises? One notes, I think, in the institutions and laws which make up what we call the 'state' an impositional character which the metaphor of self-government does little to hide. Yet this impositional character is not something that we are inclined to characterise solely in terms of power; we search for the presence, or lack of, an element of right. If the specification of this is given purely in legal terms it will be at once tautological and uninteresting from the ethical point of view. What we need is a specification of why, for instance, 'by birth', to use Hume's example¹², is a significant and pertinent criterion of right.

What we want then is, I suggest, a means of saying that a form of rule is unconditionally or necessarily the right

form of rule, and this so that we may attribute or deny a general and substantial rationale to the status of subjecthood. If we have such a means then it is possible that the recommendation 'You should comply with the law' be given without a relative or in-order-that, clause. Here I think, it is helpful to give an example. It is from R.G. Collingwood's Speculum Mentis:

... to obey the law in the spirit of intelligent and cheerful co-operation...is...to have reached, if only implicitly, the position of absolute ethics.¹³

The peculiar character of this remark can be indicated by reference to Kierkegaard's notion of double-mindedness¹⁴, which shows, I think, the distinction between necessary and contingent connections, which vis-à-vis subjecthood separates the ideological interest from moral and practical concerns. It is not as if my complying with the law is something which just happens to bring about the good, rather it is in compliance with the law that willing the good is exhibited.

Of course someone like Marx would reject the ideological position I have just given as an example, for he denies any connection between the law, under "capitalism", and the rational exercise of the will by members of the "proletariat". Here we have a very different conception of man in relation to the state. In the third section of this chapter I want to say something more about the character of these conceptions and to locate them in the context of political life.

3. Consider a remark of Hume's concerning the relation of subjects to the rule of their king:

They consent, because they apprehend him to be already by birth, their lawful sovereign.¹⁵

From the ethical point of view one may ask for the pertinence of the criterion for lawful sovereignty being "by birth", and if this was genuinely a request from the ethical point of view the tautological reminder, 'That just is what it is' would be impertinent. For if we see the sense and recognise the force of Marx's XI thesis on Feuerbach - 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it'¹⁶ - then we may expect some justification or criticism of this criterion. So our question becomes: How does justification and criticism work here? My answer is that it works by our adherence to specific "pictures" of man enabling us to attribute or deny a rationale (of which we approve) to actual and/or possible political arrangements.

By a "picture of man" I mean a vocabulary given sense in the context of discussion and other usages. Given a mastery of the vocabulary we may appraise political phenomena; for instance, the events in Russia in 1917 can be seen as 'the victory of the proletariat in a socialist revolution', 'a regression because of the demise of representative institutions', or 'a fraudulent coup d'état signalling the demise of the Russian political tradition as embodied in Czarist rule'. Logically prior to the events being so appraised is the picture of man which gives these expressions their sense.

It is my contention then, that, ideological pictures present us with manners of appreciation. And this position may suggest a useful analogy with aesthetics; consider the following remark from Ludwig Wittgenstein's Philosophical

Investigations:

Here it occurs to me that in conversation on aesthetic matters we use the words "You have to see it like this, this is how it is meant", "when you see it like this you see where it went wrong"; "You have to hear this bar as the introduction"; "You must hear it in this key"; "You must phrase it like this" (which can refer to the hearing as well as the playing).¹⁷

Injunctions, imperatives, invitations: the eliciting of appreciations and appraisals in a certain manner. The aesthetic relies upon conventions, the conventions governing artistic creativity, and is not arbitrary. In contrast the invitation to appraise ideologically is, in itself, arbitrary, and this relates to the idea of commitment, the criterion of which would be that the appraiser is himself the sincere subject of appraisal. (See Chapter 5)

Finally, I will discuss the relation of ideological appraisal to political authority, that is, to what I take to be the context of ideological thinking.

Rousseau's example of the robber showed that it is only intelligible that I should hand over my purse given a prudential calculation. It may be irrational for me not to hand over the money, that is, there are no good reasons for my not handing it over), but if I do not hand the money over and my reason is a prudential one I may have acted irrationally but not unintelligibly. What would be unintelligible, as distinct from irrational, would be my conceiving myself to be non-instrumentally obliged to hand the money over, for if I did then I would not have understood the term 'robber', that is, a person who takes what he has no right to take. A necessary condition for authority, then, is that compliance

with it be intelligible on non-instrumental grounds. So while the sentence 'Always comply with the will of someone who holds a gun to your head' expresses a prudential maxim which a person disregards at his own peril, the sentence 'Authority is the kind of thing which should be complied with' is analytic for its opposite is unintelligible.

Given this dictate of pure reason there still remains the question of how an authority is constituted, or comes about. And my contention is that an authority comes about in the acknowledgement of a directive capacity by the employment of a non-instrumental vocabulary. This is a point which is well expressed by Simone Weil:

The immediate end of forms of political institution is to allow the head of government and the people to express their sentiments. They are analogous to love letters, to exchanges of rings, and other tokens between lovers. In certain circles a woman would not regard herself as truly married were she not to wear a golden ring. The conjugal bond does not of course consist in the ring. But all the same it is needful that women who feel this way should wear a ring. Political institutions are essentially a symbolic language. A language is never something arbitrary, a convention, far from it, it is something which grows like a plant.¹⁸

What I think is important about this position is that it enables us to see that the paradox formulated by Winch presents us with a false dichotomy. For although an act of acknowledgement has an object, that object is itself identified or described by the vocabulary employed in the acknowledgement. Simone Weil's analogy with the relationship of lovers is pertinent because it indicates the significance of sentiment; a person's love has an object, but it is the

love that partially constitutes the object qua object of recognition. The love that one person has for another indicates that the other's being is pertinent or applicable to the lover in a way that would be unintelligible if such a relationship did not exist.

The grammar of the vocabulary of acknowledgement in its political use can be indicated by a further analogy with religious understanding. The commandment that one should love God with all one's heart has the form of a command, but can be seen as indicating a presupposition of religious faith; for it is in loving God that one recognises his pertinence to one's life, that is, his pertinence is defined in the relationship of love.

4. Three points, it seems to me, constitute the burden of my discussion, and as they do not correspond exactly to the first three sections of this chapter I think it worth while to list them out, prior to giving an illustration of my thesis by way of conclusion.

(i) Authority is identified as a directive or impositional capacity.

(ii) This capacity is distinguished from power by the fact that in deliberations concerning conduct it is unintelligible that a person should refer to anything other than the content of an action directed by some person who occupies a position of power alone; an authoritative direction is understood as one in the consideration of which an agent is concerned with the fact of direction.

(iii) An authority is constituted, from the ethical point of

view, by its acknowledgement in the use of a non-instrumental vocabulary, which I choose to term 'ideology', displaying the pertinence of a directive or impositional capacity to agency, and, thereby, affirming a certain relationship.

Such then, in abstract form, are my conclusions concerning authority and its relation to ideology. The third point was that ideology could be seen as a non-instrumental vocabulary employed in the acknowledgement of a political authority. What I have to offer as a conclusion to this chapter is an illustration of this thesis. I want, now, to show that such a non-instrumental vocabulary is present in Mill's consideration of liberty and representative government.

Bentham says, somewhere, that a person has a duty to comply with the law just as long as it is in his interest to do so. This is a curious statement, but it is not, in Bentham, ambiguous: a person's interest stands as an end external to law. That is why, for Bentham, punishment can be nothing more than a deterrent. Mill asserts a similar position when arguing that representative government is the most rational form of government. First, individuals (most of them) best know their own interests, and, secondly, any one individual is the person most likely to pursue his interests. Here the whole character and colour of a system of rules is derived from an end to which they are subservient in strict utilitarian fashion. This reasoning exhibits a means towards an end; an end is stated and means assessed as rational or irrational in the pursuit of it. Ideological considerations, I have claimed, are distinct from this, and I now want to indicate how these are juxtaposed in Mill's

writings to considerations of an instrumental kind.

The ideological resonances of Mill's writing become most clear when he alludes to, or gives a description of, what I shall term his 'ideal character'. And it seems to me that one of the clearest depictions of this ideal character is exhibited in his castigation of absolute rule. Noting what he takes to be an unanswerable practical objection to the idea of an absolute ruler, Mill assumes the theoretical possibility and continues:

One man of superhuman mental activity managing the affairs of a mentally passive people. Their passivity is implied in the very idea of absolute power. The nation as a whole, and every individual composing it, are without potential voice in their own destiny. They exercise no will in respect to their collective interests. All is decided for them by a will not their own, which it is legally a crime for them to disobey. What sort of beings can be formed under such a regimen? What development can either their thinking or their active faculties attain under it?¹⁹

What can, I think, strike one on reflection is the peculiar narrowness or, metaphorically speaking, the provincialism of Mill's point of view. Anybody who thought that these were the individuals of whom, say, Augustine spoke would be capable of believing almost anything. It is, however, an important fact about us that we do not have the time or, perhaps, even the capacity to dwell with any consequence upon the depth and diversity of ethical considerations. And Mill's conception does offer a relatively clear idea of how man is and how he should live; the image Mill constructs is capable of use, and it is to its use that I now turn.

One sentence from the passage I quoted is particularly significant for my purposes. Mill declares that for people

living under absolute rule all "is decided for them by a will not their own which it is legally a crime for them to disobey". Imagine that we have one of Mill's "whole men", or, more exactly, someone who thinks he is, or ought to be, a "whole man", and that we engineer it such that he is the subject of an absolute ruler. What would hang on his disobeying the ruler's will? For the "whole man" there can be no action which is peculiarly obligatory in virtue of the will of an absolute ruler, nothing that demands, in conscience that he should comply. But the case is different in a representative system, for in this circumstance the "whole man" may display his character; and as the laws formulated and passed by a representative system of governments are, ex hypothesi, the outcome of the deliberations of "whole men" then their obligatoriness is denied only at the cost of unintelligibility which, in this case, would amount to moral inconsistency or hypocrisy. In one sense the obligation of the rules derives not from their content but from the fact that they are made in a specific way, a way which is for a liberal special because it enables that display of intellect of which the whole man is capable. This point is obscured by Mill's overt adherence to ethical naturalism.

Implausible as it may at first sight seem, given the content of much of Mill's writing, my claim is that Mill, at least in On Liberty and Representative Government, develops an ideological vocabulary of political acknowledgement and specifies some of the applications of that vocabulary by indicating the exhibition of his ideal character in representative political institutions. Mill prefaces On Liberty

with a quotation from Wilhelm Von Humboldt's Sphere and Duties of Government; it reads:

The grand, leading principle, towards which every argument unfolded in these pages directly converges, is the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity.²⁰

This piece does, I think, show Mill's arrogance, for in showing what he takes to be the application of the principle Mill does not show its "absolute and essential importance"; that is something that must be supplied subjectively in the assent to Mill's ideal character which is given in our finding it ethically interesting. Mill, of course, presents it in the language of proof and demonstration, and this perhaps indicates an irony concerning his liberalism - which is something that Maurice Cowling, in his book Mill and Liberalism, makes a meal of - for a world in which we acknowledge more than one ethical character would be too "liberal" for Mill. Perhaps surprisingly it is Nietzsche who to my mind correctly specifies Mill's ideological message:

We would not let ourselves be burned to death for our opinions: we are not sure enough of them for that. But perhaps for the right to have our opinions and to change them.²¹

Finally, I will attempt to indicate one implication that the conclusions of this chapter have for my subsequent inquiry. I have claimed that the paradox formulated by Winch can be resolved, from a philosophical point of view, by our noting the relations between the employment of an ideological vocabulary and the constitution of political authority. What does, I think, need greater specification is the character of an ideological, or sentimental, vocabulary and its place in

political activity. I attempt to give some account of this in the next chapter.

Notes to Chapter Two

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CHAPTER THREE: POLITICS AND THE LANGUAGE OF SENTIMENT

1. That 'reason' should prevail over 'emotion' is probably a view held by many. Despite Hume's dictum that 'Reason is, and ought to be, the slave of the passions', this faculty is often held up as that to which we should turn not only to ensure that it is most probable that our actions issue in the achievement of the ends we desire, but also if we want to determine that our conduct was, is or will be proper conduct. Emotionally informed activity has a non-rational element, and to the extent that there is this informing of conduct then it is to that extent irrational in virtue of emotion sullyng the correct exercise of reason in activity. The view that the pressure of emotion frustrates the exercise of reason in activity and is thereby to be condemned or avoided on pain of irrationality is, I think, an extreme and unjust view. Yet it may be thought to have some justification.

The first argument that we may consider in this connection is that emotion frustrates rational conduct. If someone is engaged upon some task which is difficult he may, as difficulties arise, become frustrated. His frustration does not contribute to the solving of the difficulties, rather it obstructs his paying proper attention to them. The correct advice here is: 'Leave it and come back to the problem when you have calmed down. You will get no where in that state'.

Here an emotion sullies the exercise of reason in carrying out a task in virtue of its being a state of mind which obstructs clear thinking. Being in an emotional state is, then, on this understanding rather like being drunk. The absence of dexterity is a symptom of both the mental and the physical states. Both states are conducive to inefficiency in the performance of a technical task. Such considerations lead us to say that where dexterity, either mental or manual, is required we should strive to be sober, calm or temperate.

Sobriety, calmness and temperance are not recommended purely from a functional point of view, that is, because they are conducive to good technical practice. They are virtues which have a more general import. For instance, they may be thought of as preconditions of urbanity. An emotional state, such as frustration, may, then, be thought of not only as destructive of dexterity in the technical sense, but also as ruinous of our ability to behave towards other people as we should behave towards them. A drunken lout may be someone who is rude when he is sober, but his drunkenness contributes to his loutishness. Similarly the rudeness of an angry man is different from that of a man in a cool hour. If I apologise for my rudeness when I have been either drunk or angry the characterisation I give of my insulting behaviour is not so much an excuse, in the sense that I may give an excuse for being late for an appointment, as an apology also

for subjecting someone to such an expression of my drunkenness or anger. If someone characterises his rudeness in terms of his drunkenness or anger he is not excusing his rudeness as he would be if he said that he was telling the truth. He is either at the same time making public his remorse about his state, or he is making a plea that his actions be subsumed under a causal law of the form 'Drunkenness/Anger causes rude behaviour', a subsumption which cancels the significance of his behaviour in terms of its being a contribution to social intercourse. This is to refer to a mitigating circumstance, not to give an excuse. On this understanding then the emotional informing of conduct is obstructive, and obstructive in a way analogous to emotion damaging our dexterity in the performance of a technical task. What I want to do now is raise some difficulties with this analogy.

So far it has been argued that emotion is an irrational component in conduct in the same way as its presence in the performance of a task is obstructive to that performance. It seems to me that this overlooks the distinctions between making and doing, made in Chapter 1. So far emotion has been understood as a state of mind injurious to the exercise of reason, and the model for the exercise of reason was that of attending to a task. Such a model corresponds to what Aristotle understands by art. The end of the exercise of reason in terms of art is the manufacture of articles. In contrast, the end of the exercise of reason in doing is proper conduct. Given the difference between making and

doing, is it still the case that emotion obstructs the exercise of reason in doing? If emotion is understood as a state of mind it is possible to ask whether such a state is desirable or undesirable. I have entertained the thought that it is undesirable because it interferes with the exercise of reason. Advice of the kind, 'Assuage your anger before you see your neighbour about his noisy late night parties' may have this thought as a presupposition. Remarks of the kind, 'You will have to let him calm down before he listens to reason' highlight the opposition of reason and emotion. What I want to suggest now is that emotion in conduct can be seen as something more than a state external to and obstructive of the exercise of reason. This suggestion involves understanding emotion not as a state but as a rational component of activity itself.

First, it seems to me that an emotion can be seen, quite clearly, as a reason for an action; 'I was rude to him because I was angry', 'I smashed the wrench against the cycle frame because I was frustrated at not being able to loosen a nut' - the 'because' in both these sentences does not indicate a causal process in virtue of any disutility in the actions or in virtue of their not being calculated. The anger or frustration were reasons for actions, and we may say that the actions were irrational in virtue of the reasons not being good reasons, and what is a good reason and what is a bad reason is set up by the end we have in mind.

Secondly, Aristotle's distinction between 'making' and 'doing' can be explained by the distinction between instrumental and non-instrumental considerations in activity. Smashing the wrench against the frame of the cycle is a prima facie example of an irrational action. There is no good mechanical reason for it, so its irrational from the point of view of getting the cycle fixed. From the instrumental point of view it is out of court; it is so manifestly irrational as to be absurd. An absurdity is a disturbance to the exercise of reason, and if we want to exorcise that absurdity we have to rid ourselves of its source, that is the anger or frustration. Here it is but a short step to identifying the anger or frustration as undesirable states. What we are about in fixing the cycle is the application of mechanical techniques for instrumental reasons. What we make is a 'fixed' cycle.

Thirdly, let us suppose for a moment that there are creatures who do not have the emotion of anger or frustration. Certainly such creatures might well be more efficient in fixing cycles, but what would their morality be like? Could they be said to care, for instance, about justice? Such questions are not merely rhetorical; they indicate the place of non-instrumental reasons in conduct. Say, for example, that I hit a man, in anger, who has insulted my wife. According to the idea that emotion interferes with the exercise of reason my action was irrational from

the point of view of responding to an insult. I want to question the view that this is so. My reason for hitting the man was that I was angry with him. My anger consisted of the thought that my wife had been insulted, and here I want to claim that there is a conceptual relation between the fact of my wife being insulted and my anger, while in the case of fixing the cycle anger or frustration has no relation to the reasoning involved in this exercise. My being angry at my wife being insulted is a criterion of the relationship and the response of hitting out, being the outcome of my anger, is, contingently, the upholding of the relationship. I say 'contingently' because I do not think that there is a necessary connection between the expression of such anger and physical violence. What is the conceptual relation here? Say a man professes love for his wife and that he also holds the view that an insult to a wife should be responded to by violence. If his wife is insulted and he does not so respond it is possible that we call into question his feelings for his wife. In so far as anger on his part was not present his profession of love is called into question. If this is so then the anger that a man may feel in such a situation is a rational component of the situation in which he acts. Anger, then, can be a good reason for an action, although this action need not be violent. My conclusion is that activity may be emotionally informed and rational in virtue of this.

I should now like to summarise the distinctions I have made so far in order to give a clear idea of their significance. I have claimed that emotion can be seen as a rational component of activity in virtue of non-instrumental reasons in conduct, that is, reasons for actions which have to do with the upholding of relationships. Such actions are appropriate not in terms of their being means towards ends but because they give expression to the upholding of relationships. Actions of this kind satisfy certain sentiments that we have in virtue of the occurrence of certain events within the ambiance of established relationships; that is why I have claimed that the appearance of emotions as reasons for actions marks, in so far as these are seen as good reasons, the presence of such relationships. Such distinctions between achieving ends and upholding relationships enables us to see that Sartre's account of emotion in his monograph Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions is false. I now want to consider, briefly, Sartre's position with a view to making my own clearer.

According to Sartre emotional conduct is defective because it is rationally ineffectual. After giving an analogy for the 'difficulty' of the world in terms of the troublesome moves involved in playing a pin-table Sartre states:

We can now conceive what an emotion is.
It is a transformation of the world. When
the paths before us become too difficult,

or when we cannot see our way, we can no longer put up with such an exacting and difficult world. All ways are barred and nevertheless we must act. So then we try to change the world; that is, to live as though the relations between things and their potentialities were not governed by deterministic processes but by magic.¹

As I have already indicated Sartre's position may be thought correct in one domain of reasoning; my angrily striking a television set which does not work is certainly not an effectual means to my seeing my favourite programme. And perhaps it is not wholly pretentious to say that here we see "how during an emotion, the consciousness debases itself and abruptly transmutes the determinist world in which we live, into a magical world".² My point against Sartre's position is that it is manifestly the case that the world in which we live is not viewed exclusively as the deterministic world which renders emotion irrational or magical. The angry husband who hits the man who insulted his wife is not in the same position vis-à-vis the assessment of the rationality of his conduct as the man who strikes the cycle with his wrench or angrily bangs the television set. If the husband responded to the insult to his wife by making a cutting remark back he would not have responded more successfully to the insult than if he had hit the man, as it were coped effectually with the difficulty of the world. He would have responded more effectually than if he had hit the man only if his anger stemmed from his inability to think up and deliver a cutting riposte, but the way I have

set the example up, the end is not making the man look small, but the upholding of a relationship. I should now like to further explain how I think emotions are conceptually related to the upholding of relationships.

Say, for example, that my friend's character is being vilified in some discussion it is, of course, my obligation to defend him in his absence. This obligation is not, however, the same as the obligation a barrister has to defend his client in a courtroom. Rather, if the obligation I have to my friend is not satisfied angrily then it is difficult to see it as the satisfaction of an obligation of friendship. It is in the display of the emotion that the relationship of friendship is upheld; in this that I show that I care about someone in the way friends should care about one another. This point can be brought out more clearly by noting that the person upon whom the attack was made could feel betrayed had I not been angered by the attack: betrayed in that the situation did not arouse a sentiment appropriate to friendship. In contrast, if I had not given an adequate defence of his character then he could only be dismayed by or regret my lack of dialectical and rhetorical competence. But the latter, unlike the lack of emotional response, could not, logically, call the relationship into question. In the case of the relationship of a client to a barrister it is just the lack of such competence which would be prejudicial to the continuing of any contract.

In recapitulation, then, emotion can be a rational component of conduct, and this not in the sense that it is effectual - for if an emotion appears in conduct instrumentally it is always corrupt because it is of necessity feigned - but because doing sometimes involves the display and upholding of relationships for their own sakes. It is also clear, I think, that an emotion can be a reason for an action, and a good reason, in so far as an action, say defending one's friend, counts as a satisfaction of the emotion. It is important to note, however, that an action of this kind is not performed in order to satisfy an emotion, rather the emotion is a characteristic of the action itself (whatever it may be), which it has in virtue of the action's connection with a relationship setting up the possibilities of our having specific emotions in conduct. Failure to note this point may lead to a false view of the place of emotion in conduct, that is, seeing the satisfaction of an emotion as an end external to any actions taken in pursuance of it.³

2. So far I have endeavoured to show that emotion can be seen as a rational component of conduct. I have also tried to give some understanding of this possibility. What I want to do now is to build on this account by considering it in relation to political activity and circumstance. To set the stage I examine some of the views put forward by

T.D. Weldon in his The Vocabulary of Politics.

Weldon, it will be recalled, holds the view that in politics we need a good deal less emotion and more common sense than we have hitherto enjoyed. He thinks that it is what he calls 'foundations' or 'ideologies' which have contributed to the present undesirable state of affairs. To understand Weldon's complaint about emotional thinking in politics we shall have to discern what Weldon understands by 'foundations' or 'ideologies'. What seems to me to be interesting here is that he should see ideologies arising from people becoming "worked-up" about the so-called question of political obligation. Part of his critique of ideology consists of an attempt to assuage our tendency to attribute moral significance to the question, a significance which turns the 'question' into a 'problem', a problem which is, according to Weldon a pseudo-problem. I shall now look more closely at Weldon's strategy here.

Weldon imagines someone saying, "'Even if this is the law, I don't see why I should obey it'", and he remarks here that the "only further comment possible is 'Well, this is Great Britain, isn't it?'"⁴. Now, it is (obviously) important to Weldon's position that such a comment is not expressive of the sentiment of patriotism. Weldon's comment is a "full stop" remark, but not in the sentimental sense. The remark is to be made in a neutral tone of voice indicating a convention, something which is by definition arbitrary. If Weldon has succeeded in indicating a

convention then there is nothing more to be said. Nothing more in the same sense in which once we have checked the disputed spelling of a word in a current dictionary discussion is at an end.

Weldon's point, it seems to me, is in some respects similar to a point made by Hegel in his Philosophy of Right.

So far as the authority of any existing state has anything to do with reasons, these reasons are culled from the forms of law authoritative within it.⁵

Weldon would, I think, have approved of this remark because it contains the same moral he wishes us to take from his own example. If anyone asks a question of the kind 'Why should I obey the state?' then the only reply possible consists of the indication of historically established conventions. This will not satisfy the questioner but it is the only correct reply. Such a reply can be said to be successful in so far as it indicates the impertinence of the question and shows where justification and criticism must end. However, an important difference between Hegel and Weldon is that Hegel thinks that philosophy can determine the reason for the stopping point while Weldon is appealing to convention alone, ('It could be otherwise but in fact in Great Britain we...'). I can bring this point into sharper focus by considering another remark of Hegel's, one which occurs in the same paragraph as the remark I quoted above. Here it is well, I think, to consider the tones of voice in which it could be read or said:

Since the state is mind objectified, it is only as one of its members that the individual himself has objectively, genuine individuality, and an ethical life.⁶

Such a statement would be rejected by Weldon as a piece of 'metaphysical lumber', an attempt to give a reason for a convention which is by definition arbitrary. In addition such thinking - the distortion of, and unjustifiable attribution of a rationale to, the practical issues of empirical politics - is seen by Weldon as dangerous. The danger consists to a large extent in this being "magical" thinking. Take for example, a remark of Hegel's which for my purposes is best left in German:

Der Gott in der Welt: das ist was der Staat ist.

The thought here is not easily expressible in English, although a literal translation may appear straightforward. And the intuitive plausibility of a Weldonian reaction to Hegel's remark indicates the difficulties involved here. 'Look', Weldon might have said, 'the state just isn't a supernatural person or entity'. In The Vocabulary of Politics Weldon complains:

This pretence was dangerously misleading and in so far as it is still an ingredient in the popular use of 'the state' it should be abandoned in the same way that the magical ingredients in 'life', 'force' and 'matter' have now been abandoned. Even as metaphor they are unsafe and we are much better off without them.⁷

Weldon's project, then, is clear; it is to convince people that thinking reasonably in and about politics involves

the jettisoning of a certain kind of talk about politics: talk that is intellectually unsound in virtue of its metaphysical character. However, Weldon pursues this project not just by giving a critique of the presuppositions of what he terms traditional political philosophy. He also attempts to assuage our tendency to attribute moral importance to the question of political obligation. If Weldon is successful in this then the questions of whether, how far and under what circumstances the state can be understood as a set of relationships we should or should not attempt to uphold for their own sakes are rendered meaningless not by reference to their inherently metaphysical character, but just by the fact that they are excluded from the form of reasoning appropriate to the conduct of political affairs. Just as the irrationality, from the point of view of making something, of cursing a cycle does not derive from the theological unsoundness of cursing inanimate objects, but from this being non-instrumental to the task in hand, so thinking of the state in terms of an ethically significant set of relationships is irrational as a contribution to politics not in virtue of the nature of the thinking itself but because of the irrelevance of such thinking to political conduct.

What I am suggesting here is that Weldon's two recommendations, that we should strive for more commonsense and less emotion in politics and that we should be non-ideological,

are really one recommendation considered from different aspects. The view that the state is not, as a set of relationships, ethically interesting is what Weldon attempts to support. Clearly then Weldon's arguments form not so much an account of political activity and circumstance as an account of how politics is to be conducted and assessed if political conduct and assessment are to be rational. In contrast to Weldon, I start with the fact that political conduct is informed by considerations which view the state as a substantive set of ethical relationships and attempt to display the rationality of political activity and circumstance as a partial consequence of this fact. Weldon opposes emotion to the exercise of reason in politics. If it is possible to show that emotion may be a rational component of political activity then we may see how Weldon's account of political reasoning is false. Already some clues have appeared which if clearly understood may be taken as preliminaries to a discussion of the place of emotion in politics.

First, it is, I think sufficiently clear from the discussion of reason and emotion prior to the consideration of Weldon that emotions can be seen as reasons for actions and as rational components of conduct in so far as an action is seen from the point of view of its upholding a certain relationship. The statement of this position involved the claim that emotion and ethical concern were conceptually

connected, that is, not in the sense that emotions were causally prior to ethical viewpoints but in the sense that having an emotional response could be a criterion of taking ethical matters into consideration in conduct.

Secondly, it was found that Weldon's rejection of ideological thinking could be understood as a particular statement of the opposition of reason to emotion thesis. In other words the absence of emotional thinking in political conduct is synonymous with the absence of ideological thinking. The irrationality of ideological thinking, and, ex hypothesi, the irrationality of emotionally informed conduct, is derived from the denial of any ethical importance, in terms of the upholding of relationships, to the arrangements of the state.

These two points in combination suggest that the key to understanding the place of emotion in political life may be found in an account of the logic of the ideological use of language. I shall take this suggestion up in the following discussion. To begin these considerations I want to say more about my understanding of the ethical appraisal of conduct and circumstance. I do this, in part, to further define emotion in terms of sentiment or motive in conduct.

3. In On Human Conduct Michael Oakeshott distinguishes two aspects of conduct which he terms 'self-disclosure' and 'self-enactment'. From the point of view of self-disclosure actions "are performances in respect of their being responses

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to contingent situations conducive to the achievement of imagined outcomes".⁸ In contrast actions considered from the point of view of self-enactment are "actions understood in terms of the motives in which they are performed".⁹ A motive, for Oakeshott, is "an agent's sentiment in choosing and performing the actions he chooses and performs".¹⁰ As Oakeshott notes, both these aspects of conduct have been recognised, with varying degrees of emphasis, by moral philosophers. Kant understands the moral will entirely from the point of view of self-enactment:

An action done from duty has its moral worth, not in the purpose to be attained by it, but in the maxim according to which it is decided upon; it depends therefore, not on the realisation of the object of action, but solely on the principle of volition in accordance with which, irrespective of all objects of the faculty of desire, the action has been performed. ¹¹

In contrast J.S. Mill locates the moral worth of conduct in an action's being seen from the point of view of self-disclosure:

The morality of an action depends entirely upon the intention - that is upon what the agent wills to do. But the motive - that is, the feeling which makes him will so to do - when it makes no difference to the act, makes none in the morality...¹²

I do not wish to either quarrel with, or comment directly upon, the distinctions Oakeshott makes between self-disclosure and self-enactment in conduct. Rather I want

to shed some light on the idea of the state being a set of relationships understood ethically by developing further Oakeshott's understanding of self-enactment. To begin I want to discuss the notion of commitment in its relation to ethics.

The notion of commitment has given rise to much controversy and in order to avoid entanglement in such discussions I shall set down, in an admittedly rather stipulative fashion, what I understand commitment to be. The clearest sense of the term 'commitment', it seems to me, is when we speak of someone being committed to a course of action. He may be committed in virtue of an action being the only means by which an end he has set himself can be realised. In this case the commitment has a prudential basis. Alternatively, he may be committed to an action in virtue of an obligation or duty. Here the commitment may be said to have a legal or moral basis. For example, I may be committed to a course of action, c, in virtue of having promised A that I will meet him tonight, where c is bringing it about that I meet A tonight. Commitments, then, restrict the scope of action in virtue of prudential and non-prudential considerations. I now consider further the nature of commitments of a non-prudential kind.

That a course of action is a commitment confers upon it a significance that it would not otherwise have. In moral matters this significance may be referred to as the "importance

of an action". It is important that I meet A tonight because I promised to meet him. Indeed, I think it is a criterion of understanding what 'promising' means that a person does see this importance. A commitment, then, is not itself an action but is a characteristic an action may have in virtue of importance being attributed to the action; say, for example in virtue of its being the fulfilment of a promise. The claim I wish to make is that we can only speak of the attribution of such importance to a course of action by reference to an agent in terms of self-enactment. For here we may speak of an action in terms of the motive or sentiment in which it is performed. In the case of fulfilling a promise that I used above we may say that the act of keeping the promise was performed in the sentiment of duty. The same action, from the point of view of self-disclosure, could have been performed in any number of sentiments such as fear, greed or love; such sentiments specify the importance that an action has for an agent.

Commitments, then, are characteristic importances of actions. A promise, morally understood, prescribes the sentiment of duty in activity. The importance that an action has is supplied by the agent in terms of the sentiment in which he performs it. If the prescribed sentiment is instantiated in the importance that an agent attributes to the action in question then the agent is morally good. He wills, to use Kierkegaard's expression, one thing. Agents, then, do not create or produce the importance that an action

has but they may instantiate this importance. The virtuous man is a person who does instantiate such importances in his activity, while the moral derelict is a person who does not. I now want to examine in more detail how such instantiation may occur and I also want to introduce the idea of moral vocabularies. I begin by giving an illustration of my point by reference to some episodes in Tolstoy's Anna Karenin.

After being rejected by Vronsky, Kitty Shcherbatsky displays that lack of interest in affairs characteristic of the despair which deadens involvement with other people. Eventually she visits Germany and meets and becomes friendly with Varenka, who is a maid (of sorts) and a quite different character from Kitty. Kitty sees Varenka's selfless care for sick people as an example to herself and she attempts to find herself in such activity. But it does not work. She emulates Varenka in activity, but she does not capture the spirit in which Varenka does what she does. Later Kitty finds the exercise of her capacities to be genuine within family life as a wife and a mother. What are juxtaposed here, it seems to me, are two vocabularies of self-enactment. First, the selfless devotion of Varenka to sick people, and secondly, the considerabilities of family life - of motherhood and the direction of the household. They signify different commitments, different manners of involvement with other people.

One point that can be abstracted from this example, is that a moral vocabulary does not only prescribe the duties entailed in our involvement with other people, in the way, say, that some of the rules of the game "Monopoly" do, but also indicates that actions should be performed in the correct sentiments if a vocabulary is to have a moral character in its employment. To speak somewhat lyrically: for a vocabulary to be a moral vocabulary it cannot only be used to describe the actions that a person performs, it must also touch his heart, that is have a relation to the sentiments in which he acts. It is this point which enables us to say that in Germany Kitty was only playing a role while Varenka was not. And this is also why Kitty is later able to refer to her life then as one of self-deception. I now want to discuss the relation of a moral vocabulary to sentiments or emotions in conduct in more detail. To begin such a discussion I shall refer to some of the points Aristotle makes about emotion.

According to Aristotle emotions are cognitive products. The efficient cause of an emotion is a thought or belief. Given this an emotion is susceptible to reasoned persuasion. For example, a man may be angry as a result of what he believes to be an injustice, but if it is shown to him that his belief is false, that there is no case of injustice, then the efficient cause of his anger is removed and the emotion can no longer be sustained. Another point concerning emotion is derived from Aristotle's bipartite division of the

soul into logical and alogical halves. In contrast to Socrates Aristotle places moral virtue in the alogical half of the soul. This division enables us to distinguish clearly between responses born of emotion and those which issue from calculation. The distinction is clearly exemplified in the difference between a man who endures because he thinks himself safe and a man who endures because endurance is noble.¹³ Here we can easily construct an example concerning political life. A man may engage in a political struggle in the belief that he will achieve something that gives him satisfaction - riches or the exercise of power - or he may engage in such activity because of moral virtue which has determined the judgements and goals involved in an emotional response. The duty to put things right which are unjust could be a general description of this. Here we see how moral virtue has determined the proper objects of emotional response, and given that the emotions are caused by thoughts about injustice the occurrence of actions performed in such sentiments marks an instantiation of a moral vocabulary in activity.

Such an understanding of the relation of morality to emotion is, perhaps, hardly very startling or interesting as it stands but it does, I believe, give us a clear idea of the significance of the idea of a moral vocabulary, especially the points that emotion can be a rational component of activity and that emotions are cognitive

products. Notions such as 'lying', 'promising' and 'theft' are components of a moral vocabulary. The angry condemnation which the telling of a lie, the breaking of a promise or the stealing of a possession may elicit are examples of the integration, indeed the interdependence of moral notions and the emotions. Aristotle's point is that the good man condemns not because he will achieve something by condemning, but because it is right to condemn. According to my argument what makes it right to condemn such activity is the upholding of relationships, yet we do not uphold these as a means to the satisfaction of emotions rather the presence of such emotions is a criterion of the actuality of the relationships.

4. I begin the final section of this chapter by considering an objection to the thesis which I want to argue there. The objection I have in mind is as follows: 'Even if what you say is true it does not follow that conduct that is, with reason, emotionally informed has a place in political life. It has already been stated that not all doing or activity has, with reason, an emotional component'. I want to begin my consideration of this objection by a recapitulation and extension of my discussion of rationality in Chapter 1.

The term 'rational' in one of its meanings expresses a normative concept. If I say of some action or circumstance that it is rational I do not have to produce a separate argument to show its prima facie desirability. For example,

if I describe an action as 'rational', I commend it, similarly, if I qualify an action by saying of it that it is 'viscious' I am normally taken to be condemning that action. In contrast, if I say of any action that it is exceptional, popular, exotic, rapid, excursive or unique we need an argument before we are led to either approve or disapprove. However, the term 'rational' may have a different meaning; it may be used to qualify an action or circumstance in terms of its intelligibility being given by reference to reason. Here, to call an action or circumstance 'rational' is not to commend it, it is to say only that it is intelligible in terms of reason. And intelligibility in terms of reason may be contrasted with the intelligibility of an event or circumstance in terms of causality, or the will of God. I can highlight the distinction between the two senses of the term 'rational' by saying that the opposite of the first or normative sense of 'rational' is 'irrational' while the opposite of the term 'rational', understood as expressing a categorial sense, is 'non-rational'. It seems to me that some political philosophers have conflated the two senses described here and the most notable case is Hegel who appears to argue that 'rational' is a necessary predicate of how things are yet also to argue that this shows the desirability of such a circumstance. In this chapter, I am using philosophically the term 'rational' in the second sense outlined, the categorial sense. It is not my purpose (as it seems to be

Weldon's) to stipulate the 'rational' as against the 'irrational' components of political life.

On my account then there is a difference between showing the rationality of what is in terms of its presupposition, and showing that what is, is rational. I now return to the objection that I formulated at the beginning of this section, and it is clear, I think, that I can only make my case by showing that the concept of emotionally informed conduct is a necessary presupposition of the intelligibility of political life in terms of reason. To make my case I want, initially, to refer to the arguments of Chapter Two, 'Ideology and Political Authority'. In that chapter I attempted to give an account of political authority by showing its necessary connection with the idea of an ideological vocabulary. I now want to explicate my conception of the place of sentiment in political conduct by reference to what I have said about ideology. I do this in order to show the necessary place of sentiment in politics, and if it is shown that sentiment has such a place then questions about the desirability of such a circumstance are irrelevant. In order to establish this conclusion I shall have to show that the concept of political authority is unintelligible without the presupposition of sentimental language in the use of which a political authority can be either acknowledged or rejected as non-instrumentally pertinent to a person's activity. I have, in Chapter Two,

argued to a related conclusion: that the concept of political authority presupposes the language of ideology. It follows then that I can establish my conclusion if I can show ideological thinking to be a sub-species of the language of sentiment. This I will try to do by the use of the following example.

Consider a state torn by civil strife involving the disregarding of institutional procedures and the use of violence. The sides in this conflict seek radically different political ends. Two kinds of claim can be made of such use of violence, first, that it is effective or ineffective, and, secondly, that it is ethically legitimate or illegitimate. Both considerations determine, I shall claim, the rationality (in the normative sense of the term) of its use. Now, while it may be accepted that effectiveness determines rationality, it is perhaps, contentious, to claim that legitimacy may determine rationality. So I shall attempt to show why I think this is so.

Rationality, in the normative sense of the term, has to do with having a good reason for an action. The question then becomes 'What determines a reason for an action as a good reason?', and in the case of effectiveness being the criterion the answer is straightforward: what makes an action rational is that we have good reason to think it effective. Such a definition can, I think, be extended by introducing the criterion of universalizability

and saying that if circumstances are not relevantly dissimilar then what it is rational (that is, effective) for an agent to do in a particular circumstance it is rational for any person to do. The criterion of universalizability renders irrelevant, then, any distinction between understanding an action being performed for a good reason and acknowledging that reason as a good reason for an action. In my discussion of legitimacy and rationality I shall claim that a distinction between the understanding and acknowledgement of an action as rational must be drawn. Such, then, is my analysis of rationality in relation to effectiveness, I turn now to a consideration of rationality in relation to legitimacy. Here I shall argue that the distinction between understanding and acknowledging an action in terms of its legitimacy is to be drawn in terms of the latter, but not the former, removing the grounds of possible moral objection to it.

My first point is that the distinction I am proposing does not have to do with the fact that claims of legitimacy are controllable but with the logical character of any contention. For example, if I say of a certain action that it is physically impossible, my claim is controllable, but my thought implies that the action does not fall under the concept 'physically possible'. The impossibility here is to do with a circumstance, a circumstance describable by physical laws. In contrast moral impossibility is different

in character. If, for example, I claim that abortion is not morally possible I am not claiming that an action is impossible but the impossibility of an action having the value 'good'. In other words, while the truth of the claim that an action is physically impossible is dependent upon a circumstance, the correctness of the claim that an action is morally impossible is dependent upon a doctrine or beliefs, and the ability of a person to make a moral judgement derives from his adherence to doctrines or beliefs.

It should now be clear, then, that an important part of the argument is the contrast I wish to make between doctrines and circumstances. Fundamentally, the contrast is that while circumstances obtain independently of our will, doctrines, except as intellectual constructions, have no such existence. They "exist" only in adherence to them, whereby the values formulated in a doctrine or set of beliefs are instantiated in activity. When we understand a doctrine we view it as an intellectual construction, but when we acknowledge a doctrine we show our preparedness to instantiate it in activity. Acknowledgement, then, is intra-practical. If this is so it is adherence to a doctrine which sets up the possibility of actions being rational in virtue of their legitimacy.

Let me now return to my example lest the point be lost in a disorderly mixture of distinctions. Say that the following was shown to be the case to the agreement of both sides in the situation of civil strife: that they could better (more effectively) achieve their ends within an institutional

context. My claim is that two courses of action could proceed, both with reason. First, both sides could call a halt to the use of violence and, to speak colloquially, sit around the table, and this they could do with reason. Secondly, they could accept the argument as to the effectiveness of such a means and still with reason, say that 'sitting round the table' was unacceptable. That this is against Hobbes's first law of nature is entirely without relevance, for these men are not in a state of nature in that they possess moral vocabularies properly so-called. In the second case, that is, where they do not give up violence, having accepted the view that an institutional procedure is more effective, the only way that they could proceed with reason was if they were concerned to uphold certain relationships which provided the rationale of the conflict in the first instance. The two criteria of effectiveness and of upholding relationships may not be thought to be at odds, but this is a contingent matter.

Now, given that the logic of this example is acceptable, we are obliged, I think, to agree to the following four points. First, the civil strife was identified as the violent pursual of different political ends. Secondly, the legitimacy of such a pursual may be taken as partially determinative of the rationality of such activity, and this in a 'strong', or positive sense, in that it involves the upholding of relationships. Thirdly, because this is so violence may be rationally employed even if it is accepted that activity

within the confines of institutional procedures would be more effective. Lastly, if this is so then the legitimacy of such a way of going on in the pursuit of a political end must involve the conceptual relation of that end to the relationships which are upheld by the continuation of violence, for if there was only a contingent relation the violence could not be an upholding in the positive sense of relationships. And this can only be supplied or made by the use of an ideological vocabulary which relates, in necessary terms, the identity of a particular group of people to a particular political circumstance. It follows then, that emotionally informed conduct, that is, conduct involving reference to sentiment, may be seen as a rational component of political life.

To conclude, I should like to try to make this point clearer by viewing the example from a different perspective. We may accept, or abide by, a political culture that would lead us to urge the adoption of an institutional procedure by the protagonists of such a conflict. But we would not do this merely on the grounds of effectiveness, we are wont to urge the legitimacy of this procedure. And this, perhaps, for two reasons. First, the presence of violence - of maiming and death - may offend us morally in a straightforward manner: these means are not justifiable in the pursuit of a merely political end. This is to refer to the illegitimacy of means in the negative sense. Secondly, we proceed by analogy; we reflect upon our acknowledgement of certain political institutions and see this, in a positive sense,

as a manner of upholding relations between persons as showing the right sentiments in conduct. In doing this we are referring to our particular ethico-political wisdom, referring to something manifestly ideological in character.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. J.P. Sartre, Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, trans, P. Mairet, Methuen, London, 1962, p. 63.
2. Ibid., p. 84.
3. In connection with this topic is worth noting a remark of Nietzsche's:

Not every end is a goal. The end of a melody is not its goal; but nonetheless, if the melody had not reached its end it would not have reached its goal either.

This remark is from Nietzsche's The Wanderer and his Shadow. See R.J. Hollingdale, ed. and trans., A Nietzsche Reader, Hammondsowrth, Penguin Books, 1977. p. 278.
4. T.D. Weldon, The Vocabulary of Politics, Hammondsworth Penguin Books, 1953, p. 57.
5. G.W.F. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, trans. T.M. Knox, London, Oxford University Press, London, 1967, p. 156.
6. Ibid
7. T.D. Weldon, op.cit., p. 48.
8. M. Oakeshott, On Human Conduct, Oxford University Press, 1975, p. 70.
9. Ibid .
10. Ibid., p. 71.
11. I Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals, trans, H.J. Paton, The Moral Law, London, Hutchinson, 1948 p.65, emphasis in original.
12. J.S. Mill, Utilitarianism, in J.S. Mill, Utilitarianism, On Liberty and Considerations on Representative Government J.M. Dent, London, 1972, p. 61, emphasis in original.
13. W.W. Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, London, Duckworth, 1975, p. 71.

CHAPTER FOUR: IDEOLOGY AND POLITICAL STYLE

In the preceding chapters I have argued for the view that ideological understanding is best represented as a special kind of practical wisdom, and not as a theoretical idiom which is either appropriate or inappropriate to political practice. Ideologies are best represented as ethical doctrines which afford the possibility of the dogmatic appraisal of political activity and circumstance. In this chapter I consider the relationship of such doctrines to political style. The conclusion I argue to is that ideological understanding is intimately connected with political style. The connection consists in the evaluation of political style being appropriately made in the vocabulary of dogmatic appraisal. To begin the argument I consider what can be meant by political style.

1. By 'style' I understand a manner of doing in which the manner does not have a merely contingent or accidental relation to what is done but forms part of it. Consider the example of a dinner party at which one of the guests requires the salt and pepper. Clearly not just any way of bringing it about that he has them will do, and the marks of the appropriate way are not determined by convenience alone. As it happens the guest may be able to reach out, across the assembled dishes, and grab the articles, or he may signal his requirement by merely announcing 'salt, pepper'. Such actions are to be disapproved, however, because they disrupt the intercourse of the dinner table. In contrast, the polite request, 'could you please pass the salt and pepper' does not merely lessen disruption to such intercourse, it contributes to it, forming, as it does, a natural part of the activity of dining, an activity which bears little resemblance to the mere intake of bodily sustenance.

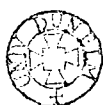
The point of this example is the same as that made by Oakeshott in

his distinction between riding a bicycle and propelling one. His discussion in 'Rational conduct'¹ shows not only that practical reason is not exclusively instrumental, but that this understanding only has sense in combination with a knowledge of how to behave: in the case of Oakeshott's example, a knowledge of what it is for a girl in Victorian England to ride a bicycle. The upshot of the argument is that although, semantically, we may distinguish between what is done, and the style or manner in which it is done, such a division is apt to make us lose sight of their specific combination which is the mark of rationality in doing.

Consider the activity of political deliberation. The outcome of such deliberation is, in its principal part, a decision as to the passing of legislation. A law sets out conditions which are to be complied with by the citizens of a state, and it cannot be doubted that a matter of principal concern is that those conditions be right or reasonable. However it is an error to think that this consideration alone could occasion the vexed question of political obligation, why should laws be complied with? For a response to this question is incomplete - and thereby unsatisfactory - if it refers solely to the 'content' of the legislation. It ignores the context of political authority or constitution. In other words, the question of political obligation cannot be adequately responded to in abstraction from attending to the manner in which legislation is passed. As I argued in Chapter 2, the idea of political authority, and, ex hypothesi, the question of political obligation make no sense without such a reference, without, that is, reference to a constitution:

For a 'constitution' is that in which rulers and subjects express their beliefs about the authority of a Government².

My conclusion is, then, that given that it is logically necessary to political authority that it command the respect of acknowledgement, such respect may be forthcoming in terms of the style or manner of political deliberation.



Now, just as a Victorian girl's knowledge of how to behave is exhibited in some degree, in just how she rode her bicycle, so a political style or manner is manifest in political deliberation. In the following discussion I consider the constitution of such deliberation from the point of view of its manner. I do this with a view to showing the relevance of ideology to politics, but I build this discussion around an analogy: the place of architecture in political life. I begin by speaking in general terms of architectural experience.

2. Within the aesthetic realm architecture occupies a somewhat peculiar position. At first glance this peculiarity is marked by the predominantly public character of architecture. In contrast, say, to novels or paintings, architecture has a direct relationship to human activity. The experience of it does not principally occur in the distraction of contemplation. It is in this sense that architecture may be termed a 'practical art'. However its practicality is not to be found, straightforwardly, in its utility. Rather, architecture, perhaps more than any other art, marks the appearance of the aesthetic in human conduct. We may, as it happens, admire the absence of all but 'functional' considerations in architecture. But such an admiration is aesthetic, for it is not function, but the idea of function which appeals, and such an idea may not correspond to any actual function. Architecture is not merely a set of contrived physical surroundings to human activity which have either a functional or disfunctional relation to it; consequently architectural experience is not an experience of that which surrounds considered from the standpoint of utility. Rather, such experience, as the exhibition of aesthetic understanding, is of surroundings as satisfactorily related not only in terms of themselves, but in regard to an activity engaged in terms of its style or manner. In other words, architecture is integral to human activity in terms of the activity's

meaning.

Thus far my remarks have been stipulative. In order to allay any objections to their arbitrariness I will now consider some examples. I begin with an instance of human activity which is typically grand.

A coronation is a ceremony usually marked by a peculiar mixture of dignity, splendour and solemnity. The distinctive style of the occasion is constituted by forms of dress, rituals, conventions, laws, and religious beliefs and procedures. But this is not all. It is clear, I think, that the building in which the ceremony takes place also determines what that ceremony is, and does not stand in a merely contingent or functional relationship to it. The opponent of monarchy must needs find himself obliged to denigrate the entire symbolism of this institution; and this will include the loftiness which, for example, is contributed to the crowning of the British monarch by its taking place in Westminster Abbey.

A coronation is, perhaps, the paradigm example of an event in which it is senseless to separate the substance and manner of the activities engaged in. Loftiness and grandeur are not merely appendages to the occasion. The tone and colour of the event are integral to its political meaning. It is not an event that the sentiments can ignore. And this may, indeed be the point, as it was for Burke:

There ought to be a system of manners in every nation
which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish.
To make us love our country our country ought to be
lovely.³

What is most interesting about this suggestion of Burke's is the juxtaposition of the terms 'love' and 'lovely', which forms in the mind a connection between the ethical and the aesthetic. What Burke recognises is that a style or manner may picture the ethical significance of activity, may reveal it to the agents concerned. The terms 'picture' and 'reveal' emphasise the practical character of the experience. The constitution of a style or

manner of an activity reveals its ethical significance. From the point of view of theory, it makes that activity what it is.

At this point it may be objected to my discussion that its upshot is insufficiently general. For sure, politics does have ceremonial aspects, but such ceremony is merely an adjunct of politics, it is not its substance, and when we depart from ceremony so we depart from the considerations, say, of architecture. In reply to this consider two examples which, I think, rebut the objection.

Take, first, the deliberative style of the House of Commons, the political forum of the representatives (not the delegates) of the various parliamentary constituencies of the United Kingdom. The style of debate is adversarial. The opposed, banked seats symbolise and facilitate the working of Government and Opposition, of Front and Back Benches, Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet. The parallel seating makes clear the lines of opposition and allows and locates the barracking which to the unsympathetic appears as nothing more than childish banter. In the middle of the House is the Speaker. First, he is required to keep order, to maintain the civility which is sometimes, quite naturally, pushed to the limit; secondly, remarks are addressed through him, signalling a divide which it is possible to bridge only by the acknowledgement of formality. If this picture is no mere contrivance (and it seems to me that it is a natural picture) we may conclude that the spatial arrangements of the House of Commons can be seen as marks of a deliberative style.

My second example concerns the context of voting. I take it from the somewhat topical debate as to whether trade union ballots should be conducted by show of hands or by postal ballot.

One argument that has been put forward in favour of the postal ballot system is that it avoids the possibility of intimidation of, or other pressures on, those who would vote in ways not approved by the violent or vociferous.

This point is obvious enough, yet its plainness may obscure a more subtle consideration, and that is that the marking of a ballot paper in a domestic circumstance is a different kind of act from raising a hand at a public meeting. The issue - what is being voted upon - may be the same, but the character that an issue has, and, more importantly, the character that deliberation upon it has are significantly altered by the circumstances of proposal and discussion.

To vote on a union proposal surrounded by fellow workers, either adjacent to , or in the confines of an industrial complex, is a different matter from deliberating upon which way to mark a ballot paper in the snugness of domestic circumstances, especially if those circumstances are familial . In other words, legislation to ensure postal ballot arrangements for Union decisions would effect a change in the style or manner of deliberation as to which way to vote. The context of the public is substituted for by the context of the private. To say that this would alienate people from their identities as industrial workers is, I suppose, plainly true, but the force of such a remark is rhetorical: for this may be just what is desired or approved. It replaces the pit-head or the blast furnace with an altogether different symbolism: the three-piece suite, the colour television and the electricity and gas bills. While in the industrial setting the ideal of solidarity seems fitting, in the domestic circumstance responsibilities are high-lighted.

In the above discussion I have argued that architectural experience is an understanding of what symbolises and facilitates, and that, as such, architecture can be seen as integral to a style or manner of activity. Such a conclusion is, I think, significant because the manner of political deliberation and activity is conceptually related to its authority. Architecture may picture or reveal that authority. In the words of Burke: "to make us love our country our country ought to be lovely". This said

I consider how, analogously, ideologies can picture or reveal political manners (or fail to do so) thus symbolising, facilitating and enhancing the authority of such manners.

3. In this section I argue that the reflective images of ideological understandings (see chapter 5) symbolise and facilitate manners of political practice and, thereby, contribute to their authority.

Consider, for example, the ideological doctrine of racialism: a doctrine which holds that the moral and intellectual capacities of people are determined racially and that races can be "ranked" accordingly. In Britain today such a doctrine is subscribed to by members of the National Front and the British Movement, and it is employed in justification of one of their policy proposals: the repatriation of immigrant sections of the United Kingdom population. Now, such a policy proposal may receive justification from a doctrine or doctrines which are distinct from the racialist one. For instance, Enoch Powell has supported, on numerous occasions, a policy of repatriation, but he has not done so on racialist grounds. (Racialism is not a policy, but a form of justification for policies). Powell has argued a recognisably conservative case: the political well-being of a state requires, to some substantial degree, a homogeneity of culture in its subjects, and this, in the case of the United Kingdom, is threatened by immigration. Here, then, are two distinct doctrines employed in the commending of the same policy.

I am not here concerned with the policy as such, what I examine is how it may be considered as a political policy, that is, at how it may appropriately arise in a political forum. I shall argue that there is sense in the judgement that the ideological vocabulary which is given in the racialist doctrine is inappropriate to the political manner of British government. This is not because of the "ideological hegemony" of anti-

racialist doctrines such as liberalism or socialism, but because the vocabulary of racialism does not fit, or cohere with, what I shall term the civil manner of political deliberation in this country. (It may well be, indeed probably is the case, that racialism is an indefensible doctrine, and that its espousers are intellectually and morally defective, but that is not my concern here. See chapter 6)

To describe British political practice as democratic is, of course, exceedingly limp. What needs to be spelled out is the manner of deliberation which precedes a vote. Theoretically, a law could be passed which effected the repatriation of the immigrant population of the United Kingdom, but in so far as such a proposal received justification from a racialist doctrine the character of political deliberation and voting in this country work against this possibility being realised. And the reason is, simply, that the tenets of racialism do not cohere with the civil manner of political deliberation.

A racialist doctrine, when applied to politics, implies that the integrity of a state is to be defined in terms of a people or race, for example, the German "Volk" or Aryan race. The class of people falling outside such designations do not belong, are not, properly speaking, members of the state. They may be the objects of political considerations, but they cannot legitimately ^{be} involved in it. They cannot enjoy a political identity with a recognised role within the state. Such a position does not cohere with the character of British political practice for the following reasons.

Members of Parliament do not qualify as rulers of the United Kingdom in virtue of the integrity of their racial stock. They represent constituencies and a person falls within the confines of a constituency because of a legal rule stating that he resides there, or has some other relevant connection with it. It follows from this that for politicians to be interested in the

well-being of the polity is for them to be interested in the well-being of the constituents. It is clear that this excludes discrimination on racialist grounds, for a racialist doctrine implies that a polity cannot be defined in such a way. My conclusion is, then, that the ideology of racialism cannot facilitate or symbolise the style or manner of political practice in Britain.

The consequences of this present us with what are, theoretically, two alternatives. The lack of coherence between ideological doctrine and political practice may mean that the doctrine lacks political substance, in that it is not one that can appear in a political forum, or, adherence to it may detract from the authority of a political practice by indicating the inappropriateness of its manner of deliberation. We witness something of the latter possibility in Hitler's rise to power.

The above considerations enable us, I think, to recognise the following points. First, ideological understanding consists of the employment of a doctrinally informed vocabulary in order to evaluate legal arrangements. Secondly, the authority of such arrangements is bound up with the manner in which they are brought about. Thirdly, that manner will itself be the concern of ideological understanding in that ideologies are related to the constitution of a political practice in terms of their facilitating and symbolising it. Such a conclusion is significant because it relates ideology to the authority of law. To conclude this section I want to make one last point about the connection between deliberative manner and the authority of law.

The connection I have sought to describe between ideology, manner of political activity and the authority of law can, in part, be seen as a generalisation and extension of the argument made by the Athenian in Book IV of Plato's The Laws, in his discussion of legislative preambles. For Plato such preambles are rhetorical justifications of the conditions of

conduct set out in laws. They are attempts to persuade people of the wisdom of laws. This double-element of law is important not principally because it sets out why the conditions demanded in law are reasonable or sensible (which may always be open to debate), but because the preamble - consisting of a persuasive address - is a ceremony. Talking of the legislator the Athenian asks rhetorically:

Is he to say without ceremony what one should and should not do, and simply threaten the penalty for disobedience before passing on to the next law, without adding to his statutes a single word of encouragement or persuasion⁴.

The integral nature of the preamble to law, in short, its ceremonial function, is clearly implied by Plato. He makes deliberate play upon the two meanings of the Greek work nomoi, meaning both 'laws' and 'melodies'; a legislative preamble is analogous to a musical prelude.

I have generalised Plato's point, claiming that political deliberation, in terms of its manner, can be seen as performing the same function as legislative preambles. It affords legislation a certain authority. Such manners are the objects of doctrinal appraisals. They appear as manners to be approved or disapproved in terms of the tenets of ideological doctrines.

4. The following objection may be made to the argument so far: the connection between ideological doctrines and political manners is a contingent one; there can be no more than an association between a political style and ideological doctrines. In this case political styles and ideologies do not fit one another. For example, racialist justifications of political proposals would not be countenanced in the House of Commons because - and this is contingent - its members are of such a persuasion as to be opposed to racialist doctrine. However there can be no a priori objection to the possibility of racialist ideology informing British political practice. The manners of British political practice are not logically contradicted by the

tenets of racialist doctrine.

This objection rests on the distinction between the contingency of association ('As it happens British politicians are not racilaists') and the necessity of exclusion ('There is a contradiction between British parliamentary democracy and racialist doctrine'). I have been at some some pains to avoid either horn of this dilemma, which I regard as a false one. To do this I have chosen to use the term 'coherence' rather than the terms 'association' or 'entailment'. By coherence I mean a relationship which may be elucidated rhetorically. I now consider what can be meant by the rhetorical elucidation of a relationship. To do this I distinguish between rhetorical and technical recommendations.

When discussing architectural experience I claimed that in relation to human activity architecture may complement that activity whatever it may be. This it may do by being in correct relationship with the manner in which an activity is carried out. This is what is meant by saying that architecture may facilitate and symbolise the character of an activity. In other words, architecture can be seen as constitutive of the style or manner of activity, for example, the grandeur and solemnity of a coronation.

For an architect, then, the question will arise as to the fittingness of his designs to the activities that will occur, say, within a building. And this is where his sensibility, as distinct from his technical knowledge will come in to play. He will have to decide upon certain structures and details as against others, and in this he does not have a theory from which to derive his decisions and recommendations, but will have an understanding of a doctrine or something resembling it. I want now to give some reasons for this last point. I do so by contrasting technical and rhetorical prescriptions or recommendations.

A technical recommendation is one that is justifiable on the grounds that the course of action or circumstance enjoined is effective in bringing

about a desired end. Such recommendations may be based on experience - 'sow your carrots and potatoes now, and you will have a good crop by August' - or they may be based on a theory explaining the connection between events and outcomes, for example, a causal theory indicating the degree of resistance of a material to certain forms of corrosion. (See chapter 1). The important characteristic of such recommendations is that they deal exclusively in means not ends. A doctor, for example, may give recommendations which, if taken up, conduce to a person's health, but he cannot, qua doctor, tell you to aim at health.

In contrast, the character of a rhetorically justified recommendation is seen in the futility of attempting to separate means and ends. A rhetorical elucidation involves circularity. In recommending a certain style or form of architecture we are tacitly assuming or affirming the desirability of a certain style or manner of activity. It is this whole that has to be displayed in terms of its attractiveness. And a necessary condition for such attractiveness is the coherence of a building with the activities it surrounds. Rhetorical justification, then, is concerned to elucidate the coherence of relationships. This is not a technical or theoretically informed exercise; nor is it concerned with contingent association: for what is merely contingently connected the consideration of coherence, ex hypothesi, cannot arise.

To conclude this chapter I consider an example which displays the coherence of doctrine and manners of political practice. The illustration I have chosen is National Socialism. This is, perhaps, a hackneyed case, but it has the advantages of being vivid.

During Hitler's rule in Germany striking and large scale displays were of political importance, as also were the agencies of propaganda: literature, press, film and radio. Their importance has been the object of much concern, particularly within the confines of sociology and social psychology. Such concern may be thought to have explanatory implications, for these were some

of the means by which Hitler ensured and exercised his dictatorship. The explanatory role of such implications is afforded by the question, 'What made it possible for Hitler to rule as he did?'; one answer, among others, to this question is that he was able to rule because of his wholesale use of mass meetings and propaganda.

Such an explanation has an ideological appeal. It seems natural to the liberal mind that a rule which was tyrannical in form and barbarous in substance should be seen as the outcome of irrational political practices: of mass hysteria and the lies and distortions of propaganda. But such an explanation, whatever its comforts, seems to me to be suspect; it fails to recognise that the ideology of National Socialism set up these practices as rational. (Just as liberalism sets up the rationality of representative democracy). Hitler's ruling cannot be explained in terms of his employing certain means in his exercise and pursuit of power. Rather, what in such explanations are seen as means are actually manners of political practice prescribed in Nazi ideology, an ideology which described what, from the point of view of its legitimacy, Hitler's power consisted in. The rationality of the manners of political practice in Nazi Germany were internal to the ideology. Supporters of Hitler were only dupes when viewed from the vantage point of other ideologies.

This internality can be seen in the way in which Nazi practices symbolised and facilitated the political identities described in National Socialist ideology. Führer and Volk, leader and people: such a relationship is transparent and all encompassing in the surroundings of a mass address and interchange.⁵ The categorical 'Ja oder Nein' signifying the determination of the German people, implies that rules and procedures of debate and decision are irrelevant to, and corruptive of, authentic political determination; irrelevant because the German people, being a 'people', are necessarily of one will, and corruptive because such rules are merely the opportunity for

dissembling. Propaganda, the homogenizing of political literacy, also has a symbolic role: it reveals the unity of the German race and makes startlingly clear what had not been clear before the Führer: that there was an insidious Jewish conspiracy. That this could now be so clearly seen was a testament to Hitler's qualities of leadership.

The relationship of ideology and political manners can be further evidenced in other political movements by considering the inappropriateness of certain questions. There is a definite sense in which it is stupid to ask, in a tone of neutral inquiry, a radical feminist why men should be excluded from meetings of the Women's movement; 'stupid' because it displays a lack of political literacy. For it is not only that a male presence does not conduce to the purposes of such meetings, rather, it is difficult to see that there would be meetings of the Woman's Movement without the symbolising and facilitating of feminist ideology in separatist styles. Something similar can be seen in the case of civil disobedience. To ask of this style of dissent why it is "civil" shows misunderstanding, for that it is public and by and large peaceful indicates nothing more than a pun. Its "civility" is ideological. It is specified in a doctrinal conception of the relation of law, subjects and rulers to something which transcends and sets limits to those relationships.

The conclusion of this chapter, then, is that the rationality of political manners and styles cannot be determined without reference to the ideological doctrines which they facilitate and symbolise. In the next chapter I consider a different aspect of ideology, namely its subjectivity. Such discussion is not distinct from questions of manner and style for the reason that once again I shall be at pains to emphasise the non-instrumental character of ideological thinking and its constitution of political identity.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. 'Rational Conduct', in M. Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics, London, Methuen, 1962.
2. M. Oakeshott, On Human Conduct, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975, p.189.
3. E. Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, ed. C.C. O'Brien, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1969, 1972.
4. Plato, The Laws, trans. T.J. Saunders, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1975, p.181.
5. The apotheosis of the mass meeting is probably to be found in the Nuremberg rallies:

To see the films of the Nuremberg rallies even today is to be recaptured by the hypnotic effect of thousands of men marching in perfect order, the music of the massed bands, the forest of standards and flags, the vast perspectives of the stadium, the smoking torches, the dome of searchlights. The sense of power, of force and unity was irresistible, and all converged with a mounting crescendo of excitement on the supreme moment when the Führer himself made his entry.

(Alan Bullock, Hitler, a Study in Tyranny, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1962, p.379). Bullock comments: "Every device for heightening the emotional intensity, every trick of the theatre was used". (ibid.). What Bullock has done is elucidate the rallies in terms of their psychological effects. He makes no reference to ideology; but what we can recognise (but not feel) is the coherence of the rallies with national socialist ideology. Historically, it was more than theatre, more than device, which was afoot.

CHAPTER FIVE: POLITICAL PRACTICE AND REFLECTION

The region of the ethical, then, is a region of diverse, certainly incompatible and possibly conflicting ideal images or pictures of a human life, or of human life; and it is a region in which many such incompatible pictures may secure at least the imaginative, though doubtless not often the practical, allegiance of a single person.

- P.F. Strawson

In this chapter I consider the character of ideological understanding and its relationship to political activity by locating it within the manner of thinking known as reflection. I consider the questions, what is the nature of reflection? and what is its relation to conduct? I begin by considering, briefly, the nature of human conduct.

1. Human conduct is distinguishable from other forms of action and event in that it is the outcome of intelligent activity: the activity of deliberation, or thought about what should be done. The character of such deliberation varies from sphere to sphere. We can examine the deliberations of a judge, a general, a politician or a bishop and not expect them to be employing the same kind of arguments. Formally speaking, though, all deliberation has an end, and that end is expressed in the question, what is to be done? On one account any answer to this question will be rational if it is based upon an understanding of the circumstances of any proposed action, and of the effects it will have. For example, an order issued by a general will be sound if, in his deliberation, he has shown cognizance of the tactical and strategic possibilities of the circumstances of his action and of its possible effects in terms of the securing of victory. This example illustrates a simple model of rational action, that is, an action which is decided upon; it is one in which a person deliberates with a view to determining the best means to a

given end. (I note, here, that an end is not fixed and determinate prior to action. An end is a rational goal, and will be responsive to changes in the circumstances which make achievement possible. Deliberation is not something continually aiming at a fixed point; as circumstances change so, rationally, do ends.)

The object of deliberation is, then, the determination of means towards ends. Someone who deliberates is someone who reasons from the beliefs he has about the circumstances of his proposed action and what effects it will have. Having reasoned from such beliefs he arrives at a set of beliefs which he can act upon.

One implication of this understanding of deliberation is that the agent stands to the world as an individual who finds that circumstances are either favourable or unfavourable to the ends he wants to pursue. His world has something of the character of a state of nature. It is a world he can act upon and which acts upon him. His beliefs about it are beliefs which affect deliberation solely in the sense that they are beliefs about relevant circumstances. He is moved to deliberation only in terms of ends sought; he does not reason in the context of an identity that is acquired in anyway save by reference to the ends he seeks. Like Hobbes's man in a state of nature he has no moral identity which he is rationally obliged to consider in his deliberations.

If we introduce, or postulate, moral identity in our account of human conduct our conception of deliberation will change. If agency is regarded as an amoral notion then the context or natural movement of deliberation is derived from an end sought. The rationality of any action will derive from the beliefs which an agent has about the circumstances and effects of the action. If we attribute moral identity to agency or conduct we can no longer assent to this account; for now the context of deliberation will not derive solely from the end sought, but also from the form of association with other persons which specifies the moral identity. This point can be clarified by

referring to Hobbes's Leviathan. In the state of nature a man cannot act unjustly for the laws of nature oblige only in foro interno. After the covenant bringing about the sovereign men can act unjustly. By bringing it about that the laws of nature oblige in foro externo they constitute association between each other. Such association is moral in character, albeit in Hobbes, because of his account of human nature, limited or relative.

If, then, we say that human conduct has a moral character we imply that the context of deliberation is derived not solely from an end sought but also from the moral identity which a person has because of his association with other people. Given what has been noted above, it follows also that ends, the rational goals of agency, should be responsive to this identity for we cannot determine an end as rational without reference to the identity of the person who would pursue it. Given the above considerations I pass on to a more detailed consideration of the context of deliberation as it is determined by moral association.

Moral association between people is multifarious, but it is possible to make some general statements about its character. It is a form of relationship between people in which the pursuance of ends is secondary to the fact of relationship. It is relationship governed by rules and conventions to be acknowledged as obligations incumbent upon its participants. Such rules and conventions may congeal into practices, giving some certainty of identity to an agent, or may even be established in terms of an institution conferring the benefits and restrictions of membership. Such practices and institutions determine moral identity. It is in this sense that they determine the context of deliberation. (It is difficult to draw a clear line of distinction between the ideas of practice and institution; it can, perhaps, be done by noting that we talk naturally of membership of an institution but not of a practice. More importantly, we can think of the difference in terms of an institution being established while a practice confers less security of

identity. According to this criterion, for example, courtship would be a practice while marriage would be an institution: to be married is to enjoy the security of an established identity.)

My position then, is that the context of deliberation is partially determined by the moral identity of an agent. Such an identity is specified in rules and conventions marking out obligations and rights to be respectively acknowledged and enjoyed. These rules and conventions may congeal in a practice or be established in an institution. With these considerations in mind it is possible to give a brief sketch of political activity.

Limply put, politics is the activity of determining the legal arrangements of a society understood as a state. As politics is not merely the exercise of power and society not only association between people of similar if not identical moral persuasion, political activity is generally engagement carried on within practices and institutions. Certain sociological and legal factors give rise to establishment. Political activity, as we know it, tends towards the security of practice and institution. (I am not denying here that there are certain manners of political activity which seek to enact the disbelief in practice and institution, but such activity tends to be either violent - thereby setting aside the idea of a polity - or evanescent and ineffective.) The idea of a polity implies ruler(s) and ruled and that relationship tends to be constituted within practices and institutions. These set out the substance of the moral identities postulated in such relationship. Political practices and institutions provide, then, the moral contexts of deliberation. A corollary of this is that a person's membership of an institution or participation in a practice cannot be regarded merely as a means but must be acknowledged as an end in itself. From this we can derive a formal definition of political legitimacy. The legitimacy of rule will be found in the moral character of the office or station of the ruler, for it is the constitution of this office or station which sets up the

relationship of rulers and ruled.

At this point I want to summarise the principal points of the above discussion. Having done so I will note some further characteristics of deliberation before passing on to a consideration of reflection.

First, when conduct is moral in character and not merely instrumental we presuppose association between people. Secondly, such association is specified in terms of rules and conventions. These may congeal into a practice or be established as institutions. Thirdly, a person's moral identity is enacted in conduct; it forms the context of his deliberations. We deliberate not only in terms of the consideration of possible responses to circumstances, but also in terms of the identity that is revealed in such responses. We aim at the fulfilment of that identity. As an example of this last point consider Augustine's arguments for claiming that the civil powers should be used to combat heresy and compel membership of the true Church. At the heart of his argument is the thought that justice is giving each his due. True justice, for Augustine, is not of this world; it involves giving God his due. A king, therefore, must render service unto God. We have here a characterisation of kingship; it provides a context of deliberation in that a king must consider in his deliberations what is due to God and act accordingly.

Given the above account what are the considerabilities of deliberation?

First, deliberation is not merely the decision to pursue an end and the subsequent determination of the best means to that end. For an end is a rational goal and its rationality cannot be judged in abstraction from a consideration of the circumstances in which it may be pursued.

Secondly, no end can be rational if it is not satisfying to the individual who pursues it. Deliberation occurs in the context of the idea of such satisfaction.

Thirdly, where there is moral association the identity of an individual is determined not merely in terms of his particular pursuit of felicity, but

in terms of the rules and conventions constituting association. If this is the case than what counts as a rational goal will be circumscribed or determined by that identity. (Bringing heretics into the church was a rational goal for a ruler understood in terms of Augustine's conception of kingship.)

From these three points we can see, I think, that deliberation presupposing moral association involves consideration within two logically discrete spheres. First, deliberation makes reference to the circumstances of proposed action. Secondly, it makes reference to the moral identity to be fulfilled or enacted in action. In logic, then, we can distinguish the circumstances and context of deliberation, and we can characterise that distinction in terms of two kinds of belief. Beliefs about circumstances and beliefs about the identity to be fulfilled or enacted in conduct. Further, we can give some account of the nature of these beliefs by considering the kinds of scrutiny appropriate to each.

It is clear, I think, that beliefs about the circumstances of action are either true or false, accurate or inaccurate, or well or ill-founded. The relevant form of scrutiny of such beliefs then is investigation. A general believes that the enemy's forces to the south are composed of two battalions. The Prime Minister believes that the closure of four collieries in County Durham will be responded to by a national mineworkers' strike. What can we say of these beliefs? Only that they are true or false, accurate or inaccurate, or well- or ill-grounded. And we can only say ^{these} things if we carry out investigations as to what is the case. However, when we turn to the scrutiny of beliefs about moral identities to be fulfilled or enacted in conduct things are not so clear. Scrutiny will have, formally, the same goal - reasonable belief - but in what form does such scrutiny take? In the following discussion I shall attempt to answer this question by considering the nature of 'ethical reflection'.

2. By reflection I understand the consideration of an identity carried out in terms of an image or images of that identity. In order to elucidate the nature of these images I consider, initially, their occurrence in the form of pictures.

The understanding of a picture consists in the contemplation of its images. Reflection has a contemplative aspect, but it is mediated by the attempt to understand the self in terms of those images. Consider, for example, a picture of a human event or circumstance. Such a picture presents, to the contemplative mind, images of the styles and manners in which people relate, and of their preoccupations. The contemplation of such images is aesthetic in character, but the meaning of such images is not, I think, necessarily confined to that mode; not all consideration of a practical kind is necessarily an impertinent intrusion which distracts or corrupts our attention. There is, of course, no conceptual connection between the images which make up a painting and its market value, but an attempt at self-understanding in terms of the images of a painting is possible only in terms of the understanding of meaningful connections between the self and the images attended to. There are no connections in terms of meaning between the images composing Leonardo da Vinci's 'Mona Lisa' and the facts that it hangs in the Louvre and would fetch an enormous sum on the open market. However, there is a connection which is conceptual between Picasso's 'Guernica' and his stipulation that it should not return to Spain until that country enjoyed democracy. In other words, that painting enjoys an ideological, or intra-practical value which is not independent of the images which compose it.

This last claim is open to the following objection. What establishes the connection between the painting 'Guernica' and the fact of Spain enjoying or failing to enjoy democracy is not the images which compose it, but Picasso's stipulation. This is a stipulation he can make not in terms of being an artist but only in terms of his estate. If this is so then the

connection between the images which compose the picture and the possibilities of Spanish self-understanding is not a meaningful but a contingent one, contingent upon the stipulation of Picasso. In order to answer this objection I want to consider what it would be to either approve or appreciate the stipulation.

One of the ways in which it can be appreciated is to understand the painting as a symbolic expression of Picasso's horror at the bombing of Guernica: its circumstances and manner. The question arises as to what makes such an expression appropriate, for if the expression is symbolic we look for some connection between the symbol and what is symbolised. The connection in this instance can only be between the horror and the images which compose 'Guernica', not the painting as a conditionally alienated part of Picasso's estate. Such symbolic expression presupposes the possibility of the images of a picture having an intra-practical value.

The above considerations suggest, I think, the following idea of reflection: it is the understanding of the self in terms of images that capture its identity. Given also that the self is a moral identity enacted and fulfilled in conduct it follows that the images of the reflective consciousness will be images of that conduct, images capturing the self in conduct. These images are not themselves that conduct, they have an ideal character and stand in a prescriptive relation to it. It is this prescriptive relation which I now want to examine.

Prescriptions, generally, are the outcomes of deliberation. They enjoin substantive actions and are of the form 'Do this' or 'Do not do this'. The prescriptions belonging to the reflective sphere are different, they enjoin not actions, but ways of seeing actions. For example, if I say to someone, 'Punish him' I urge an action on his part, but if I say 'See this as a punishment', I am prescribing an ethical understanding of an action: I prescribe the employment of a certain image in order to determine the ethical character of conduct. Just such reflective prescription can be

found within the ideology of feminism, where the view has been advanced that opposition to abortion may be the outcome of a male desire to punish women for sexual transgression.

This provides an image of the ethical character of pregnancy, and it is one which shifts the focus of attention from, for example, the rights of the unborn to the justice or injustice of a patriarchal relationship. The prescription, 'See this as a punishment', if taken up, provides a distinctive manner of understanding pregnancy and abortion; an understanding which may be enacted in conduct. The question then arises: what is involved in the taking up of such prescriptions? A person takes up a prescription to do something if he acts in response to it. A prescription to see things in a certain way is taken up, I think, in adherence. Before examining this notion with a view to further elucidating the character of reflection I want to recapitulate some principal points of the discussion so far.

First, to speak of the context of deliberation is to refer to the moral identity which an agent enacts or fulfils in conduct. Secondly, this presupposes moral association, sometimes congealed in a practice or established in institutions, and moral association is what it is because it is treated as an end not as a means. Thirdly, reflective understanding attends to the identity enacted and fulfilled in agency by attempting to capture it in terms of images. The question arises, then, of the prescriptive ground connecting the images of reflection to the moral identity of an agent. This ground is to be found, I think, in adherence, by which I understand the subjective aspect of human conduct in terms of that conduct being moral. It is adherence to a set of images which commits an agent (from the subjective point of view) to the enactment or fulfilment of a moral identity. (Analogously, it is assent to propositions about the circumstances of deliberation which commits an agent to acting upon those propositions.) Adherence is the relationship between a set of images and

moral identity. It is a form of non-voluntary commitment to act in a certain way. It sets up the identity of the self prior to deliberation. Reflection is the attempt to understand that identity; it specifies the content of adherence, or, what a person understands himself to be in adherence. As an example of this consider the absolute prohibition of adultery in the Christian religion. This is an image of the sexual inviolability of the family; adherence to it commits a husband or wife to never deliberating about with whom, when and where to commit adultery.

I claimed above that adherence was the subjective aspect of human conduct, thus implying that it has an objective side. That side is composed of the rules and conventions which bind and confer rights upon persons. The question arises, then, of the relationship between the subjective and objective aspects of conduct. I think that this can best be elucidated by considering how adherence can undermine or sustain existing terms of conduct.

The considerabilities of moral agency appear as obligations and rights in conduct. Obligations are rational entities in that they commend themselves to acknowledgement by an agent. Their confines set limits to rational conduct. If this is so then, ideally, obligations set limits to what can rationally be deliberated. A person may deliberate as to how he should respond to certain circumstances but he cannot deliberate as to how he should act wrongly. Lest this last point appear obscure consider the following example. Say I deliberately override my fair on a bus. If this is noted by the bus conductor he may proceed to penalise me for this offence. In short, I may be punished. If I escape detection then such punishment does not come my way, but that it does not is contingent, the fact remains that it should. Punishment is not something I can will to suffer, yet it should occur if I have offended. If this is so I cannot will to do wrong, and what I cannot will to do I cannot deliberate upon how to do. The realisation of this Socratic position postulates a correspondence between the rules and conventions constituting moral agency and the self-understanding of an agent specified

in terms of his adherence in the reflective sphere. Such a correspondence can be either sustained or undermined by the reflective images capturing the identity of moral agency. What is sustained or undermined is the legitimacy of the existing terms of moral association.

Moral association is persons enacting and fulfilling identities in terms of certain conditions. In reflection those conditions are scrutinised in the light of certain images. Such reflection reveals how substantive moral association satisfies or fails to satisfy a person's nature. So, in adherence, a person will have a subjective sense of the terms of moral association being rational or irrational. If he sees them as rational then he is able to acknowledge them as the outward symbols of the sentiments in which he acts (that is, the identity he enacts or fulfils). In this way moral association is sustained. It is undermined in a lack of correspondence between the terms of moral association and the sentiments of action. Such a circumstance is tragically evidenced in a marriage in which there is no longer mutual love, where one partner finds himself alienated from the forms of enactment and fulfilment of the identity prescribed in the institution of marriage. Political practices and institutions may also suffer an analogous fate. And it is to the relationship of adherence and political practices and institutions that I now turn.

It belongs to the natural movement of reflective understandings of political association to variously sustain or subvert existing political practice understood as moral association. This is because such association is an end and not a means, and engagement within it involves the enactment or fulfilment of a self-understood identity. That identity may be the object of reflective consideration which generates adherence - the subjective aspect of moral agency. It is in this sphere that the sentiments in which a person should act are specified. To sustain association in reflection is to indicate that its conditions are the outward form of such sentiments; to subvert

it is to say that the conditions have no such character and are alien to a person's identity. (And association which is alien is no association at all.)

These two positions are, of course, extremes, evidenced perhaps only in the ideal state of Plato's Laws and the nihilistic anarchism which would sunder every political bond. No realistic political ideology can aim at such extremes, whatever the apocalyptic utterances of its adherents. (One thinks here of Rosa Luxemburg's dramatic alternatives: the victory of socialism or the collapse into barbarism.) In various ways conservatives, liberals and socialists have sustained and undermined political practices, producing ideological images which clothe changes with a continuity which makes them political. For example, Lenin's political achievement, if it was one¹, was possible because he gave the images of Marxism a certain authority for the Russian people; a revolution presupposes a political identity to be realised, in so far as that identity is lacking a revolution is nothing but a fraudulent coup d'état...

Political identity, in its subjective aspect, is to be found in adherence to images of political association. They specify the nature of moral enactment and fulfilment. To conclude this chapter I want to consider Plato's Crito as an example of such specification. One of the reasons I have chosen this text is its literary character; the justification for this will, I hope, emerge in my discussion.

3. In Plato's Crito Socrates is concerned to express his beliefs about the authority of the courts decision that he should die. These beliefs have a direct bearing upon his decision not to follow Crito's advice that he should escape from prison. The reasons Socrates advances for his decision to stay are various, but they revolve around a central point: that to escape would be a failure in the enactment and fulfilment of his moral identity. But

his
 what is/identity in this respect? It is given in his relationship to law.
 Socrates captures this relationship in three images: piety, the natural
 justice of keeping agreements and destruction.

A literary consideration of the place of these images in the Crito
 reveals that they are made peculiarly striking by the personification of
 the laws: they speak and reason with Socrates. Now, the question arises, is
 the personification of the laws a rhetorical device employed to persuade
 the reader of the justice of Socrates' account of his relationship to the
 state? For if it is then the demonstration of the correctness of the
 account is entirely another matter. Such a distinction, between persuasion
 and demonstration, would separate Plato's art from his argument. The view
 that I have advanced in this chapter, that moral association is captured in
 images, implies that such a distinction or separation is factitious. The
 personification of the laws is not the rhetorical form in which an understanding
 of political association is expressed, but is integral to the images Socrates
 employs to capture the moral character of that relationship. To accept
 this position is not to hold that the images may not be rationalised, but such
 rationalisation does not abstract a content from an otherwise unsuitable
 form, it merely no longer deals in images; and to no longer employ the
 images does not merely subtract from the force of Socrates' account it
 affects its sense as well. Why is this so?

In order to persuade us of the appropriateness of his images of political
 authority Socrates must show the relevance to law of what is proper in piety
 and the keeping of agreements, and what is abominable about destruction (in
 this case the precedence of the private over the public). Now, we show relevance
 by application and the application of such images to laws personalises them.
 For we are pious to our parents and forebears. (Socrates, just before his trial,
 implies that Euthyphro is guilty of impiety towards his father because he is
 about to charge him with manslaughter.) It is persons whom we treat unjustly.

And to destroy a person whom we should venerate is monstrous. It is not, then, merely a literary device but natural to the application of the images in the account that the laws should be personal and not abstract.

I have taken Plato's Crito as an illustration of my account of the reflective understanding of political association and its relationship to conduct. The account, however, is general in scope: it does not apply only to ideological texts which are overtly literary in form. In Marxism, for example, the image of historical process is of central importance. It gives a peculiar rationale to political practice: political conduct is enactment and fulfilment in terms of the particular individual becoming part of what is transcendent of him, i.e. the movements constituting that process. It is an image which is for the liberal anathema, implying as it does that political arrangements are in flux and relative to the circumstances of the particular stage of the process.

In this chapter I have described the reflective character of ideological thinking. Two aspects of deliberation were distinguished: the circumstances of agency and the context of agency. The latter concerns the moral identity to be enacted or fulfilled in conduct. Such an identity has both objective and subjective senses, and it is to the latter that reflection is peculiarly relevant. Reflection is the consideration of self-understanding in terms of images which capture the identity of the self. The relation of such consideration to conduct was presented in terms of the notion of adherence. Adherence makes the images of reflection intra-practical, and, in the case of political conduct, constitutes the ideological beliefs which an agent enacts.

This position may give rise to some disquiet. It may be thought that the emphasis on subjectivity renders ideological understanding arbitrary and non-objective. I do not think that this implication is well-founded. In the next chapter, therefore, I consider how ideology may be understood to be objective.

Note to Chapter 5

1. Michael Oakeshott doubts this: "And who, even if he could recognise himself as a member of the 'proletariat' and believed that a government had authority in virtue of its 'proletarian' composition or sympathies, could possibly connect this with the private enterprise usurpers, operators of the most fraudulent coup d'état of modern times, who have constituted the government of Russia for the past fifty years?"

M. Oakeshott, On Human Conduct, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975.

CHAPTER SIX: THE OBJECTIVITY OF IDEOLOGY

In the preceding chapters, I have elucidated the nature of ideological understanding by arguing that it is an ethical idiom concerned with the determination of political identity. To this end I have stressed its constitutive role in political life and also its subjectivity. I indicated in the last chapter that such an account may give rise to questions concerning the objectivity of ideology. This chapter addresses itself to such questions. The principal conclusion I argue to is that ideological understanding can be seen as objective relative to a polity. This is a special kind of objectivity and blandly stated it is obscure. Its character is derived from two perspectives: first, the general character of ethical understanding (of which ideology is a part) and, secondly, the nature of political association (which is the peculiar sphere of ideology). I examine the first in the context of a discussion of ethical relativism and consider the second in terms of those components of political association to which any ideology must address itself.

1: Relativism and Ethical Understanding

In this section I argue for a certain form of ethical relativism. To begin I discuss some of the points which have led me to argue to this conclusion.

First, I take it to be central to the idea of morality that it is possible, in relevant circumstances, to say of the

performance of an action that it is right or wrong. Secondly, I follow Aristotle in Book Five of the Ethics, in saying that the performance of the action must be voluntary. By this I mean that it was intended or meant. Thirdly, such a condition allows us to speak distinctively of moral responsibility for the performance of an action. It is distinctive in that we talk of the responsibility of a person or self. Now, these three points may lead us to think that there are moral laws binding on persons as such. On this view the idea that justice, say, is conventional is wrong:

Some philosophers are of opinion that justice is conventional in all its branches, arguing that a law of nature admits of no variation and operates in exactly the same way everywhere - thus fire burns here and in Persia - while rules of justice keep changing before our eyes. ¹

Such a circumstance, far from showing that justice is conventional or relative, indicates ignorance of what justice consists in. For instance, it is no objection to the U.N. Charter of Human Rights that as a description of the rights actually enjoyed by a substantial proportion of the world's population it is largely false. The charter has sense as a list of rights because it is thought that these are rights that people should enjoy qua persons. Whether, in their particular circumstances, they do or do not enjoy them is a problem of execution not determination.

The position that I have briefly sketched, that what is morally right or morally wrong is binding on persons

and is not therefore conventional or relative to the circumstances in which people actually find themselves, is, I think, confused. It is so for the following reason. Our concept of a person, or self, presupposes the concept of the capacity to intend to do something, and there are reasons why we are bound to admit that such a capacity is relative. This is the principal position I want to argue for in this chapter, and I do so with a view to endorsing Bradley's position in 'My Station and its Duties'.

If what is right here is wrong there, then all morality (such is the notion) becomes chance and convention, and so ceases. But 'my station and its duties' holds that unless morals varied there could be no morality; that a morality which was not relative would be futile...²

My first question, then, is, How does the idea of a person or self, presuppose the capacity to intend to do something? Before answering this question I want to clarify its implications. It is clear, I think, that the view that morality is not relative, but binding on persons qua persons, implies that what a person is morally capable of intending is to be derived from an account of what it is to be a person. The question I have posed commits me to saying that this view is confused. For, if the idea of a person presupposes the capacity to intend then we cannot give an account of what a person is in abstraction from reference to such a capacity, yet we are supposed to give an account of what that capacity is in terms of a prior idea of the person or self. Implied in my question, then, is the view that the moral self or

person to whom we attribute responsibility is relative to a capacity to intend. Why should we accept such a view? To have an intention is to see oneself in terms of one's future agency. If I say, 'I will go to Newcastle tomorrow' I see myself as an agent with a self, to use Michael Oakeshott's terms, to disclose and to enact. Now, although the intention presupposes a self to be disclosed and enacted, it is impossible, I think, to conceive of such a self independently of the capacity to intend. This thought can be put in the form of a question: if we have a being, such that it has no intentions how can we say that it is a person or has a self? For whatever the movements this being performs there is no singular reference we can make in order to attribute responsibility for those movements which does not form part of a causal chain. In the making of a moral judgement issuing in blame or praise we move from the performance of an action, via the attribution of intentionality, to the person whom we blame or praise. Without the notion of intentionality we could not move, or make reference, to a person whom is responsible, and if we cannot attribute responsibility we can have no idea of a determinate self. So although it is true to say that the self is revealed in intentional action the only criterion by which we can make reference to a person, and, indeed, the only way in which a person can be said to have self-knowledge, is the intention he had in doing what he did. There is no sense in talk of a self which is in principle inaccessible.

And since the only way in which we can refer to the moral self is by reference to intentional action, our idea of the self, as something to which we attribute responsibility, or of a person, presupposes the capacity to intend to do something. If, then, we are to talk of the relativity of morals we must needs inquire into the relativity of intentional capacity for this is our route to the object of moral praise and blame.

The formation of an intention requires that an agent have beliefs which he can employ so as to determine an action as reasonable or rational in the relevant circumstances. If someone does not have such beliefs he lacks the ability to intend to do something. It follows, then, that we may be able to give an account of the relativity of intentional capacity in terms of the relativity of belief. In the discussion which follows I shall also consider the relativity of performances. I approach these issues by exploring the idea of relativism in terms of the notion of explanation.

If we are interested in the explanation of events or circumstances then we presuppose that they are not autonomous but relative to other events or circumstances. Explanation proceeds by establishing links (rational or causal) between events and circumstances and what is causally or rationally prior to them. For the purposes of elucidation consider two examples. (1) We witness the following event: 'A

assaulting a police officer'. To explain we have to establish a link between it and some other circumstance or belief. Say we come up with the idea that A is drunk. If we conjoin this with the law-like generalisation 'Drunkenness causes violent behaviour', we have an explanation of the occurrence of the event. What we are claiming is that A's assaulting a police officer is relative to his being drunk. (2) 'B believes that a woman's place is in the home'; we may have an explanatory interest in this circumstance. The question, 'Why does B believe this?' is to be answered by establishing a link between that circumstance and some other event or circumstance. Say we hit upon B's jealousy of female success in the firm for which he works; if we combine this with a psychological law concerning the connection between emotion and thinking, then we have an explanation: B's belief is relative to his jealousy.

In both these examples we explain an event or circumstance by referring to what I shall call, very generally, the states of A and B. A's action and B's belief are relative, respectively, to their drunkenness and jealousy. In addition I note that in both the examples the explanations were of the causal kind. Being drunk is not a reason for being violent and jealousy is not a reason for a belief. This is not to say, however, that in both examples a rational explanation could not be given. It is possible to have a reason for assaulting a police officer and a reason for believing a woman's place is in the home. In these cases

too we can speak of the state of the agent or believer, but that state will be a rational not a natural one. Generally speaking, then, performances and beliefs (that is, assent to thoughts) are relative to the states (natural or rational) of the respective agents and believers. However, it takes but little to note that this account of relativity in terms of explanation is incomplete. If we define the enterprise of explanation as the establishing of links we imply that there are two things to be linked. Take the example of belief: what is to be explained is assent, but the explanation will not be satisfactory just by reference to what is causally or rationally prior to the assent, it also entails reference to the content of what is assented to, that is, the thought. Similarly, in the case of an event, a performance cannot be explained without reference to its content, what the action was. I shall argue, now, that this involves attributing to thoughts and actions a certain autonomy.

The point can, I think, be well made by considering the practice of excusing. If we view A's assaulting a police officer as relative to, or explainable by, his drunkenness, then we may be given to excuse it as an aberration, but the sense of such an excuse presupposes that the action A performed is the kind of action which may be excused, but not, for instance, commended. In other words, we must have an idea of the action apart from its performance. It is A's performance of the action which is

to be excused but what makes the excusing possible is the action; what makes excusing reasonable is A's drunkenness. We have then a distinction between performance and action, for it is the action, assaulting a police officer which makes excusing a possibility, not A's performance of it.

An analogous distinction may be made between beliefs and thoughts. It is B's belief that a woman's place is in the home which is to be explained (shown to be relative to some state of B), but in explaining this we do not explain the thought 'A woman's place is in the home'; we explain B's assent to it. For the explanation to work that thought must be autonomous or independent of B's assent to it. My conclusion is, then, that to talk of the relativity of a belief or a performance is not to talk of the relativity of a thought or an action. To recognise this distinction however, is not to say that thoughts and actions may not be relative in some other way.

Consider, for example, the action A performed: 'assaulting a police officer'. We can give the following true description of that action: 'Assaulting a police officer is a criminal offence'. Such a description asserts a relation between an action and a legal rule. Criminal law, then, tells us what that action is in terms of what it is relative to. Something similar can be said about thoughts. Take the thought that it is wrong to commit adultery. There are many ways in which this thought may be understood to be relative: within the context of the

Christian religion it can be seen as relative to a command of God; morally, we may think of the betrayal of an exclusive relationship; and legally adultery is grounds for divorce. The relative contexts tell us what the wrongness of adultery consists in. These considerations suggest, I think, that to understand a thought (which is something prior to assent or dissent, to belief or disbelief) we must have in mind what it stands relative to. It must appear in a certain context. And the context must set up the possibility of assent or dissent. To say this is to say that the meaning of a thought is relative to such contexts, for we cannot be said to have grasped the meaning of a thought independently of an understanding as to how we might rationally assent to or dissent from it. Now, I have dogmatically asserted this last point so it now behoves me to examine it. To do this I want to look at an example given by Donald Davidson.³

...how clear are we that the ancients - some ancients - believed that the earth was flat? This earth? Well, this earth of ours is part of the solar system, a system partly identified by the fact that it is a gaggle of large, cool, solid bodies, circling around a very large, hot star. If someone believes none of this about the earth, is it certain that it is the earth that he is thinking about?⁴

Davidson poses this question in the context of his argument that thought is dependent upon belief which is in turn dependent upon a language constituting a speech community. To talk of belief in this way is to integrate questions of

epistemology and questions of meaning. In the example given the suggestion is that we cannot specify the sense of the thought 'The earth is flat' independently of reference to what can lead a person to assent to or dissent from it. We require the context of a cosmological understanding. This does not mean that the thought 'The earth is flat' is true relative to a particular understanding only that the determination of the sense of the thoughts - of which we predicate truth or falsity - can only occur given a background of belief or understanding. To say that the meaning of a thought is relative is not to say that its truth or validity is. Thus, it is not true or false but nonsense to say that it was true for the ancients that the earth was flat. For this begs the question of the sense of the thought expressed. Truth and validity are autonomous, but this autonomy presupposes the relativity, in terms of meaning, of the thoughts which we try to determine as true or false, valid or invalid. Take, again, the thought 'it is wrong to commit adultery'; this is a thought which admits of validity or invalidity; it makes no sense to say that I can assent to or dissent from it irrespective of a context to which its meaning is relative, but if I do assent to it I do not hold that its validity is relative to the context; someone who does not see its validity is morally deluded, he does not have the opposite thought which is valid relative to a different context. But this is not to say that he might not be

attending to a different thought. We may differ in our thoughts, but their validity is not relative to our differing; there are no such expressions as 'valid for him' or 'true for her', or 'true (or valid) relative to a culture or context'.

Something of the substance of this position is to be found in the objection to a certain form of relativism made by D.Z. Phillips and H.O. Mounce.⁵

The error of relativism, as it is traditionally conceived, may be stated in general terms by saying that relativists treat moral judgements as if they were statements about certain of the conditions⁶ on which they depend for their sense.

In other words, to think that one can derive the validity of a judgement from the conditions of sense for a judgement is to be committed to a vicious circularity, for we discount what is essential to thought, that is, what it is about.

Thus far I have given an account of how beliefs and performances may be thought relative. I have also distinguished belief and performance from thought and action and attempted to argue in what respects thoughts are relative in terms of meaning and autonomous in terms of truth or validity. I now want to consider further what connections hold between assent or belief and the meaning of a thought.

When talking of relativity and explanation I noted that a person's assent to a thought could be explained in terms of that person's state. Where the explanation is causal the state referred to is natural, it is a state

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someone is in; but where the explanation is in terms of reasons then the state referred to is rational. This is not a state someone is in but an intellectual capacity he enjoys. An intellectual capacity is the ability to give reasons or grounds for assent to a thought. It is such reasons or grounds which constitute substantially the contexts within which a thought's meaning may be determined. This seems to me to be something like the position adopted by Wittgenstein in Zettel:

The causes of our belief in a proposition are indeed irrelevant to the question what we believe. Not so the grounds, which are grammatically related to the proposition, and tell us what proposition it is.

However, such constitution requires a form as well as a substance. A form enables us to determine the role which any substantial contribution to a context of thought has. The descriptions of such forms are, I think, what Wittgenstein understood to be grammatical descriptions, or remarks. He gives an example of such a remark at the very end of Zettel:

"You can't hear God speak to someone else, you can hear him only if you are being addressed" - That is a grammatical remark.⁸

What this remark does is give a description of the form which being addressed by God takes. It describes something of the context in which a religiously informed understanding may constitute the rational background to assent

to or dissent from thoughts. I have argued that it is only in the context of an understanding that a thought can occur as the object of possible judgement. This is what the meaning of a thought is relative to: meaning is relative to a context of possible grounds of judgement. What distinguishes such contexts are their forms, and such forms are, the objects of what Wittgenstein understood to be grammatical descriptions of the nature of judgements; they tell us what kind of judgement (moral, religious, legal, theoretical) is made.

In giving, then, a rational explanation of assent to a thought we must needs refer to the context in which it is a possible object of judgement and locate within that context the grounds particularly adduced. The import of this position can be illustrated by reference to the difficulties facing an anthropological understanding of societies very different in culture to our own. I have argued that meaning is relative to a context in which rational assent to a thought is possible. To be part of such a context is to enjoy an intellectual capacity which has implicit in it a conception of rationality. The difficulty that arises for the understanding of alien practices is the conceptions of rationality that they embody and presuppose. This is a point made by Peter Winch:⁹

Something can appear rational to someone only in terms of his understanding of what is and is not rational. If our concept of rationality is a different one from his, then it makes no sense to say that anything either does or does not appear rational to him in our sense.¹⁰

What I think is interesting here, and possibly misleading, is Winch's emphasis of 'his' and 'our'. As a corrective to the idea that, say, a magical ritual should be understood as a primitive (and rather bad) form of technology, it is I think sound. However, such a way of speaking does suggest that conceptions of rationality are relative to persons. Let me explain. An utterance is relative to a person in that it is I, you, him or her that makes it, but the content of the utterance, the thought expressed, is not relative to a person, rather it is the utterer who is relative to a context (or, conception of rationality) which makes utterance possible. This priority is a necessary condition of rational explanation. If we are to explain someone's assent to a thought then his grounds must be intelligible to us in a way that does not require reference to their being his grounds. That intelligibility is given in a context, a context to which any putative believer must be relative. In justification of this point consider an example of the limits of the rational explanation of belief. Say someone today, who is to all intents and purposes an intellectual peer, believes that the earth is flat. Why are we inclined to dismiss such

a person as a crank? We are, it seems to me, because we do not have a context to which to refer in order to explain his belief, and to which we can attribute the substance of reason. Our whole way of talking about the shape of the earth speaks against it being flat. It does not, of course, follow from this that the ancients were cranks, for then the context in which thoughts about the earth could be rational objects of assent was radically different.

At this point I consider the character of the context to which moral conduct may be understood to be relative. Such a context will be partially constitutive of our intentional capacity (see Chapter 5), which in turn sets up the possibility of our referring to a person (or self) to whom we attribute moral responsibility for the performance of actions. In order to highlight the constitutive function of the context of understanding, and its relation to the attribution of responsibility, consider an example, much favoured by Phillips and Mounce.¹¹ A child is intentionally killed. Now such an event cannot in itself provoke the moral question, 'Who is responsible?', what gives such a question its sense is the concept the action is deemed to fall under. This involves judgement. Say that the concept chosen is 'murder'. If that judgement is made and the question of responsibility asked in the light of it we presuppose something else. The route to the self which is responsible is via intentional capacity; what we presuppose,

therefore, is the possibility of the person understanding himself to have murdered. If that possibility is lacking then we fail to make reference to the performance of the action and so our route to the person whom we hold responsible is blocked. There is, as it were, no target for our condemnation to hit. In order to have a route to the person we must, in our judgements, employ concepts which mirror an agent's self-understanding. An analogous example can be constructed from the Nuremburg Trials. If there was any sense in which the people there convicted were punished for offences, it is presupposed that the prosecution were correct in urging that it was open to them to recognise that their actions, although commanded by Hitler, were morally wrong. What throws doubt on this is that the claim flies in the face of much of the ideology of national socialism, the images of which speak against independence of judgement and the regarding of Jews as persons. For example, Hoess's autobiography, Commandant of Auschwitz, reveals a conception of humanity and just treatment in the circumstances of the Final Solution severely at odds with that which informed the prosecution at Nuremburg. (See Chapter 4).

The question arises then as to how moral judgements can have a route to the person to whom we wish to attribute moral responsibility. In considering this question I shall argue that we need a picture to which to refer in order to make moral judgements and that in order that such judgements

can function in the language game of praise and blame that same picture must provide us with self-knowledge. In order to argue this case I shall discuss the concepts of self-knowledge and appropriateness and dissonance in conduct.

If we say of a person's activity that its ends and manner are appropriate we commend that activity in terms of its coherence: agent, action and end sought exhibit a fittingness. To make such a judgement is not to morally commend; it is to say that a person has satisfactorily revealed himself in his activity. He evidences self-knowledge. Correspondingly, to judge that there is dissonance in activity is to throw doubt upon the self-knowledge of the agent. The advertisement in the Catholic cathedral in Bristol for a Guy Fawkes bonfire and party in the grounds of a local convent may, to some, appear as a dearth of the sense of the appropriate from which we can infer a lack of self-knowledge.¹² Self-knowledge then will consist of a sense of what is appropriate and what is dissonant in one's conduct. What description can give of such a sense? I consider this question by referring to a branch of conduct in which a peculiar form of self-knowledge is called for. That branch is politics, and I will term the corresponding self-knowledge ideology.

In political activity an agent is not concerned with the pursuance of ends in a manner which is peculiarly his own, or to afford satisfaction solely to himself. He must act in a certain manner and in the pursuance of ends which he

understands to be appropriate to the polity within which he exercises his authority. If he does not do this there is a sense in which he forfeits the political authority he enjoys. To meet this condition, then, he must have a sense of the appropriate and dissonant which is peculiarly practical. He must exhibit a self-knowledge composed of a picture of the polity. Such an understanding will not be exhibited in support for or opposition to particular policies (although it may be historically associated with support or opposition), rather it is shown in his justification or criticism of policies in terms of what they imply for the manner of association between members of the polity. Consider, for instance, Enoch Powell's opposition to Britain's membership of the Common Market; in it he reveals his thought that there is a dissonance between the identity of the British and a putative political association of formerly sovereign states of Western Europe. For him, unlike for Edward Heath, 'Europe' is a factitious political entity. From this example we can see that the substance of political debate is partially constituted by rival understandings of what is appropriate or inappropriate to the polity. However, the polity is analogous to the self: the only route to it is via an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in respect of it. To occupy, then, a position of political authority requires, logically, an ideological understanding.

In this section I have argued for a form of ethical relativism. Its principal features are that a conception

of the self to which we attribute moral responsibility is dependent upon intentional capacity, in turn this capacity is relative to a context of understanding, a context composed of the vocabulary of ethical discourse. The possibility of self-knowledge in conduct, then, is dependent upon the use of such a vocabulary. In the next section I consider further ideological vocabulary in terms of its uses in political practice.

II: Ideology and Political Practice

In this section I shall consider more directly the objectivity of ideology, that is, the criteria by which ideological understanding may be adjudged appropriate or inappropriate to its object. To pave the way for my discussion I recapitulate some of the positions which I have sought to establish so far.

First, politics is the activity of attending to human affairs by - principally - the effecting of legislation. Such legislation aims at the well-being of a state.

Secondly, there are two ways in which legislation may be evaluated. The first is expressed in the question, Does the Legislator succeed in effecting the ends he has aimed at? In short, has he hit upon the right means to secure his ends? To answer this question we need to command a correct causal understanding of relevant events and circumstances. The second way in which legislation can be evaluated is from the ideological point of view: Do the relationships it

effects display the conditions prescribed in an ideological understanding?

Thirdly, as a Legislator is concerned with relationships from the points of view of what he can make them, and what it is right to make them, it follows that the wise or sagacious legislator is one who correctly combines causal understanding and ideological evaluation in his deliberations.

Fourthly, it follows from this that if ideological understanding is to make a rational contribution to legislation it must be in a certain harmony with the causal understanding we possess. It is this harmony which will show the pertinence of a set of ideological beliefs to the subject of legislation. This pertinence must be practical, not theoretical, for the politician does not deal with a blank sheet of possible arrangements; but with the relation of law to agents identifiable in terms of their substantive wants, desires, manners and beliefs.

Lastly, from these considerations there follows one criterion of the objectivity of ideology (as an aspect of practical wisdom). An ideological understanding must allow the acknowledgement of facts which are of political significance in relation to the evaluations it makes. Failure to do so is a mark of the inadequacy of an ideology - such a failure may be marked by a retreat into merely theoretical consideration within a tradition of ideological reflection, for example, revolutionary socialism in the United Kingdom in the present day. Here though, it is necessary to make one qualification concerning politically motivated and

significant activity which is illegal - for example, the activities of the Provisional IRA. To adapt Clausewitz's central maxim: we see in terrorist activity the pursuance of policy by other means; and this is what distinguishes the terrorist from the common criminal. In this chapter I shall set aside the circumstances of terrorism and civil war. (But, see chapter 3).

Having, then, set out these positions I want to pass on to more substantial discussion of the issues they refer to.

1. In previous chapters I have stressed and argued for the constitutive role of ideological understanding in political life. In particular, I argued that the notion of political authority is intelligible only in terms of ideological understanding. I now want to consider that constitutive characteristic from a different perspective, that is, from the point of view of the political reality that the legislator confronts.

A legislator is a person who must commend his proposals to an audience, and this is something he does in two ways. First, the legislation must be shown to be technically sound so far as is possible. That is, it has to be shown that it will in fact effect the changes it aims at effecting and it will not have too many adverse consequences. Secondly, it must be commended on ideological grounds; that is, the legislation observes and does not contravene ideologically

prescribed values. This latter exercise is rhetorical in character. And it is rhetorical not merely in the sense that the commendation is persuasively or impressively expressed, but principally in that it is an attempt to show the connection between the legislation and a set of ideological beliefs. The legislator, here, aims at the commendation of his proposals by their harmonious location within a manner of ideological appreciation. The best way in which I can make this point clear is by the consideration of an example.

The circumstances of life in Northern Ireland are often lamented in terms of their political intractability. This is what makes Northern Ireland a problem and the character of life there wretched. The problem, at least in part, seems to be the following. It is practically impossible for the British Government to commend a proposal or set of proposals which can at the same time be accommodated within the scope of the ideological beliefs of both the opposing camps of the Protestants and the Catholics. The political significance of ideological belief can here be gauged by recognizing that if the hinterlands of ideological belief which determine the political identities found in Northern Ireland were different then the "problem" of Northern Ireland could not arise. Consider, for example, an ideological "might-have-been". On the mainland of the United Kingdom in the 20th Century there developed a political movement and party the vocabulary of which made it clear that it represented the working man. The central ideological tenets which underlied the development

of the Labour Party were, one, that the political identity was appropriately determined not by race or religion but by the idea that someone was of a certain class because of the nature of his employment, and, two, that such an identity was rationally disclosed by working within the existing constitutional arrangements and not provoking constitutional crises. Such a political phenomenon has been largely absent from Northern Ireland where political identities are disclosed not in terms of the socialist understanding of class but in terms of Catholic and Protestant, Republican and Unionist. The sets of beliefs that determine these identities do not enable a conciliatory rhetoric. I now want to leave this example and consider what, in general, it may be thought to reveal.

Formally speaking the aim of rhetoric is effective communication, and in the case of politics the mark of such effectiveness is that a proposal is successfully commended. Within the confines of ideological commendation the mark of effective communication can be further defined as the capturing of the ethical sense of the audience both in terms of its imagination and the sentiments in which it will act and appraise. Given this, what the example of Northern Ireland shows is the obvious point that rhetorical success is subject to circumstances, circumstances which demand causal understanding. However obvious as it may be, it does show a criterion of objectivity for ideological understanding and that is that if it is to be rational it must cohere with

our causal understanding. It must do so because the legislator is attempting in his deployment of causal and ideological understanding to aim at the achievement of a single end.

This conclusion needs comment for the reason that the political world is, substantially, one that is made. I want to make these comments in the context of a discussion of political change.

It has for a very long time been recognised that an important part of a politician's power is his ability to make a good speech. Plato's long and serious preoccupations show that he well understood that to be able to move an audience by speaking is, in political circumstances, to have power over it. So although the rational employment of ideological commendation must take causal factors into account, it must be remembered that one of those factors is the power a politician can command. Given that this is true I now want to argue that an ideological understanding can be made objective by a political achievement being valued in terms of a certain ideological vocabulary. Initially, I want to explain what I mean by use of an analogy.

Every year at the Last Night of the Proms it is possible (perhaps) to witness an expression of patriotic sentiment in the singing of "Land of Hope and Glory". It is this occasion among others, which has done much to popularise Elgar's 'Pomp and Circumstance March' and it has given it a place in English civic life. Yet, outside of the fact that it is a march,

there is nothing intrinsic to Elgar's piece which makes it peculiarly appropriate to the expression of patriotism. It has come to have the significance it has by continual historical association. It has permeated a culture in such a way that it has a significance beyond the purely musical realm. In a similar way ideological understanding can become objective, in so far as it plays a part in practical affairs, and does not remain merely in the intellectual sphere, by being historically associated with a political achievement.

This point is similar to one made by Weldon in his discussion of political appraisals in The Vocabulary of Politics. Weldon suggests that when assessing, for example, the achievements of Stalin we should think of ourselves as being engaged in something similar to an appraisal of the music of Beethoven. This comparison may strike us as odd, but clearly what Weldon is urging us to focus upon is the notion of an achievement, and particularly, as the cases of Beethoven and Stalin suggest, the idea of a great achievement. Now, Weldon's aim is to steer us away from what he understands to be ideological thinking, but my point is that it is impossible (historically) to understand Stalin's achievements (as distinct from note that he achieved a great deal) without reference to the ideological understanding in the name of which Russia was transformed. Stalin's achievements are historically inseparable from the peculiar adaptations he made of the thought of Marx, Engels and Lenin to the circumstances of the Soviet Union. How ever we

may value Stalin's achievements it is an historical fact that they were valued by the people who participated in them in a vernacular vocabulary of the language of Marxism- Leninism. And it is this valuing of achievement in the achieving which gives ideological understanding objectivity. It was the ideological rhetoric of Lenin and Stalin that made such a valuing possible; they created or made, a political world.

A political world, in itself, is a contingent achievement and is liable, unless it is maintained in the face of change, to fall away. A mark of such falling away is when substantive ideological evaluations fall into disuse. The typical undergraduate question 'Has the Labour Party replaced socialism in terms of its creed or policy?' invites an examination of such disuse. Consider for example the Legislation of the Attlee Government (1945-50) which aimed at the establishment of comprehensive health and welfare services. This was an achievement which was valued in the vernacular vocabulary of British Socialism. With the demise of such a vocabulary the National Health service considered not as an organisation but as an institution has increasingly suffered from an ideological malaise. Formerly, it was the objectivity of an ideological understanding which contributed to or sustained the well-being of such welfare arrangements.

Having made the above remarks I now want to consider at a theoretical level the nature of the relationship between an ideological understanding and a political achievement.

First, while it is the case that certain doctrines within an ideological tradition will not afford justification for certain arrangements (for instance, the ideas of laissez-faire and the minimal state tend against a state welfare system) it is not the case that a certain set of arrangements is exclusively the preserve of a particular ideology because of its intrinsic characteristics.

Theoretically, a system of state welfare may receive justification from various ideological perspectives. It is a matter of historical contingency that the National Health Service in Britain was politically justified in a socialist vocabulary, rather than in the terms of a conservative or Christian paternalism.

Secondly, such a contingency (historical association) renders ideological understanding objective in that the political achievement symbolises or represents the values of that ideology. Like Elgar's march, it comes to have a place in civic life. In this sense a harmony is achieved between an ideological and causal understanding of the political world and it is this harmony which sets up the possibility of a specific ideology making a rational contribution to legislation.

In the next part of this section I want to extend the argument in order to consider how ideological objectivity can be seen as a function of political practice.

2. So far I have argued that one criterion for the objectivity of ideology is the fact of use, i.e. its contribution to the language of political debate. Two factors suggest, I think, that such objectivity is artificial or contrived, in that ideology has a facilitating role in political activity. The two factors are, one, that a political forum consists of members who are of opposed views as to what legislation should be effected, and, two, that it is necessary that a legislator have some command over an audience. It is natural, then, that politicians or political groupings should seek to develop ideological positions which they represent. These positions facilitate divisions and groupings. This phenomenon can, I think, be understood in Hobbesian fashion; in the following discussion I try to show an analogy between Hobbes's account of how men come into a state of civil association and the rationale of political grouping and division.

In moving from a state of nature to civil association men give up part of their natural right, and it is rational for them to do so because they benefit thereby. In the act of authorisation they create a feigned or artificial person to rule them and their obligation to obey is marked by his ability to secure them better conditions of life than they would otherwise enjoy. Analogously, political divisions and groupings are rational if they afford a politician conditions in which he can better exercise his powers. But he has to pay a price for those conditions. Just as Hobbes's

natural man must give up some of his right of nature so a politician who places himself in a group must give up his right to determine his own ends. In Hobbesian fashion again, it is rational for him to do so so long as he is more effective as a politician.

If the Hobbesian account of political grouping and division is correct then the groupings are artificial, and this is shown in their being more or less hierarchically organised. Ideological understanding is relevant to these groupings and divisions in that it facilitates them. Just as the power of Hobbes's sovereign, that is, the power of all men united in him, ensures that men may be related in law and not merely contingently, so adherence to an ideological understanding can go some way to ensuring rational division and grouping. The points are analogous in that relationship according to law is more rational, i.e. beneficial, than relationship outside it.

A mark, then, of the objectivity of ideology, is its effectiveness in the political world. Perhaps the clearest example of this is one that strikes us because of its evanescent character: the orchestration of an otherwise politically illiterate group. To explain and develop the example I refer to Machiavelli. According to Machiavelli the best form of republican constitution was a mixed one, that is one that combined a dictatorial function (capable of quick and decisive action), the middle classes (in order that their dynamism was contained within the state) and the

tumults, a class of people characterised by illiteracy and volatility. The aim of Machiavelli's constitution was to include within the state powers which if excluded would be a danger to it. I have mentioned Machiavelli's contentions as a preface to a consideration of Lenin's political activity. What Lenin achieved in 1917 was a remarkable coup d'état and he effected this by persuading a class of people characterised by their illiteracy and generally wretched condition that they had a political identity in terms of being members of the proletariat, a class which had a revolutionary mission the fulfilment of which would alleviate them of their unjust and wretched condition, and, in particular, bring to an end a war in which they, as the proletariat, had no reason to be engaged in. It is in this way that Lenin's achievement is a classic example of the formation of politically significant power by ideological persuasion.

Despite the striking clarity of this example it has, for my purposes, certain limitations which if not noted may mislead. Lenin's action was a coup d'état, that is, an illegal seizure of power. It is fair to say then that the orchestrated a class of people in his pursuit of power, because that class of people did not belong to the existing political forum. But ideological understanding has a role different from that of mere orchestration when it is employed within the confines of a political forum. A political forum is a rule constituted practice and the

identity of a practice in terms of the engagements in it is given form by the various ideological understandings exhibited in those engagements. Given that political practice is rule bound and that within that practice there are groupings and divisions which are facilitated by ideological understandings it follows, first, that the groupings and divisions must be respectively acknowledged and recognised, and, secondly, that such acknowledgement and recognition confers upon the various ideological understandings exhibited in the forum a legitimacy within the state. (In the United Kingdom, for example, this is a legitimacy enjoyed by neither revolutionary communism nor racialism). This is of significance for the objectivity of ideology for the following reason.

A Legislator is a person who aims at the well being of a state and in his deliberations he exhibits ideological understanding. Given that his beliefs in this area determine what he thinks right, the acknowledgement or recognition within a political forum of his political identity contains implicitly an acknowledgement or recognition of the ideology which determines it. The legitimacy thus conferred is a mark of the objectivity of an ideology in that in saying that an ideological understanding legitimately determines political identity we are not saying that we adhere to that ideology. They are independent judgements. According to this criterion in the United Kingdom today conservatism, liberalism and some idioms of socialism enjoy objectivity while fascism, racialism and revolutionary socialism do not. On this

account, then, ideologies are objective relative to a polity.

3. . . So far I have claimed that ideologies can be understood to be objective in relation to a causal understanding of the world and in respect of a political practice or, more generally, political activity. In this section, I want to consider the extent to which ideologies may be said to be in accordance with reason and, thereby, objective. To begin I shall say something about what I understand by reason.

Reason is a normative concept in that any argument or understanding must commend itself to it. Not to aim at this is unintelligible for there is no point in aiming at an understanding which is irrational, that is, one which there are no good grounds for accepting. Further, reason, in so far as it is to be a criterion by which an understanding is assessed, must be independent of the considerations adduced in that understanding, and of considerations adduced in any rival understandings. This said I now want to examine the scope of reason in the assessment of ideological understandings.

First, in so far as an ideological understanding manifests itself in an argument, it is like any argument subject to logical laws. It is a sound objection to an argument that it contains a contradiction. Consider the following example. A protestant in Northern Ireland states as one of his values political concord in that province, and also claims to adhere to the ideological understanding of

of the Rev. Ian Paisley. It is possible to object to his position because it involves a contradiction. It is not my purpose here to claim that a contradiction does in fact exist, rather my claim is that it can be objected that there is a contradiction, and that although this presupposes an understanding of ideology it does not require an ideological understanding. Argument of this kind shows either the limitations or the possibilities of an ideological understanding. Limitations and possibilities are not intrinsically either good or bad, but adherence to an ideology is more rational if an awareness of them informs that adherence.

Secondly, appeal to reason may have consequences going beyond the indication of limitations. Some ideological understandings do seem preposterous and this is a characteristic which they have irrespective of the political sense of the policies they are claimed to justify. Consider, for example, racialism. While, for example, there are good grounds for excluding children and lunatics from a political forum because they are respectively immature and mentally deficient, it seems absurd to determine membership of a forum on grounds of race. This is simply because there appear to be no grounds for claiming a causal link between race and moral and intellectual capacities. This is a clear example of how an appeal to reason can determine the objectivity of an ideological understanding, but it is important to distinguish between such an appeal and what

is merely ideological rejoinder. It is one thing to object to Mill's principle of self-protection by saying that it encourages heterogeneity which is damaging to the integrity and unity of a nation but it is another to question the distinction between self- and other- regarding actions upon which its application rests. The former is an ideological objection, while the latter is one that calls for philosophical and (perhaps) psychological inquiries.¹³

The above remarks do not, however, bear upon what is often taken to be the most pertinent relation of reason to ideology. This concerns the view, often assumed and sometimes argued, that ideology is to be understood in terms of its opposition to what are sometimes called interests or "real" interests. Such an understanding of ideology is recognizably a legacy of Marx, and it is one which is attractive in that it serves to elucidate what is nearly always assumed: that ideology is an irrational mode or kind of thought. That is to say, specific ideological beliefs are not irrational while others are held with good reason; the way of thinking is irrational for ideological beliefs are those which serve to disguise the real interests of one class in order to further the interests of another.

Central to the above view is the thought that the interests of a person or group of persons can be non-ideologically described in a way which leads us to the dismissal of the possibility of rational adherence to ideological beliefs. In other words we must be in a

position to say that some ways of living are worthwhile while others are not independently of any ideological valuation. It is clear, I think, that the arguments of the preceding chapters (see, especially, Chapter 1) speak, generally, against the distinction between real interests and ideological valuations. Here I want to argue more particularly against this view. Specifically, I want to show that the attempt to demonstrate that certain beliefs and institutions conduce to the real interests of mankind, while others do not, leads to a misreading of the denigrated beliefs and institutions, a misreading which indicates circularity in argument.

Perhaps the paradigm case of such an argument is to found in Mill's On Liberty, where he is concerned to justify liberty of thought and discussion in terms of its being conducive to the pursuit of truth. He applies this argument explicitly to the question of religious toleration arguing that religious beliefs and institutions which speak for, or proceed on the basis of, suppression are wrong. In arguing this case Mill implies that he sees religious institutions and practices as, respectively, research institutions and the procedures for inquiry which are operative within them. Religious truth appears to be like scientific truth. Mill misses, more or less entirely, the meaning that religious institutions and practices have in terms of their providing the context within which a person can realise, in a satisfying way, his mortality and its connection with something

transcendent. (A context well appreciated and understood by Augustine). In short, Mill's argument for liberty of religious belief rests on a misreading of the nature of religious institutions.¹⁴

What, I think, lies behind Mill's argument is his utilitarianism, that is, his view that institutions are to be treated as means towards ends; ends which they serve either satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily:

All action is for the sake of some end, and rules of action, it seems natural to suppose, must take their whole character and colour from the end to which they are subservient.¹⁵

Such a view of institutions is also implied by Karl Popper in his account and defence of "social engineering".¹⁶ It is adherence to this view that does most to prompt belief in the distinction between ideological valuation and (real) interest. Central to this understanding is that the rationality of a practice or institution may be represented as decisions issuing in normative laws; these laws rationalize society. Thus we have the rationalizer (the social engineer) and that which is rationalised: a society, a society understood from the point of view of premeditated ends. (Popper's principal objection to Marx is that the ends he specifies are inappropriate because we have no, properly speaking, scientific procedures for determining the means to them). It seems to me that this is a false understanding of rules and institutions in that it reduces rules to maxims and institutions to organisations. I want,

now, to explain why this is so.

The conclusion I wish to argue to is a view expressed by Rush Rhees in objection to Karl Popper's ruthlessly instrumental view of institutions. Rhees's position is that institutions "are features or forms of social existence not means to it".¹⁷ I will argue this case by reference to the example of 'promising'. Say B promises A that x where x is some future performance of B's, and that come the time of the performance B finds x onerous. What reasons can B have for not performing? Clearly the onerous nature of x is not in itself sufficient reason (as it might be had it not been promised); this is so because the performance falls under a rule. What account can we give of the nature of such a rule? In previous chapters (see, especially, Chapters 2 and 3) I have argued that such a rule gives the performance a certain character, to say this is to mark the internality of an end in conduct, to see it as rationally, yet not instrumentally, linked to a practice or institution. Now, if this is so then there is, I think, no such thing as the impartial observance and evaluation of the "working" of a practice or institution, an impartiality which is required if there is to be a social engineer running institutions to serve ends that "we" have decided upon, nor can there be a workable distinction between ideologically defined interests and "real" interests, for the rational ends of conduct are, at least, partially, institutionally defined.

(Someone may object to this last equation, but the principal upshot of the arguments of this thesis is that ideologies and political practices and institutions are integral).

The points raised by the example of promising can, I think, be generalised to cover Popper's objection to Marxism in order to show that he has missed the point. If Marxism, as an ideology, specifies the rationality of political conduct for the working classes it does so not in virtue of a series of predictions or prophecies, but by indicating an identity to be revealed in distinctive manners of political activity, which aim at the realisation of institutions and practices appropriate to that identity. Certainly, Marx talked of these ends in the rhetoric of theory, but as ideological ends they have sense only in relation to a doctrinally defined identities. The idea, then, of real as against apparent interests is incoherent if this is supposed to be a criterion for the objectivity of ideology, for the ends under consideration are internal to practices and institutions, and, when evaluated, internal to ideological appreciations.

In this chapter I have argued for an account of ideology which locates its objectivity in its forms of use. As an idiom of ethical understanding it has objectivity as that which enables self-understanding in conduct. As an element of political activity ideology is objective relative to the characteristics of a polity.

Notes to Chapter Six

1. Aristotle, Ethics, trans. J.A.K. Thomson, Harmondsworth Penguin Books, 1974, p. 158.
2. F.H. Bradley, Ethical Studies, Oxford O.U.P., 1967, p. 189.
3. D. Davidson, 'Thought and Talk', in S. Guttenplan (ed), Mind and Language, Oxford, O.U.P., 1975.
4. Ibid, p. 21, emphasis in original.
5. D.Z. Phillips, and H.O. Mounce, Moral Practices, London, R.K.P., 1970.
6. Ibid., p. 70-71.
7. L. Wittgenstein, Zettel, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1967, p. 437.
8. Ibid., p. 717
9. P. Winch, 'Understanding a Primitive Society', in P. Winch, Ethics and Action, London R.K.P., 1972.
10. Ibid., p. 30, emphasis in original.
11. Op.cit.
12. I owe this example to Mr. P.J. Rowell. I stress 'to some' for judgements of this kind are practical. It may be thought, alternatively, that such a celebration marks in a subtle way the mutual acknowledgement of British establishment and Catholic Church; it marks, in other words, an historical change.
13. It is important here to have in mind the distinction between a captivating rationalisation of an ideological attitude or disposition and a philosophical or psychological claim.
14. Here I have taken what Mill says at a philosophical level, but it is interesting to note that this example provides a startling illustration of the difference between ideological and philosophical understanding. (See conclusion). The ideological force of Mill's account is seen in its undermining the rationale of religious institutions. It cannot, I think, be denied that

the rise of secular humanism is a mark of Mill's success in the ideological sphere.

15. J.S. Mill, 'Utilitarianism'; in J.S. Mill, Utilitarianism, On Liberty and Considerations on Representative Government, London, J.M. Dent & Sons, 1972. p. 2.
16. See K. Popper, The Open Society and its Enemies, Vols. I and II, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1945, and, The Poverty of Historicism, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961.
17. R. Rhees, Without Answers, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969, p. 58.

CONCLUSION

I: Language and the Question of How We Should Live

The question which captures the essence of ethical understanding is, How should we live? To consider this is to ask what the terms of human association should be. In this thesis I have sought to explain the nature of this question within the sphere of ideology. The explanation I have given excludes two ways in which it may be thought that the question of how we should live can be clearly understood; 'clearly' in the sense that we would have a grasp of how we should go about answering it. These two ways are the contractual and utilitarian understandings of political association. In the first the relationship of rulers and ruled is accounted for in terms of the rationality of a contract or covenant authorising rule, and, in the second, political obligation is explained (and rationalised) by reference to the conduciveness of the terms of association to some end (say, happiness) upon which we can agree independently of political considerations.

The contractual and the utilitarian understandings have a common feature: the idea that political relationship, or its rationality, is artificial or conditional. It is artificial in that it is agreed upon, or, better, the terms of its legitimacy, are what would be agreed upon, and it is conditional in that the relationship is meant to serve a purpose. There is, I think, something very attractive about this position; and its attraction lies in its providing a criterion of legitimate rule. Explaining the normative role of the metaphor of authorisation David Gauthier states:

Only when the relationships which it requires do actually obtain is government legitimate. Only when the government is effectively the agent of the people, although distinct from them, is obedience to political authority fully obligatory.

Legitimate political power, or political right, comes from the people in the sense that it must be exercised

in their behalf, to secure those of their objectives which cannot be obtained by their individual actions¹.

Thus, for example, in their association people desire that they be dealt with justly. Considered as an objective this may be fulfilled in the authorisation of a ruler who attends to these matters, the matters of just dealing - in this sense the terms of association which men naturally desire, but which they cannot achieve individually, are attained by the introduction of an artificial power or right which stands over them all.

The understanding of political association as artificial, or conditional, may be thought to mark a transcendence of ideology. First, there are conditions which men are naturally inclined to desire (let us call them, for convenience, conditions of just dealing); secondly, these are not conditions which they can attain by their individual efforts; so, thirdly, they contrive a circumstance (political rule) which secures the enjoyment of these conditions. The effect is that while men were formerly inclined for reasons of prudence to disregard the terms of natural justice, in the context of political association those terms are made to count. Political rule is legitimate in so far as it affords the enjoyment of those conditions which it was instituted or authorised to uphold: the conditions of natural justice. I do not deny that there are natural obligations and rights². However, I do not think that reference to them in the explanation of political association marks a transcendence of ideology.

To talk of natural obligations and rights involves making reference to the persons who have them. The making of such reference depends upon the senses of the terms we use to refer to those persons. These senses, it seems to me, will be related to ideological doctrine. For example, the natural rights that a slave enjoys are not coextensive with those of

a free man, that is, it would result in injustice to treat one in all ways the same as the other. Yet slavery is an institution, and receives ideological justification and criticism. Our capacity, then, to say that this or that person has these natural rights and obligations, is dependent upon the senses of the terms which we use to refer to them. And it is these senses which are the subject of ideological elucidation.

The example of slavery may be thought unconvincing. Nowadays we are inclined to say that there are rationaly no such people as slaves, and that the institution is a violation of natural rights, rather than a context within which natural rights and obligations can be ascribed. Consider, then, another example. Some may not think it unjust to prefer a man to a woman for a job solely because he is a man. Tell this to the Women's Movement! It is not that the abstract conceptions of natural justice are contendable, for example, 'Treat like people alike', rather what are contendable are the senses of the terms which we employ in referring to those who have natural obligations and rights³.

Conceptions, then, of what is naturally due to, or incumbent upon, persons are involved in or integral to human relationships, but their application is dependent upon the language in which those relationships are conducted - the language of practice and institution. The use of such a language in the context of politics implies, I think, that the state is seen as ethical association, that is, as an end in itself. In the next section I turn to an examination of this idea.

II: The State as Ethical Association

It is useful to consider the account of ideology I have argued for in this thesis in the light of one of Hegel's more familiar pronouncements:

If the state is confused with civil society ... then the interest of the individuals as such becomes the ultimate end of their association, and it follows that membership of the state is something optional. But the state's relation to the individual is quite different from this. Since the state is mind objectified, it is only as one of its members that the individual himself has objectivity, genuine individuality, and an ethical life⁴.

For Hegel - in opposition to what he took to be the contractual view of the state - political association was non-instrumental or ethical association. Its terms are "subjective" in that they relevantly compose a person's self-understanding in activity. Hegel's arguments for this view are metaphysically complex, but one of his principal contentions was that subjectivity was an inherent quality of Geist or Mind⁵. Now, from the point of view of Objective Mind it is necessary to individual self-understanding that a person understand himself as "subject" in terms of the various levels of right at which he enjoys association with others. In this sense the state, or political authority, would not be alien to individuality but would actually compose it. It would not be a means to life, it would be a form of it. The state was a component of what Hegel termed Sittlichkeit.

In this thesis I have argued that ideological understanding is necessary to the practical understanding of a state as an ethical association; ideological understandings compose the acknowledgement of political authority necessary to that authority not being alien. They constitute self-understanding by displaying rational connections between what a person can understand himself to be in his activity and the enactments of a political authority. The authority of a political body is delineated in its constitution, it follows, then, that an ideological understanding must seek to display connections between that constitution and the relevant aspects of the self-understandings of those subject to it. (And, of course, the opposite

may be true: an ideological understanding may aim at displaying the lack of such connections, as Marx sought to do.) The language of ideology is, then, ethical. To conclude this thesis I want to make some general remarks about the character of ethical language, and particularly its role in argument.

1. In his essay 'Understanding the Abortion Argument'⁶ Roger Wertheimer distinguishes between two kinds of argument:

I want to understand an argument. By an argument I do not mean a concatenation of deathless propositions, but something with two sides that you have with someone, not present to him; not something with logical relations alone, but something encompassing human relations as well⁷.

Wertheimer thinks that such a distinction is peculiarly pertinent to the understanding of ethical argument. Here I want to consider it in the light of the role in such argument of agreement in what I shall term ethical attitude.

It seems to me to be basic to ethical experience and understanding that we have attitudes towards people which mark them out as standing in certain relationships. Such attitudes are dependent on language. I do not mean by this that they can be reduced to "mere" words, but rather that the sense that an ethical vocabulary^{has} has to be described in terms of the contribution it makes to the having of such attitudes and the relationships implied in these. (Another way of putting this is to say that a person cannot have such attitudes independently of his command of an ethical vocabulary.) Our attitudes will be evidenced in the way in which we deal with others. Attitudes constitute the manners of our dealings.

Attitudes are to be distinguished from opinions. They form the grounds upon which opinions can be expressed or form part of an argument. Consider Wittgenstein's remark:

My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul.
I am not of the opinion that he has a soul⁸.

In other words: I do not premiss the manner of my dealings with others on a thought or opinion. (In the case of the concept 'soul' they belong to a form of life.) In contrast I may act towards or before someone in particular in a way responsive to my thought, say, that he is angry with me. The role of attitude rather than opinion, however, is marked by the sense that the term 'he' has in a sentence such as 'he is angry'. A term such as 'soul' describes something of that attitude (or marks out its grammar). Attitudes, then, set up the relations which obtain between persons. And these attitudes are evidenced in the ethical vocabulary we are disposed to use in our discussion, understanding and argument about ethical matters. I can perhaps best clarify the role of attitudes here by considering an example.

Judith Jarvis Thomson in her essay, 'A Defense of Abortion'⁹ argues her case by the use of a series of very striking comparisons. These comparisons serve a dual purpose: as analogies they reveal the logic of her argument and enable her to indicate what she takes to be the flaws of opposing arguments, but, secondly, they serve as images which mark the attitudes we should have to the relationships under discussion: foetus, mother and third parties. These images serve as answers to an underlying implicit question: what attitudes should we have towards the relevant parties in the abortion issue, i.e. what relationships obtain here? It is the understanding of these relationships which determines the sense of Thomson's central concern, the right to life.

Consider her first and perhaps most striking comparison. You wake up to find yourself surgically connected to a famous violinist who will die if he does not have use of your kidneys. Now, Thomson's use of this comparison is not my concern here, rather I want to note that it sets up a position central to her argument, that a person's body is part of his or her estate or property (and here the image of contract is uppermost) where you have the

"right to decide what happens in and to your body".

This image paves the way for another which once again emphasises property right: the woman "houses" the unborn child:

... the mother and the unborn child are not like two tenants in a small house which has, by an unfortunate mistake, been rented to both: the mother owns the house¹⁰

What Thomson constructs then is an image of the relation of mother to unborn child, the mother has property in her body and the child is alien to it. Such an image of this relationship is an expression of the attitude we should have towards it. And it is the sharing of this attitude which makes possible the kind of argument Wertheimer is interested in, not one which is a "concatenation of deathless propositions", but "something encompassing human relations as well". In short, it is the having of certain attitudes and the problems which they give rise to which makes an argument such as Thomson's worthwhile and not merely a logical exercise. However, if a person's attitude towards mother and unborn child are significantly different (as they are say for the catholic) such that he understands their relationship in another way, an argument such as Thomson's will not seem worthwhile.

I have considered this example in order to distinguish the place of attitudes in ethical understanding and in order to show how arguments can be worthwhile or not, irrespective of their category, in terms of their relation to those attitudes. I want now, in the light of this discussion, to consider the role of ideological vocabularies in the formation of attitudes.

2. Take, for example, the Marxist terms, 'bourgeoisie', 'proletariat', 'alienation', 'capitalism' and 'exploitation'. These are terms used in referring to individuals and the relationships in which they stand. As images they express certain attitudes we can have to political, social and economic affairs in terms of their ethical significance. They are the

starting points of argument in Wetheimer's sense: the starting points of arguments which have an intra-practical value. What this shows, given the argument of much of this thesis, is the dependence of practical concepts of political authority on ideological vocabularies without which the attitudes which determine the relation of rulers to ruled would be impossible. The rhetorical presentation of an ideological vocabulary is essential to political association. In this sense we can reverse the view of Hegel with which I began. It is not because the state is "mind objectified" that it is only as a member of the state that a person has "genuine individuality and an ethical life", rather it is the having of certain attitudes, dependent on an ideological vocabulary, which makes possible an ethical association such as the state. (Nietzsche, I think, captured something of this when he said that men acted and associated with one another in ways which he found disreputable because of the "lies" of Christianity and morality; his project was the annihilation and transcendence of the attitudes they constituted.)

Such considerations suggest, I think, that a principal component in the ethical aspects of political education is always indoctrination. (This is a component well recognised by those greatly concerned with political stability, for example, Plato.) By indoctrination I do not mean the inculcation of arbitrary prejudices or biases but rather the display in both arguments and conduct of those attitudes which compose our conception of political authority and its relation to conduct. It is not, as it might first seem, tautological of Aristotle to claim that we can recognise wise conduct by paying heed to the conduct of the wise man. We require exemplars of good conduct not only in order to judge the appropriateness of our attitudes, but so that we may acquire them.

It would be satisfying to capture in a page or two the essence of ideology as I have understood it here. This can, I think, be achieved

to some degree by considering a problem posed by R.G. Collingwood in Speculum Mentis he argues that what he terms historical ethics "fails to give a clear answer to the question 'What is duty?' and in practice vacillates between two contradictory answers."¹¹ It is worthwhile quoting Collingwood's elucidation of this contradiction:

First, the subjective answer: the will is its own world and its own law. It has nothing outside it to determine it, but is absolutely autonomous, and duty is simply its pure self-determination.

Secondly, the objective answer: the moral order of the objective world as a given whole is the law which must determine the subjective will.

Both these solutions are doomed to failure precisely because of their distinctness. They are a pair of opposites, as yet unreconciled. The error must lie in their very separateness, and in accordance with the programme of concrete thinking we must try to overcome this separateness. Till we have done so, the conception of liberty or duty which we have achieved is held by the most precarious tenure; for the whole essence of duty is the reconciliation which it effects between the universal and the particular, and if these are once more separated, as in effect they are by a cleavage between the individual and society, the very conception of duty must fall to the ground. For if my duty is to obey society, I am a slave and my obedience is useful but not good: if my duty is to ignore society and follow my own bent, my defiance of society is precisely the opposite of useful, namely, futile; for society will crush me, and rightly. The reality of duty therefore depends on overcoming the antithesis between these terms.¹²

For Collingwood something of this reality is achieved in law, but it is complete only in what he call absolute ethics. I am not here concerned with Collingwood's "solution", rather his statement of the opposition between society and individual suggests the central feature of the ideological use of language. It is our ideological understanding which enables us to rationalise that seeming opposition, and constitute it as a relationship. Ideologies are, in this sense, manners of political living.

Notes to Conclusion

1. D.P. Gauthier, The Logic of Leviathan, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1969, p.176.

2. "... there are natural rights, to the extent that there are natural obligations - to the extent, that is, that a concept of 'just dealing' arises naturally among men. In using the word 'natural' I do not mean that the authority of these rights can be exercised independently of the protection afforded by a constituted state. But they can be independently understood ...", R. Scruton, The Meaning of Conservatism, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1980, p. 85.

3. The argument here owes much to Frege's account of sense and reference. Frege's thesis is that the sense that a name has will determine its reference. I have accepted this and claimed that the senses of the terms relevantly used in the ascription of natural rights and obligations are ideologically elucidated.

4. G.W.F. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, trans. T.M. Knox, London, Oxford University Press, 1967, remark to §258.

5. M. Oakeshott, On Human Conduct, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975, pp.257-58. Consider Oakeshott's account of the relation of individuality to Geist:

In respect of being an exhibition of der Geist each man is self-moved by his own self-understanding and what he is generically (Geist) is the specification of his individuality. He is in himself what he is for himself. Geist is subjekt, not substanz. (Ibid, p.257.)

Individuality has, for its completion, a universal element, something of which is embodied in the state.

6. R. Wertheimer, 'Understanding the Abortion Argument', in The Rights and Wrongs of Abortion, A Philosophy & Public Affairs Reader, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1974.

7. Ibid, p. 23.
8. L. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1972, p.178e.
9. J.J. Thomson, 'A Defense of Abortion', in The Rights and Wrongs of Abortion, op. cit.
10. Ibid, p. 9, emphasis in original.
11. R.G. Collingwood, Speculum Mentis, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1924, p.223.
12. Ibid, pp.223-24.

POSTSCRIPT

In this thesis I have argued that ideology is a branch of ethical understanding, and that its distinctive features derive from this fact and from the nature of its peculiar sphere - that is, political association. Ideology is not a theoretical idiom which aims at an academic representation of political life; it is an intra-practical language essential to political association and practice.

In arguing this view I have relied heavily upon distinctions familiar from the works of other political philosophers. Most notable here is the distinction between making and doing, which is variously formulated in Aristotle, Arendt and Oakeshott. Such a distinction, it seems to me, is essential to the understanding of the state as ethical association. Without this understanding much of political life would be inexplicable. (The paucity of achievement in the field of "political science" testifies, I think, to this view - but that is no matter.)

In addition I have sought to show recognition of the arguments of what may be vaguely termed Anglo-Saxon philosophy in this century; particularly I have in mind here Wittgenstein and writers in moral, social and political philosophy who have followed him, especially Peter Winch, Rush Rhees and D.Z. Phillips. Their emphasis on, and accounts of, language have a marked effect upon my thinking, I should add here, though, that such recognition does not mark a break from attention to political philosophy as it has been practised over the centuries.

Specifically, it seems to me that thinking in terms of both idealist philosophy and the arguments of Wittgenstein et al is to attempt a synthesis which is both important and timely. It is important because the idea of the state as ethical association can be elucidated in terms of the constitutive role of ideological language; and it is timely in that such a position marks an alternative to the attempt to understand the state in terms of abstract

notions of contractual justice.

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