PART ONE

Theoretical perspectives

Chapter 1

Ideology, power and prehistory: an introduction

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This volume is first shown to form part of a larger dialogue arising from some critiques of the dominant models in archaeological theory. In particular, it is part of an attempt to credit people and society in prehistory and material culture studies with the same abilities as we credit ourselves, rather than reducing them to the passive recipients of external forces. Two general discussions then follow, a summary is given of some approaches to the concept of power, and in particular a description and critique of Foucault's recent work on this topic is used as the basis for developing a working model of power. A model for the critique of ideology is developed through the examination of three examples. Firstly Marx's critique of the bourgeois conception of the political economy, secondly Marx's own labour theory of value, and thirdly the implications of three recent critiques of Marx's work. From these are derived some general characteristics of a working model for the critique of ideology, which differs in a number of respects from the original example of Marx's writings.

A problem in archaeology has always been that its method has provided the dominant metaphor for its interpretation. Before all else, archaeology has been about discovery. It is as quest and search that archaeology first commanded and now continues to fascinate its wide audience. This is encapsulated in the image of the archaeologist finally clearing a way through the last of the jungle to reveal the ancient ruined city, or burrowing through placid fields and orchards to uncover the unsuspected evidence of antiquity. In recent times the urge to discover has become a more fine-grained, refined ambition to locate all that might have been missed by the grand dig, to note the small seeds, the ghosts of wooden walls, the first clearance of trees.

All archaeologists take pride in the achievements of this exploration, in the idea, continually affirmed, that the future promises new pasts. Such is the attraction of these discoveries that, prior to a relatively recent rise in self-consciousness, exhibited in the 'new archaeology', it was held that the results of these investigations were comparatively self-evident as facts about the past. There had, however, always been those who questioned the nature of interpretation, and this questioning grew rapidly in the 1960s as a sustained critique of simple discovery, in favour of the development of a theoretical structure, which was expected to give a systematic basis to interpretation that might match the increasingly sophisticated and systematic methods being used in excavation and the laboratory analysis of remains (Clarke 1973).

This shift in the discipline, and the particular direction which it took, put the emphasis on a critique of the archaeologist as discoverer, and addressed the nature of the societies which were being investigated only in a limited fashion. Again it was method that dominated, although in this case the 'procedure' of interpretation. It was the models and hypotheses, held by the archaeologists, and their inductive or deductive qualities, that were seen as the centre of interest, and it was at this level that a restructuring of the archaeologist's approach from mere discoverer to interpreter was held to be necessary. Although the debate was apparently at the level of epistemology and the nature of the archaeologist as scientist, in practice it also had implications for the implicit model of what was being discovered (Miller 1982a, p. 86; Tilley 1982, p. 30).

In so far as the nature of the past in general, and the characteristics of the archaeological record in particular, were discussed in an explicit fashion, this was primarily through consideration of sampling biases (e.g. Mueller Ed. 1975). A realisation developed that archaeological remains were not direct reflections of past activities but were distorted by differential preservation, discard and curation patterns etc. (Schiffer 1976). The assumption behind this work was that when such natural and cultural transformation processes could adequately be taken into account, the archaeological record would be straightened out and the nature of the past could then be 'read off' more easily. The logistics of such an approach tended to result in one factor being held constant, and that was the image of the creator of the archaeological record. The model of ancient peoples emerged as similar to the rigid frame of behaviourist agency and its contingent deterministic response. This in turn led to a focus by some on factors that could be held 'constant', such as in the study of bones, rather than cultural artifacts (Binford 1978).

This volume continues the debate about the models held by archaeologists. The focus of attention, however, is not on the models archaeologists have erected purportedly to explain artifactual evidence, but rather on models held with regard to the creators of this past. A direct implication of ascribing an active intelligence to past peoples, as opposed to a passive stimulus-response conception, is that the remains we recover are to be interpreted as creations by people in accordance with their representation of the natural and social world. This is not a determinant response but an active intervention; the social production of reality. This represents a radical shift in perspective in the direction of making the past *human*. It is a perspective that respects the agents that created what we find and grants them the same abilities and intentions that we would credit to each other as sentient social beings. It is also a recognition of the importance of taking into account the conceptions we hold of our own society which inevitably mediate our understanding of the past. The images created from a positivist perspective of passive agents reacting as 'game theory' subjects or as playing out 'roles' contingent on external pressures is a precise image of the same science that gives technical control its dominant place in our own society, serving to bolster up asymmetries of power and dominance (see chapter four below, p. 38). It is almost as though the ascription of the connotations of savagery, of minds less able to rise above their confrontation with the environment, now exorcised in discussions of contemporary society, is still preserved in relation to the past. In cultural evolutionary theories, societies are treated like football teams with labels on their backs. They compete in the adaptive stakes – ground rules for the game laid out *a priori* – before any analyses start. The assumed need of societies to adapt to externally induced socioenvironmental stresses or internally developed pathologies (Flannery 1972, Gall and Saxe 1977), becomes a differential measure of success. Some societies develop to the status of civilisations and reach the top of the league while others are relegated to the lower divisions of bands and chiefdoms. To use such a framework is not a normatively neutral process. It is to measure, to compare, to order the sequences according to definite criteria, time and place, and in doing so to pass judgement. It seems preferable to grant to all *Homo sapiens sapiens*, the abilities and characteristics we would wish granted to ourselves.

The present volume also continues a dialogue held between a number of workers in the field of prehistory, historical archaeology and general material-culture studies. It is a dialogue that began with a dissatisfaction with the dominant trends developing in archaeology during the late 60s and early 70s. The kind of archaeology espoused directly invited a response because of its unusually didactic and self-conscious form and tone. The history of the 'new archaeology' is instructive and it is important that lessons are learnt from it; that the undoubted advances made during the period in analytical techniques are preserved and are reflected in contributions to this book but that something of what now seem to be its shortcomings, should also be borne in mind. Part of the nature of this dissatisfaction has been discussed in detail by Ian Hodder in the introduction to *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology* (Hodder Ed. 1982a). There, the emphasis was on the misconceptions and limitations of functionalist assumptions that aligned with the didactic epistemology, and this theme is continued in Hodder's contribution to this volume.

The dissatisfaction arose with a number of interrelated elements forming the 'project' of the 'new archaeology', specifically:

(a) The uncritical acceptance of a positivist epistemology as the best means to gain knowledge of the past, taking this to

be something different from empiricism rather than a form of it (e.g. Hill 1972).

(b) As a direct concomitant of the former, a stress on functionalism and reduction of explanation to the need of human populations to adapt to an environmental milieu.

(c) A behaviourist emphasis considering the archaeological record mainly in terms of biological directives; a calorific obsession (e.g. Zubrow 1975).

(d) The labelling of any approach which asserted the primacy of social relations, cognition and intentional dispositions as 'paleo-psychology' which was consigned to the unsubstantiated realm of pure speculation.

(e) A failure to consider the social production of archaeological knowledge.

(f) An emphasis on the conservative values of stability and equilibrium deemed to be the norm, and a lack of attention to conflict and contradiction.

(h) A reduction of the analysis of social change to the elucidation of external factors impinging on the social system.

(i) A belief by some in mathematisation as the goal of archaeology; the attempt to reduce past social systems to a suitable equation (e.g. Gunn 1975).

A lesson might be learnt from the manner in which the 'new archaeology', despite its assertions to the contrary, may have in certain respects acted to continue previous traditions. Archaeology may be held to tend towards 'fetishism'; this idea as used in critical approaches suggests that relationships between people may be represented as though they were relationships between objects. Archaeology has always tended in this direction because of the nature of its evidence, which is primarily a world of objects. The history of archaeology has been a struggle between the representation of its evidence as signifying human subjects and as signifying types of object. In much of the earliest archaeology the relationship between these two was seen as relatively straightforward. The goal of archaeology was knowledge about past peoples. The artifact was the signifier, the subject who made and used them the signified, and the symbolic process was direct. For example, during that period when diffusionist models were paramount, the signifier might be a group of similar artifacts observed to spread over a given area, and the signified would then be a prehistoric people who were assumed to have moved over this same area.

The tendency in archaeology has been towards a fetishism in which little account is taken of the supposed signified, the result being that the process becomes subject to an inverse transformation. Concern becomes increasingly directed towards the artifacts themselves, that is, the stone tools, ceramic sherds or to faunal remains, and the prehistoric record is visualised primarily in terms of artifacts. In effect, the peoples or cultures become labels for similar artifacts or subsistence patterns: the subjects of the past have become the signifier, the label, while the evidence have become that signified.

Archaeological fetishism is, then, the tendency towards this inversion of the major symbolic process necessitated by any attempt to interpret the past. Such tendencies exemplified by the virtual ascription to ceramic styles of an ability to reproduce further 'generations' of ceramic styles without reference to human agency have been noted and criticised in the past by Brew (1946) and Thomas (1972).

The history of the 'new archaeology' repeats, in part, this process. In its initial conception it set out to restructure archaeology along the alignment presupposed by its principal form of legitimation: the study of past peoples. In particular it called for a renewed approach to the study of the processes of social change. In articles such as 'Archaeology as Anthropology' (Binford 1962) the call was for a return towards anthropology and a direct reference to the peoples of the past. This legitimation was pronounced at a programmatic level throughout the period. In practice, however, a similar inversion continued. The rise of computer-aided statistical methodologies, and an internal focus on strategies such as sampling, led to a still stronger stress on the artifact as artifact. A major difference from the previous traditions was the reticence in ascribing a label that had pretensions to a prehistoric people. Taken as a subsumption of observed variability, this 'normative fallacy', as it was termed, was to be avoided. Increasingly concern focused on the variability of the artifact. That which was theoretically signified, namely people of the prehistoric past, tended to be eliminated, or reduced to the status of passive adaptors to environmental shifts, to await the time when more refined methods would somehow allow for their treatment as more active agents.

A line of thinking which certainly attracted many adherents to the 'new archaeology' was its optimism, that archaeology could be anthropology. The old view of a ladder of increasing difficulty of inference (Hawkes 1954), in which work was thought to be virtually impossible beyond the initial technological and economic rungs, was summarily rejected. However, the methodology and epistemology adopted for climbing higher directly precluded much success. The social and symbolic 'rungs' were only dealt with insofar as they could be reduced to effects of the economic and technological. The pessimism of normative archaeology was recreated but in a different manner; the top 'rungs' of the ladder became merged with those at the bottom, which on *a priori* and possibly expedient grounds, were again asserted as primary.

This is the background to the dialogue of which this volume forms a part. Much of our dissatisfaction was with the elimination of the proper signified of prehistory. This relationship with past peoples is always a symbolic one, mediated by archaeological remains, and it was appropriate that the concern with the return of people into prehistory should coincide with the espousal in anthropology of a concern with the symbolic process in the development of structuralism and semiotics. This was directly relevant to the key problem of archaeology. At the time when these approaches were impinging upon the search by the archaeologist for a more appropriate means to conceptualise the past, these ideas had themselves developed in a series of directions that made them more suitable for archaeological appropriation. The original structuralism of Lévi-Strauss could never have

served such a purpose since it retained much of the more mechanical approaches of the sciences in its ever-present tendency towards formalism.

One important development in structuralist studies was an articulation with an increasing interest in the legacy of materialist approaches. This encouraged an emphasis on diachrony which had very positive results for its application to archaeology (e.g. Friedman and Rowlands 1977). Another influential shift within social theory developed from a disavowal of the more mechanical side of both structuralist and Althusserian structural-marxism, towards a concern with agency and strategy. This is evident in the work of social theorists such as Giddens (1979) and anthropologists such as Bourdieu (1977). The extensive influence of both of these trends will be evident in the papers in this volume.

From these perspectives has arisen an interest in the critique of ideology as an approach to material-culture studies and in particular to prehistory. This is an approach that presupposes an active construction and representation of the social world by past peoples, but which maintains a critical attitude to the analysis of these practices. This project has to confront several problems, relating to the conceptualisation of human society, if it is to avoid regressing in the manner of similarly optimistic and radical reappraisals of the possibilities of prehistory. In restoring the concern with agency in prehistory, we should not relapse into the kinds of individualist and psychological models of human behaviour which characterised some earlier forms of archaeology (e.g. Collingwood 1956, Hawkes 1968), and have been subject to the weight of criticism of all the succeeding traditions. This involves a positive use of advances in social theory and anthropology that have moved towards a non-reductionist model of human agency compatible with the coarse-grained scale of the archaeological enterprise. Indeed, Marx, who has provided the inspiration for many of the ideas used in this volume, played a crucial role in his insistence that human agency was understandable only as it was historically constituted by social relations.

This implies a critical approach to the concept of intention. Where intentions are discussed by Leone (chapter 3), and Miller (chapter 4), it is to show that although the agents must be allowed to have some understanding of their own world, as often as not their intentional actions have led to consequences that were the very opposite of those intentions. The major dimensions of social conflict and contradiction revealed by analysis often cross-cut the supposed concerns attributed to intention. In no case is individual intention of itself the cause of observed patterns. Terms such as 'strategy' and 'representation' have meaning only in relation to the development of institutions and social relations. It is essential that any recourse to peoples as agents of prehistory maintains a conception of society commensurate with these strictures.

The second means by which we can avoid regressing into the older form of fetishised archaeology is by setting our studies of prehistory directly alongside historical archaeology and studies of contemporary material culture which use comparable theoretical models to analyse analogous situations. In the trajectory of the dialogue of which this volume forms a part, there are three major elements in the overall research strategy. Firstly there is research into the articulation between interpretations of the past and the social and political context of the present. These include studies of the manner in which the past is represented (Leone 1978), the form taken by archaeology in different social contexts (Miller 1980), and the implications of the social theory that pertains to these debates (Tilley 1981, 1981b, 1982a). These researches come alongside a growing interest in the implications of critical theory. Working with models of social action which seem plausible and pertinent in the analysis of our own actions as interpreters may break down the distance that otherwise allows the emergence of implausible mechanised and fetishised models of past peoples.

The second research emphasis is towards the analysis of contemporary societies, and the application of these models to the study of material culture. This has in the past, included studies of the creation and maintenance of spatial boundaries (Hodder 1979, 1982b), architecture (Donley 1982) ceramics (Braithwaite 1982, Miller 1982), the disposal of rubbish (Moore 1982), and mortuary practices (Parker-Pearson 1982). These have been carried out in both industrial and non-industrialised societies. A contingent interest is in the general development of material culture studies, including the critique of the covert role played in the reproduction of asymmetry in age and gender (Hodder 1982c, Miller Ed. 1983). By placing these studies alongside one another, as in this volume, the prehistoric material may be directly equated with the interpretation of living societies. This does not mean that archaeology cannot go beyond other branches of anthropology. On the contrary, it is precisely intended that it does so since the relationships between these elements are dialectical not parasitic. The archaeological record is used to indicate the subtle and active role played by material culture, and this in turn leads to attempts to 'excavate' the underlying strata of meaning formed by material culture in the modern world. Archaeological materials are usually temporally extensive and may reveal major shifts in the symbolic position held by similar artifacts in relation to ideology over time. Of the three studies in the second section of this volume, only one is conceived of as essentially synchronic, the other two are concerned with the changing denotation of ideologically informed practices, as they are confronted by different social contexts or alternative material representations.

Symbolic and Structural Archaeology (Hodder Ed. 1982a) was an exploratory volume communicating a disquiet and a set of possibilities for change. It related to a number of themes and maintained a diverse range of responses. Although many of the contributors are the same, this volume is not a sequel, which would have had to comprise a series of works on a number of interrelated topics. Rather, the present volume picks up and emphasises only a single theme, the critique of ideology, which was explicitly discussed in only two papers in that volume (Shanks and Tilley 1982, Shennan 1982). It is hoped that the present volume represents a relatively coherent set of discussions. This is not to say that the authors adopt similar approaches, or are in agreement with one another. On the contrary, the volume retains a variety of interpretations as to the most important implications of these ideas for archaeology and material culture studies. There is, however, a set of core problems to which all of the papers

relate. These concern the duality of the symbolic relations between past artifacts and past peoples, that is how the artifacts signified for the people who used them in the past and how the artifacts signify that process in turn for us, and how this process is mediated by power and the objectification of power. The area of debate is over how material practices give rise to conflicts in interest and to the nature of the role played by the material world in the representation and alteration of these practices. Having indicated the background to these concerns, we now examine the two concepts that provide the major instruments of the subsequent critical analysis; power and ideology.

Power

Discussions of power in social theory have tended to polarise according to a number of specific conceptual oppositions. Power has been conceived as *either* a property predicated on the actions of individuals, *or* as being a feature of collectivities. It has been regarded as the intentional, dispositional capacity of individuals to realise their objectives, or a structural feature of social systems. Power has been regarded as something which is either possessed or exercised and as being solely a negative, repressive phenomenon or a positive, productive element in social life. Concomitantly most theorists have worked from fairly narrow definitions connecting power with force or coercion (e.g. Mao's aphorism that power grows out of the barrel of a gun) or the capacity of agents to impose sanctions for non-compliance with their wishes by others: 'the chance of a man or a number of men to realise their own will in a social action even against the resistance of others' (Weber 1968, p. 926). Alternatively power has been conceived as being legitimate authority circulating in the social system in a manner equivalent to money (Parsons 1963), or as a generalised media of communication (Luhmann 1979). Lukes associates power *ipso facto* with clashes of interest: 'A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests' (Lukes 1974, p. 27), while to Poulantzas (1973) power arises from structurally determined class relations. Needless to say all this work has been based on conceptions of political practices in contemporary western societies. An alternative line of approach has been to erect elaborate typologies of different types of power, rather than relying on restrictive definitions. Attempts have been made to distinguish carefully between force, coercion, manipulation, persuasion, influence and authority, legitimate or illegitimate power (e.g. Lasswell and Kaplan 1950, Wrong 1979).

In the position taken in this chapter we wish to avoid conceptual splits between on the one hand, viewing power as either individualist/collectivist, in terms of possession/exercise, involving restricted definitional statements, and on the other hand, the erection of contentious and almost infinitely extendable typologies. Two senses of the noun power may be distinguished, *power to* and *power over* (Benton 1981, p. 176). By *power to* we refer to power as an integral and recursive element in all aspects of social life. *Power over*, by contrast, can be specifically related to forms of social control. While *power to* can be logically disconnected from coercion and asymmetrical forms of social domination and does not, therefore, imply *power over*, the latter sense of the noun power must always involve *power to*. At a very broad and general level both of these senses of power indicate an irreducible link between power as a capacity to modify or transform, referring to the ability of human subjects to act in and on the world and in definite relationships to each other. Power enables agents (individual or collective) to significantly and non-trivially alter, or attempt to alter, the conditions of their existence and the outcomes of determinate situations in specific social and material contexts.

Foucault (1977, 1980, 1981) has attempted, more convincingly than any other contemporary social theorist, to dispel the notion that power is inherently negative or repressive. This is the idea that power is a monolithic and unitary mechanism, or sets of mechanisms, that can 'do' nothing but say no; to deny, to constrain, to set limits, to prevent the actualisation of human potentialities in one way or another. Foucault's work maintains a clear break between traditional ways of conceptualising power in either Marxist or non-Marxist traditions. Both Marxist and 'liberal' views of power have tended to deduce it in one form or another from the economy. Power tends to be treated as a concrete possession analogous to a commodity which can be wielded, transferred, seized or alienated. The 'juridico-discursive' conception of power (Foucault 1981, p. 82) involves the propensity to analyse power relations in terms of the language and imagery of the law. Power is conceived as a concrete possession of individuals. The partial or total cession of this power of the part of individual subjects allows sovereignty or political power to be established.

In classical and revisionist Marxist conceptions power tends to be treated as a function of the economic. In other words power is related back to the mode of production and solely conceived in the role in which it plays in the maintenance of the social relations of production, linked in discussions of the capitalist mode of production with class domination. The *raison d'être* of political power is located in the economy as a determinant in the last instance (Althusser 1971, Poulantzas 1973, pp. 99–105).

In both positions, whether power ultimately arises from a 'contractual cession' or an economic base related to class interests, it is simply conceived as flowing from the top to the bottom of the social order, from the superstructural political forces (classes, state apparatuses or individual decision makers) who possess it and exercise it on subjected populations in either an overt or a covert manner. Foucault has effectively challenged the negative conception of power intrinsically associated with such positions:

> It is defined in a strangely restrictive way, in that, to begin with, this power is poor in resources, sparing of its methods, monotonous in the tactics it utilises, incapable of invention, and seemingly doomed always to repeat itself. Further, it is a power that only has the force of the negative on its side, a power to say no; in no condition to produce, capable only of posting limits, it is basically anti-energy. This is the paradox of its effectiveness: it is incapable of doing any-

> thing, except to render what it dominates incapable of doing anything either. (Foucault 1981, p. 85).

Power, rather than being simplistically conceived in terms of possession and/or a repressive role in inhibiting agents from fulfilling objectives, life-chances etc., should be conceived as having two sides or faces. On the one hand, power has a directly productive effect in social life and, on the other, a negative side linked to social control, hence the importance of the distinction introduced above between *power to* and *power over*.

Foucault stresses that power subjects bodies (people), not to render them passive, but as active beings. For example, the relationship of power to sexuality since the seventeenth century has not been just as a repressive mechanism pushing sexuality into the background, setting limits to it and controlling its forms and modes of expression (something we may be 'liberating' ourselves of now). The relationship has been productive of an ever increasing discourse and knowledge of (hence power in relation to) sexuality which has both denied it and extended, intensified and elaborated, its forms and practices. Because historically sexuality has become an object of analysis, surveillance and control, this has also directly engendered an intensification of individuals' desire for, in and over their bodies. In one sense power makes individuals what they are, it produces the social reality and the objects of discourse in which the individual is situated. To understand this requires a particular conception of the articulation between power and knowledge. Power produces both domains for its exercise and the reality in which it operates: 'power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful) . . . there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations' (Foucault 1977, 27). Knowledge is a condition of possibility for power relations, a knowledge which is not so much true or false, as legitimate or illegitimate in terms of power strategies. Power creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and bodies of information.

Accepting this conception of power as being both positive, and linked with the production of knowledge, we need to situate it in relation to social actions and practices.

Foucault's position can be briefly sketched as follows. By power Foucault does not mean, (i) institutions or mechanisms that ensure the subservience of the citizens of a particular state, (ii) forms of subjugation characterised by legitimate authority rather than coercion, (iii) class domination. These are the 'terminal forms' that power takes, rather than its locus or source. For instance, the state is conceived in terms of the overall strategies and effects of power. It is the effect of institutions and procedures and social establishments which themselves define the manner in which power is exercised. Power is not a unitary phenomenon, instead there are 'micro-powers' situated throughout the society. Power is to be found in specific institutions (hospitals, prisons, schools etc.), factories, state apparatuses, families, interest groups – in all social forms – but is never exactly located in them. Power operates and emanates from a multiplicity of centres via a variety of mechanisms. Power is never possessed by individuals or institutions but it is exercised by them. It is not appropriated for specific purposes hence to ask 'who holds power?' and 'what is the source of this power?' is neither relevant nor necessary. It is 'the moving substrate of force relations, which by virtue of their inequality, constantly engender states of power . . . the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in any particular society' (Foucault 1981, p. 93). A strategy is not possessed or formulated by any particular individual or state apparatus, but is a combination of a multiplicity of force relations arising throughout society characterised by their positioning, forms, techniques etc. Power is omnipresent in the social body.

All individuals and groups exercise power and are subject to its exercise. Power is not in some way external to definite types of social relations (economic, sexual, religious etc.) but part and parcel of them. Power comes from 'below' rather than 'on top' (state power) and forms a general matrix for social life. Where there is power there is also resistance or a plurality of resistances. The exercise of power sets up these resistances to its effectivity and these are its irreducible opposite.

Power relations, Foucault claims, are both intentional and non-subjective (1981, p. 94). From where, then, does intentionality arise? Power in Foucault's terms has a certain rationality because it is exercised with a series of aims and objectives. These are not attributable to any particular agent but arise 'anonymously' in the social body from the local situations or micro-powers in which they first appear. The rationality of power is characterised by the 'tactics' it uses. These tactics become connected to one another from the local micro-level at which they are first inscribed and end by forming comprehensive systems the logic and aim of which is clear whilst not being attributable to any inventor (1981, p. 95).

Contemporary western societies are portrayed in *Discipline and Punish* as being disciplinary societies. Discipline is one of the main techniques of power. It provides the primary mode of social subjection. Discipline is located in a wide variety of institutional forms (schools, prisons, the army, the police, hospitals, factories). Is it surprising then, Foucault asks, that prisons resemble factories, schools barracks and hospitals (Foucault 1977, p. 228). Discipline 'makes' individuals, it creates subjects because it is the result of a power that regards individuals as both the objects and instruments of its exercise. Discipline also has the effect of normalisation and corrects deviations from the norm. Power is exercised via careful observation and surveillance, by the comparative measure from the norm, hence the insane are more individualised by discourse than the sane, the patient more than the healthy, the child more than the adult. By comparing individuals by a continuous assessment in the form of examinations, collated medical reports, etc., discipline asserts a normalizing judgement. The norm around which power is exercised is, in the terms of Foucault's analysis, a real material and physical relation. There is little space for any consideration of ideological control. Foucault's conception of power-knowledge opposes the concept of ideology as either being a discourse opposed to science or as a feature of the social world, involving the 'management' and

representation of reality. His insistence on the positive, productive characteristics of contemporary power apparatuses, linked with the contention that the power-knowledge relation leads to a politics of truth, is the precise opposite of the Frankfurt school's critique of ideology (Foucault 1980, pp. 131–3; Gordon 1980, p. 237).

Notwithstanding the novelty of Foucault's analysis and the many insights to be gained, it cannot be accepted in toto for the following reasons: (i) accepting that power should not be conceived as a property belonging to an individual agent or a collectivity, power is still attributable to individuals and agents. This is neither a delusion nor a theoretical error and Foucault's conception of power fails to specify on what sort of basis this attribution can be made. Having ruled possession of power out of court, Foucault does not seem to consider this problem further. (ii) To suggest that power strategies have an object and a purpose but at the same time are still non-subjective is contradictory. Intentions may only be properly conceived as being attributable to human subjects or groups of individuals. Power strategies, as Foucault conceives them, like social systems can have no goals or objectives, but who then do they serve? (iii) To make resistance the irreducible opposite to power is to suggest that resistance is always present in relations of power, and to ignore ideology. Why should there be resistance to power if it is ideologically misrepresented, or is actually non-repressive, i.e. for the general good, unless one is to say that resistance to power, whatever its forms, is an existential part of human nature. (iv) To fail to attribute power to agents is also to fail to realise that power conveys definite psychological and material benefits: prestige, access to resources etc. Even if power cannot be possessed by agents, prestige and resources can as an effect of the operation of power be attributed to them. (v) Foucault's analysis tends to depoliticise power relations and the effect of political struggles in contemporary societies is left unanalysed.

Drawing on Foucault's analysis we conceive *power to* as a component of all social interaction and as a feature embedded in all social practices. This power draws upon and creates resources. Viewed at perhaps the most abstract level it can be regarded as a dispositional capability, neither possessed nor exercised or controlled by any particular agent or collectivity, but as a structural feature of social systems, which is only manifested through its effects on individuals, groups and institutions.

Power can be logically separated from either exploitation or social control, i.e. its effects need not necessarily promote repressive control. It is not a resource, something which can be used, but operates and produces effects through the resources drawn upon by social actors in their interrelationships with each other and an environmental milieu. Power, conceived as a dialectical moment in interaction, draws upon and creates resources and is present through its effects; on this basis it may be attributed to individuals, groups, institutions etc., who benefit from it.

These resources may be either material or non-material. By material resources is meant control over coercive media, possession of the means of production, raw materials etc. These are extrinsic resources drawn upon in power relationships. By non-material resources we refer to knowledges, skills, competences etc. These are intrinsic to individual social actors or collectivities. Resources are not dormant features but are actively produced through the material and symbolic praxis of agents. All power relationships are dependent upon access to an asymmetrical distribution of resources.

As such, power should be conceived as a positive force intimately involved in the production, reproduction and transformation of the social order and what counts as social reality (knowledge in and of the world). Power, then, as a component of praxis, involves the capacity to transform, to produce specific effects and outcomes as a result of the interaction of human subjects with their environment, involving necessarily 'the realisation of teleological positings' (Lukács 1980, p. 9).

Power over is the accomplishment of effects which can only be realised by an agent (individual or collective) through the agency of others. This means power enables an agent to get another agent to do/not to do something they would otherwise do/not do and this may be directly contrary to the objectives of the agent over whom this power is exercised. *Power over*, except in the limiting case of a bound prisoner, always involves a dialectical relationship between the power 'holder' and those upon whom power is exercised, as agents always have some resources, mental or material, to resist the exercise of power. Power relationships thus exhibit a dialectical asymmetry and will always be contingent. The effects produced by power are rarely, if ever, assured (Hindess 1982). Unintended effects may be produced and the outcome of a power relationship cannot be simply deduced by a process of adding up resources on either side.

In determinate social situations, where social control and exploitation are a regularised feature of life resulting in the differential restriction of life-chances for the majority of social agents, the production and maintenance of this control is likely to be both ineffective and unstable in the long run if the only resort to bolster control is by means of physical force or the threat of the use of such force in the form of coercive sanctions. The social order must be legitimised and the principles upon which control is based justified. One of the most powerful means of achieving this is the active production of a normative consensus naturalising and misrepresenting the extant nature of asymmetrical social relations so that they appear to be other than they really are. Ultimately all forms of power, whether analysed in terms of authority, persuasion or other related terms, can be reduced to either physical force (or its threat) or manipulation, where this power must produce its effects through the agency of others. This is because the use of power to further the objectives of specific interest groups will almost always entail the reproduction of the effects of this power for its own sake. The securing of this power is either irrelevant to, or more usually, directly contrary to, the interests and objectives of those subject to it.

Lukes' self-styled 'three-dimensional' conception of power stresses the importance of the ideological legitimation of the social order in which the effects of power may be analysed in part in terms of successfully misrepresenting social reality so that those subjected to power are largely unaware that this is contrary

to their interests: 'A may exercise power over B by getting him to do what he does not want to do, but he also exercises power over him by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants' (Lukes 1974, p. 23). This raises a whole series of problems. Firstly, the conception is based on the classical view that ideology is false consciousness which involves an empiricist conception of knowledge. Secondly, as Lukes views the exercise of power in all cases as being contrary to the interests of those subjected to it, the problem arises as how to determine the real or objective interests. This latter problem has been discussed at length (McLachlan 1981; Benton 1981, among others). Exactly how are an agent's interests to be conceived? Given that an agent's wishes, desires, actions etc., may be systematically manipulated by the active distortion of social reality on the part of those in positions of power, are his/her interests actually what the agent thinks or believes his/her interests are? Might there be a significant difference between an agent's 'objective' interests (i.e. discursively formulated) and 'real' interests? Real interests here refer to what the agent's interests would actually be if that agent were situated differently in relation to the material and social conditions of his/her existence. Does this mean that power is in this sense legitimate? Can power be used to affect an agent in opposition to his/her 'objective' interests but in accordance with what are supposed to be that agent's 'real' interests, and if so is this not a manifesto for totalitarianism? The nub of the problem is that given ideological forms of manipulation of the social order, in what manner will real interests of agents be determined? This problem can only be adequately resolved in relation to a detailed consideration of the nature of ideology. This is taken up below, but that discussion is predicated upon a notion of power as discussed here, which may be summarised by the following points:

(1) *Power to* is an integral element in social life, a component of all social practices, an existential part of human existence and can be disassociated from social control and domination, characterised by *power over*.
(2) Power may have some of its conditions of existence in the economic base, e.g. systems of labour exploitation but is not simply an affect of the economic.
(3) Power is both productive of knowledge and non-material resources, and a negative repressive element bolstering social inequalities.
(4) Power is dialectically related to resources, to operate it draws on these resources and in turn reproduces them.
(5) Power is not unitary, it cannot be tied down to a single essence or form.
(6) At one level power is neither possessed nor exercised but is a structural feature of the social totality only manifested at its point of constitution in social action and intereaction through its effects.
(7) Power is attributable to individuals, groups etc., not as possession but in terms of the effect of its exercise producing a structured asymmetry of resources.

Ideology: the approach

In focusing on the concept of ideology as a means of altering our perspective on the nature of the past, we have to hand a term that has developed over a considerable period and undergone many changes of meaning. Its history and development are succinctly presented by Larrain (1979). Most recently the notion of ideology has undergone a shift from being a relatively crude tool for the investigation of dominant interests and their legitimation, to becoming a much more subtle and sophisticated technique in the hands of anthropologists such as Bourdieu, or the social theorists following the Frankfurt school, in which the complex interplay of images and strategies are teased out and related to competing interests.

The scale of these interests is that of social convention and collective representation analysed at the level of observable variability. Ideology works, however, with somewhat different assumptions from the more traditional anthropological notion of culture with its dominant Durkheimian model of collective representation. The critique of ideology emphasises differences in interest and conflicts in representation, for a variety of groups within a society. The most fruitful arena of debate today is probably the feminist critique, that has moved from the more blatant examples of male dominance, to the more subtle forms of the reproduction of gender asymmetry as naturalised in the everyday and mundane features of the modern world.

The critique of ideology has been applied in the critical analysis of a range of problems. Current developments in anthropology are often directed at a much more fine-grained analysis than that which is intended here. The problematic addressed in this volume is more at the scale of the longer periods and larger regions that form the framework of most archaeological enquiries. One effect of this breadth of scale and also the sheer variety of social formations to which this critical analysis might be applied, is that it seems reasonable, at this stage, to develop a very broad reading of the concept of ideology itself. For example, we might use a general model of a group linked by interest, rather than attempting to specify what those interests might be, which is left to the specific application of the model to the historically contingent subject of analysis. Much of the debate over ideology is concerned with its precise application to the analysis of contemporary society. This development of a detailed 'archaeology' of capitalism may, however, be less useful as a guide, than the original inspiration from which the model derives.

The concept of ideology developed here is quite distant in a number of ways from that which is presented by Marx. Nevertheless, it is the case, that Marx's work represents the base-line from which virtually all subsequent discussion has developed. The present analysis returns to this base-line, but in a slightly unconventional manner. The discussion will focus, not upon what Marx and subsequent authors have said about the concept of ideology itself, although Marx's comments will be touched upon, but rather Marx's writings will be used to exemplify in themselves what such a concept might come to mean in practice. By not attempting to synthesise the vast literature that has grown up since, it is hoped to avoid much of what has become a convoluted and sometimes rather sterile debate, in favour of argument by example.

Specifically the investigation will revolve around a core aspect of the three volumes of Capital (which is also its opening section), that is Marx's 'labour theory of value'. This is not out of direct concern for that particular theory, but rather because it has become the prime example for a number of approaches to the nature of ideology. There will be three parts to this investigation. In the first instance the focus will be on the bourgeois conception of value as characterised by Marx, which is close to his own, more explicit model of ideology, as illustrated in other sections of Capital and in his earlier writings. Secondly, the investigation will turn to the concept of ideology as exemplified by his own presentation of the labour theory of value, and thirdly the investigation will turn to that which is implied by critiques of this theory.

Marx's labour theory of value

A clear presentation of the labour theory of value is found in the opening section of volume one of *Capital*. Marx can best be understood as positing a set of categories that are conceived of as relationships rather than entities (Ollman 1971, p. 13). He begins by presenting a series of dichotomies differentiating the concept of *value* from that of *use-value*. He argues for a twofold characterisation of labour. (a) The division of labour results in many different and specific kinds of work that in turn create the variety of objects. This specific labour produces the use-value of those objects. (b) These objects are also the product of abstract labour, i.e. that labour in general which has gone into their production, whatever its specific form. It is by embodying this abstract labour, that the object has value. Marx states: 'We see then that that which determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labour socially necessary, or the labour-time socially necessary for its production . . . Commodities, therefore, in which equal quantities of labour are embodied, or which can be produced in the same time, have the same value' (1974, p. 47).

The use-value of an object is directly observable as the potential utilitarian use to which it may be put; its value, by contrast, is an abstract attribute that is not immediately evident. Value only becomes clear when we consider exchange. Marx argues that exchange between objects is a very different phenomenon from that which is usually presented. He notes that in order to exchange objects as commodities, they have to be reduced to an equivalence, i.e. their value. It is because they all embody quantities of labour-power, which gives them their value, that they may be seen as commensurate and exchangeable. Marx states: 'It is the expression of equivalence between different sorts of commodities that alone brings into relief the specific character of labour-creating value, and this it does by actually rendering the different varieties of labour embodied in the different kinds of commodities to their common quality of human labour in the abstract' (1974, p. 57).

In a series of stages, Marx shows how this abstract equivalence becomes in the capitalist economy transformed into money. Money therefore acts not only as a standard for price, but also: 'It is a measure of value inasmuch as it is the socially recognised incarnation of human labour' (1974, p. 100). This argument is relatively straightforward, but its implications for the workings of the highly complex political economy of capitalism occupies Marx for the weighty three volumes of Capital. The entire work is, however, a continuation of the same argument. Marx attempts to demonstrate systematically how a whole range of terms used in economics are in fact based upon the social relations of production. He argues for example that it is not in exchange that profit is produced as claimed, since 'Circulation, or the exchange of commodities, begets no value' (1974, p. 161). To obtain value the capitalist must find something that creates value and is available for sale. He therefore depends on the labour power that he can purchase. Since the workers cannot obtain the tools or machines needed to translate their work into commodities, they are forced to sell themselves to the owner of the means of production. The capitalist therefore obtains surplus value, by all the work the labourer does over and above that necessary for the reproduction of his or her own labour, that is the feeding of the family, or if all the family are put to work, then merely the feeding of the individual.

As Marx delves into the different forms these relations take, the argument, although of the same nature, becomes more complex. In the second and third volumes Marx shows how many other economic terms, such as rent or a variety of forms of capital, may be revealed as transformations of value. The pivot of the analysis remains the socially necessary labour to produce a commodity at a given level of the productive forces. The form of this analysis indicates the material connections that bind these various aspects of the capitalist process. There are also connections of another form in the manner in which these processes are represented, both the representation by the capitalist (Mepham 1979) and the analysis of Marx (Ollman 1971) must be understood as structured discourse.

Of the three perspectives from which this argument may be analysed for an understanding of the workings of ideology, the first, and that which Marx himself had in mind when he writes about the concept of ideology, are the actions and contingent beliefs held by the bourgeois and repudiated in his argument. In the bourgeois scheme of things, these same economic categories which Marx reveals as stemming from value, are taken as real in themselves. For them, there is no such category as abstract labour value. For the capitalist it is indeed exchange which produces profit. On most of the points of the above argument, the perspective of the bourgeois and that of Marx are quite contradictory. For Marx, abstract labour produces value which allows for the existence of money, for the capitalist it is money that produces equivalence between commodities and that labour may in turn be measured against. For the ordinary capitalist, use-value and price, are the only 'value' of concern.

The essential difference between the perspective taken by Marx and that of the bourgeois is brought out in a section of *Capital* termed the 'fetishism of commodities'. In this section Marx explains, how it is that what ought to be obvious appears not to be seen. It is 'because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their labour *is presented to them* as a social relation, existing not between themselves,but between the products of their labour' (Marx 1974, p. 77). The bourgeois model of the

political economy makes sense as a relation between things in terms of prices and profits and exchange, in which people meet in terms of their relationship with commodities, i.e. as owners or sellers, but it makes no sense as an account of the relationship between people. Rubin argues therefore that 'the theory of fetishism is, per se, the basis of Marx's entire economic system, and in particular of his theory of value' (Rubin 1972, p. 5).

The bourgeois model of the world is essentially their representation of what is taking place from the point of view of their interests. Marx makes clear that it is this point of perspective that is crucial in explaining why the world appears to them as it does. An example is the nature of exchange. To the ordinary non-capitalist buyer or seller, an exchange will usually appear as commodity–money–commodity, for example they obtain money by selling their labour power and with that money, purchase a commodity. To the capitalist, however, who may be part of precisely the same exchange but is entering and leaving at a different point the process may present itself as money–commodity–money.

If this representation of the political economy by the bourgeois is taken as an example of the bourgeois ideology, its characteristics start to emerge. Clearly it is a representation of the world that is in the interests of and from the perspective of the bourgeois. The second important attribute is that it is not merely an abstracted theory, on the contrary it is a description of how the capitalist does indeed work. 'The circulation of things – to the extent that they acquire the specific social properties of value and money – does not only express production relations among men, but it creates them' (Rubin 1972, pp. 10–11). Representation is of importance not as mere presentation, but because the subject attempts to reproduce the world in the image from which it is understood and apprehended. The capitalist goes about his or her daily work calculating profit, planning investment precisely in accordance with the bourgeois ideology of relations between things. The emphasis in *Capital* is on the origin of ideology in the opacity of the phenomenal form of everyday action (Mepham 1979, see also his discussion of the mystification of the wage form pp. 153–5).

The next attribute of the bourgeois representation as ideology is that it has a moral foundation. Marx most often presents details of the bourgeois conception (that is the ordinary capitalist as opposed to the academic theorist), when he illustrates how the capitalist is attempting to legitimate the continuation of the status quo in opposition to some reform measure proposed in government such as the factory acts. Two features are of importance here. (a) The bourgeois account is not taken as a defensive constructed representation, but, on the contrary, is assumed to be the natural and unquestionable order of things. This character of naturalness is the first legitimatizing property of the representation. It is obviously reinforced by the extent to which the bourgeois has succeeded in creating the world in the image of this representation. (b) The bourgeois represent their world as in accordance with a set of principles centred on the concept of individual liberty: every individual is free to work to his or her own advantage, and it is essential that the government be prevented from curbing this liberty of the individual.

Another aspect of this bourgeois representation is what it ignores, and that is the possibility of another perspective emerging because of the emergence of a class in contradiction to itself. While this model is from the perspective of and in the interests of the bourgeois, it is contradicted from that of worker, the proletariat. While it is legitimated by the freedom of the bourgeois to exploit, it is contradicted from the simultaneous further deprivation of the proletariat, who have become free only to sell their labour power, and create slaves of themselves. It is important to note that ideology is not equated with the entire actions, beliefs or representations of the world held by a given group. It is only when those representations are generated by a conflict of interests and an assymmetry of power that is in turn reproduced through these representations that we confront the phenomenon of ideology (Larrain 1983, p. 15).

Our initial concept of ideology can then be summarised as it is exemplified by the bourgeois representation of the political economy. Ideology is the representation of the world held by the dominant group in the society, and is also the rationale which guides their everyday actions. It is a representation that accords with the interests of that group and that emanates from the perspective of that group. It centres on its model of the political economy but includes a moral legitimation of the whole of society. It is contradicted by the existence of an exploited group whose interests it does not represent. It may therefore be seen as mystifying in that it makes appear as natural and correct that which is partial, and that it makes appear as coherent that which fails to acknowledge the contradictions it encompasses. Finally it is characterised by both deriving from and being a representation of the material world, and it is the dialectical relation between these two; representation and action, in actual material practice, that is comprehended by Marx's own profound concept of praxis.

Ideology in Marx's account of capitalism

The second account of the concept of ideology may be taken by focusing, not on what Marx takes to be the bourgeois representation, but rather as is exemplified by Marx's own account. Marx presents his work as a scientific discovery. In a preface he compares himself to a physicist, who has recovered the elementary and simple basis of the money-form. The basis of the discovery is the differentiation of value and use-value based on the twofold character of labour as abstract and specific. For Marx then, his discovery was as a recovery of something real from beneath the bourgeois representation, which was a mystification that served to hide this reality. It may be noted that Marx talks of mystification rather than illusion, the concept of ideology appears to have a reality for Marx based on two realms, the material and the ontological. The material reality of ideology that conceives of it as distortion of something that has a material base, is clear in Marx's earlier writings about ideology itself: 'men developing their material production and material intercourse, alter, along with their real existence, their thinking and the products of their