

Introduction

Consider a few simple anecdotes that may clarify the topic of this book and hint at its basic tenets.

The first one relates to an old friend who once said, when our conversation turned to a war that was front-page news at the time, “Let ideologies die, let people live.” A lifetime of experience lay behind this recipe. Born a Bolivian German, he received his education in Germany in the 1930s. Imbued with Nazi propaganda, he enlisted, was sent to the eastern front, and survived a dangerous head injury, but would have gone back to fight if he had been strong enough after his recovery. His beliefs were not shaken until most of the cruel and criminal realities of the Nazi regime had been fully exposed, forcing the viewpoint of the victims upon anyone who did not refuse to see. During the days when we were neighbors in his new home country, the USA, he used to frown a bit sadly whenever his president explained why another war needed to be fought. *Déjà vu*. And he understood why the rhetoric worked.

In a different context, I listened to Regina Schwartz’s story of how she used to teach about the Bible with great enthusiasm. She viewed the Exodus as the central event of the narrative, a myth of liberation directly relevant to cries for freedom and emancipation movements of the day. Until a student asked, “What about the Canaanites?” This embarrassing shift of perspective, focusing on the conquest and exile of the ‘Others’, led to her book-length answer to the student’s question, *The Curse of Cain* (Schwartz 1997), in which she unveils the other side of the Bible as a story of collective identity construction (one God, one land, one people, one nation) which may lend itself – and often did – to endless legitimations of violence and injustice.

The third anecdote bears on personal experience as a seventeen-year-old Flemish student in the late 1960s, when I participated in a demonstration demanding separation between the Francophone and the Flemish parts of the University of Leuven, and the removal of the Francophone section from the Flemish city of Leuven altogether. Riding the waves of the international student movement of those days, we were led to believe that we were fighting for democracy by returning to Francophone Belgium their own university (which would make it less ‘elitist’) while safeguarding Flanders from another ‘oil slick’ such as the bilingual (but French-dominated) Brussels spreading in the middle of Flemish

territory.¹ Years later, as a graduate student in Berkeley, a Jewish-American fellow student asked me during a dinner party to explain why the University of Leuven had to be split in two. It struck me that I had never really questioned the measures that were taken, even though in the process an entire new city was created, Louvain-la-Neuve. I did not get beyond the reproduction of common-places such as “Otherwise Leuven would have become another Brussels.” “What is so terrible about Brussels?” my interrogator continued. I parroted some more platitudes until the cross-examination culminated in a verdict: “Look, Nazi prosecution of German Jews did not start with concentration camps – it started with relocations!” It did not take me too much longer, fortunately, to understand that the ‘Belgian model’ for dealing with diversity, which I had never questioned (imagine, an aspiring linguist not questioning the institutionalization of a language border, nor the equation – even if metaphorical – of the spread of a language with environmental pollution!), was in fact a peaceful version of what would, years later, be called ‘ethnic cleansing.’

These are just three anecdotes, but each of them illustrates the strength of what is commonly referred to as *ideology*. Once ways of thinking about relations between groups of people are felt to be ‘normal’, they may become powerful tools for legitimating attitudes, behavior, and policies, whatever the frequently negative consequences in terms of discrimination, patterns of dominance, and even violence. Each of the anecdotes also shows, however, that changes of perspective are possible. Such shifts usually require critical incidents, but since ideological struggle (and, by extension, most social struggle) centers around *meaning*, simple acts of *questioning* may be enough. Its power and its changeability² turn ideology into a necessary object of systematic scrutiny in the social sciences. Research may not only help us to gain a better understanding of some of the processes of meaning generation that affect everyone’s life, but it may also provoke the kind of questioning needed to pave the way for attempts at improving the fate of the less powerful. This expression of hope is purposefully naïve, aware of the limited contribution a researcher can make, but refusing to

¹ Note the subtly aberrant use of “returning.” The Francophone section of the University of Leuven had never been anywhere outside Leuven, where French and later (Flemish) Dutch became the languages of teaching after Latin had been abandoned. For those too young to remember, or too far removed: The establishment of a language border in 1963 created two officially monolingual territories in Belgium, the outcome of what started as an emancipatory struggle ending the *de facto* dominance of French in public institutional life in spite of the numerical majority of Flemish speakers. It left only Brussels as a bilingual island in otherwise Flemish territory. In that context, the presence of a partly Francophone institution in the Flemish city of Leuven was felt to be an ‘undemocratic’ anomaly by many Flemish politicians and activists.

² Changeability takes different forms. It may also mean, for instance, that perspectives are not necessarily applied logically in the same way to the same types of phenomena at different times or in different contexts. I will come back to this property of ideologies later. But it may be useful to point to an example here: The old friend from the first anecdote suddenly showed fewer objections when the bombing of Yugoslavia started under the Clinton administration. Yugoslavia was at the time the only remaining European communist country; though he had obviously shed the old Nazi ideology, it may simply have been harder to get rid of the corresponding (but easily detachable) anti-communism.

be immobilized by such awareness. The limitations are serious indeed. In order to have any impact, changes of perspective should extend beyond the individual. Some of the more effective instruments to bring this about are education and the mass media; though both are indeed instruments of change, they are also entangled in the structures of power that will resist change.³ Moreover, any new perspective is susceptible to unpredictable transformations and applications. A permanent monitoring of ideological processes, therefore, is imperative.

In other words, I fully side with Eagleton's (2007, p. xxiii) observation that "it is because people do not cease to desire, struggle and imagine, even in the most apparently unpropitious of conditions, that the practice of political emancipation is a genuine possibility." However constraining frames of thought may be, people do not just passively absorb them; the importance – and potential – of agency should never be ignored.

There has been a lot of theorizing about ideology. It would take us too far – and within the scope of one small book certainly not far enough – to give an overview. For a history of the concept and an overview of its various manifestations, I would refer the reader to McLellan (1995), Heywood (2007), and Billig (1982), depending on whether one wants a brief introduction, a focus on political issues, or an emphasis on social-psychological implications, respectively. An interesting selection of readings, some more basic than others, is to be found in Žižek (ed.) (1994). Theoretically coherent treatments of the topic, from an angle that is closely related to my own, are developed by Thompson (1984, 1990, 1995) and – possibly with the closest affinity to the tenets of this book – by Eagleton (2007). Also relevant is the tradition of the sociology of knowledge (Mannheim 1936, Berger and Luckmann 1966), which often deals with ideological issues without using that term, as well as the microsociological, praxis-oriented, often ethnomethodological studies of the situated production of knowledge (e.g., Garfinkel 1967, Goffman 1981). For a critical elaboration of some of the fundamental issues involved in the connections between discourse and power or between discourse and knowledge, in relation to which ideology can be defined, the reader may turn, for instance, to Bourdieu (1991), Foucault (1972), or the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory (e.g., Habermas 1979). My own theoretical starting point is summarized as briefly as possible in Chapter 1 of this book.⁴

What must be kept in mind from the outset is that my use of the term 'ideology' bears on much more mundane and everyday processes than the grand political

³ On a similar note, Hobsbawm (1997, p. 363) says, "The third limitation on the historian's function as mythslayer is even more obvious. In the short run they are impotent against those who choose to believe historical myth, especially if they hold political power, which, in many countries, and especially the numerous new states, entails control over what is still the most important channel of imparting historical information, the schools." He adds: "These limitations do not diminish the public responsibility of the historian."

⁴ Further reading: Ball and Dagger (2001, 2004), Baradat (1999), Barth (1961), Bell (1960), Boudon (1986), Decker (2004), Eagleton (ed.) (1994), Hawkes (2003), Larrain (1994), Meyer *et al.* (eds.) (2009), Smith (2001), Susser (1988), Talshir, Humphrey and Freedman (eds.) (2006), Taylor (2010), Žižek (ed.) (1989, 2005).

strands of thought it is usually associated with (such as liberalism, conservatism, socialism, Marxism, nationalism, anarchism, fascism, fundamentalism, and the like). This is true even if my opening anecdotes touch upon ways of thinking that are not unrelated to what goes under such ‘isms.’ Moreover, I explicitly distance myself from a reification of ideology that would posit it as an autonomous reality in the world of thought in contrast with discourse, or with history, in such a way as to talk of dominance and hegemony as facts rather than processes. In other words, praxis and processes are the real focus.

In contrast to the abundance of theories, there is a true scarcity of methodological reflections and in particular of research guidelines. When guidelines are formulated, either they tend to remain vague or they give the impression that simple steps can lead from observations to interpretations. A lack of procedural openness often leads to conclusions with insufficiently explained foundations, while a lack of procedural systematicity may produce results that make it hard to distinguish between preconceived ideas, research findings, and mere speculation.⁵ The main purpose of this book, then, is to reflect on methodological requirements for empirical ideology research, and in particular to offer procedures for engaging with ideology in practice.⁶ Without, at this stage, going into the details of what ‘ideology’ may mean precisely, it should be clear that here the term is not used unless social phenomena, processes, and relations are at stake. The study of ideology, therefore, is not a gratuitous endeavor. It always touches upon issues of great consequence. Its findings may also have consequences, or efforts may be made to use or abuse them in the pursuit of specific goals affecting the lives of real people. As a result, a serious degree of responsibility is involved and the need for methodical analysis, controllability, and accuracy can hardly be overestimated. I hope to bring research practice closer to those ideals with the proposals that make up the substance of this book. Hence the desire to formulate guidelines for research that is truly ‘empirical’ – not to be confused with ‘empiricist.’ A side effect may be that the guidelines themselves, though inspired by a theoretical position on the notion of ideology, may turn ideology into a more ‘operational’ notion, thus eliminating some of the fuzziness in which it tends to be couched.

The venture is ‘reflexive’ in a literal sense. The need for it developed in the course of research into a societal debate surrounding the presence of ‘migrants’ in Belgium and in particular in Flanders.⁷ This research was not originally

⁵ See, for instance, my (Verschueren 2001) critique of a type of critical discourse analysis, as represented by Norman Fairclough (1992), as well as my more general warnings (in Verschueren 1999c) related to the risk of ideologized research in the wider domain of linguistic pragmatics (i.e., the science of language use). Helpful examples or overviews of methods of discourse and text analysis, many of them relevant for ideology research, can be found in Cap (2002), Jalbert (ed.) (1999), Mann and Thompson (1992), Renkema (ed.) (2009), Titscher *et al.* (1998), and Wodak and Meyer (eds.) (2009).

⁶ Two highly recommended recent books with goals close to my own, but different in approach and with a different scope, are Chilton (2004) and Scollon (2008).

⁷ The research in question has been reported in numerous publications, including Blommaert and Verschueren (1991b, 1993, 1994, and in particular 1998); the scope of the same line of research

defined as ideology research at all, and there was no definition of ideology at its source. Rather, it was a spinoff of an earlier interest in problems of intercultural and international communication.⁸ In a heterogeneous social world – i.e., in *any* social world – questions about communication beyond the level of the purely individual (and sometimes even at that level) are inseparable from ideas about group identities and intergroup relations. Similarly, questions related to the discourse on ‘migrant problems’ turned out to be inseparable from ideas about what a society should look like. Hence our shorthand description of the minority–majority debate, as conducted in this case primarily by members of the majority, as *a debate on diversity*. For reasons that will become clear in Chapter 1, this overarching issue can only be described as ideological. Hence the redefinition of an investigation into a specific intercultural communication topic as a type of ideology research. It is this investigation that, retroactively, will serve as a first systematic point of reference for the more general theoretical and methodological reflections in this book (mainly in Chapters 1 and 2). For the sake of brevity, it will be referred to, whenever necessary, as our ‘migrant research’.

One other type of data source, of a strictly historical nature, will be used equally systematically but much more extensively, starting with the general theoretical and methodological principles (in Chapters 1 and 2) all the way through the details of research guidelines and procedures (in Chapter 3). It consists in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century discourse on (parts of) the colonial world and colonization in French and British history textbooks, starting in particular from Lavis (1902) and narrowing the topic to accounts of the 1857 ‘Indian Mutiny’ in a wide range of British counterparts. In contrast to the migrant research, which can be looked back upon to be evaluated in terms of the principles put forward in this book (though the materials are too elaborate for them to be a usefully coherent point of reference when we come to detailed guidelines and procedures), the history book materials have not yet been the subject of a full analysis and are adduced for the purposes of illustrating actual research processes, showing how the relevant questions can be asked and the appropriate steps can be taken in conducting an ideology-oriented investigation; needless to say, the ‘reflection’ involved here is of a different nature.

The temptation to supplement systematic reference to the ‘debating diversity’ or ‘migrant’ research (in Chapters 1 and 2) and these historical textbook writings bearing on aspects of colonization (in Chapters 1, 2 and 3) with more sporadic examples (which could be amply provided by accounts of events in the world today) will be resisted. For different types of examples, the reader may consult

was extended beyond Belgium into the realm of European nationalist tendencies in Blommaert and Verschueren (1992, 1996), Meeuwis (1993), and D’hondt, Blommaert and Verschueren (1995). Earlier attempts at deriving methodological guidelines and procedures are reflected in Verschueren (1995, 1996) and in chapter 8 of Verschueren (1999b).

⁸ This earlier interest is reflected in Verschueren (1984, 1985a, 1989) as well as in Blommaert and Verschueren (eds.) (1991a).

earlier work leading up to this book,⁹ while it should be clear that the recommendations in the following pages are intended to be relevant for any topically selected discourse-based study of ideological patterns and processes.¹⁰

The theoretical Chapter 1 will be followed by ‘rules of engagement’ (Chapter 2), the most general preliminary guidelines for engaging with ideology. Chapter 3, the bulkiest part of this book, will go into the more practical guidelines and procedural details specifying how to investigate ideology empirically. This enterprise goes against the grain of a widespread anti-methodological stance, as embodied in the suggestion “that more understanding is to be gained by using the traditional, ill-defined skills of scholarship than by following a rigorous, up-to-date methodology” (Billig 1988, p. 199). The main challenge will be to avoid a situation in which “The reliance upon a single methodology would inevitably dull the critical edge” (Billig 1991, p. 22), while at the same time being precise enough to make the guidelines operational. This may amount to showing that a clear set of guidelines and procedures, based on equally clear general principles, formulated in such a way that it is adequate for the empirical study of ideology, should never be describable as ‘a single methodology’ and does not fit the caricature of methodology as an impersonal set of rules that will inevitably lead two researchers to identical results.¹¹ A methodologically adequate approach should enable two researchers to sensibly compare and evaluate their results beyond the mere voicing of contrasting opinions.

⁹ In particular, D’hondt, Blommaert and Verschueren (1995), Meeuwis (1993), Verschueren (1996, 1999b, 2001). The growing literature on language ideologies provides another ‘case’ with systematic alternative sets of examples; see, e.g., Bauman and Briggs (2003), Blommaert (ed.) (1999b), Gal and Woolard (eds.) (2001); for an overview, Kroskrity (2010).

¹⁰ See, e.g., Verschueren, Östman and Meeuwis (2002) for a specific field of investigation defined as the monitoring of international communication, which can easily be seen as an endeavor that would benefit from an application of the methods advocated in this book.

¹¹ The wording of this sentence was inspired by the fact that Billig’s (1988) plea for “traditional scholarship” as opposed to “a rigorous, up-to-date methodology” adduces only an example of quantitative content analysis to illustrate the inadequacy of “methodology” to achieve an understanding of ideology. That is what I am alluding to as a caricature of methodology.

1 Language use and ideology

Though the concept started its career that way, ‘ideology’ is no longer seen as the systematic analysis of sensations and ideas which should provide the basis for all scientific knowledge.¹ Ideology is no longer an academic discipline, but rather an object of investigation. It is related to *ideas*, *beliefs*, and *opinions*, but this relationship is not a straightforward one. Ideas, beliefs, and opinions, as such, do not make ideology. Simplifying a bit, they are merely ‘contents of thinking,’ whereas *ideology* is associated with *underlying patterns of meaning*, *frames of interpretation*, *world views*, or *forms of everyday thinking and explanation*. Thus the ways in which beliefs, ideas, or opinions are discursively used, i.e. their *forms of expression* as well as the *rhetorical purposes* they serve, are just as important for ideology as the contents of thinking for which these three terms serve as labels.²

Let me illustrate this first point by asking whether there is anything ideological about an utterance such as the final one in the introduction to this book:

A methodologically adequate approach should enable two researchers to sensibly compare and evaluate their results beyond the mere voicing of contrasting opinions.

This utterance certainly expresses an idea or opinion and – unless it is insincere – a belief. In order to identify ideological content, however, a deeper level of meaning would have to be found that we may expect to serve as a wider frame of interpretation or as a pattern of explanation that can be directed at multiple targets, thus with the potential of transcending the *ad hoc* character of the example under consideration. One such meaningful element, reflected in but not recoverable with certainty from the quoted utterance, could be the general way of thinking about language (i.e., possibly a ‘language ideology’) that enables the author to refer to “the mere voicing of contrasting opinions.” Implicitly, this phrase presents language (“voicing”) as a potentially straightforward (“mere”) vehicle

¹ I am referring to the French philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy who launched this endeavor in 1796 in order to spread the ideas of the Enlightenment. The scholars who worked with him in the pursuit of this goal are generally known as *les idéologues*. See Destutt de Tracy (1803).

² When we talk about ideas, beliefs, and opinions, we generally think of highly differentiated mental phenomena (measurable, for instance, by means of opinion polls, designed to identify types and degrees of variability). One could be tempted, therefore, to regard them as the volatile and variable counterparts to supposedly stable patterns and frames that would constitute ideology. However, it would be misleading to ignore the dynamics and variability characterizing ideology itself, as will be shown later.

for the expression of ideational contents (“opinions”) which may be identifiably separable (“contrasting”) entities. Let us call this perspective on language, for the time being, the ‘vehicle view of language.’³ Whether the present author actually subscribes to that view is irrelevant at this point but will have to be addressed later.

A second aspect of a first approximation of the concept of ideology can also be discussed in relation to the closing utterance in my introduction. In addition to expressing an idea, that utterance is also a *maxim*, a succinctly formulated basic principle or rule of conduct. It expresses a (research) *attitude*, adherence to certain *values*, and even a (research) *mentality*. This observation, in its own right, is not enough to qualify the utterance unequivocally as an ideological claim. Ideological patterns of meaning are rarely so plainly prescriptive. Typically, *ideology* – and hence its discursive manifestation – *balances description and prescription* (both of which can be explicit and implicit to varying degrees). In other words, it involves theories of how things are in combination with theories of how things should be. An explicit rule of conduct, as in the utterance under discussion, by no means guarantees the presence of a general underlying pattern of meaning and interpretation that would deserve the label ideology. The prescriptiveness of ideology consists mainly in a form of *normativity* that is akin to *commonsensicality*. The products of common-sense reflections (mainly descriptive) are turned into norms (both in the sense of what is seen as normal, and in the regulative and prescriptive sense). Furthermore, the common sense in question is not the invention of individuals, but common sense with a history, common sense that members of a wider community appeal to in order to be persuasive. Hence, nothing can be said on this score about the ideological caliber of the utterance without a further exploration of the wider discourse it fits into, much of which is still to be produced/interpreted at the time this sentence is written/read.⁴

Before moving on, I should not leave any doubt about the fact that ideology is a fully integrated *sociocultural-cognitive phenomenon*.⁵ As the notion of

³ Linguists will recognize this ‘vehicle view of language’ as an instance of what Reddy (1979) called the “conduit metaphor” describing an everyday pattern of talk about talk according to which thoughts are wrapped in a linguistic form which then serves as a conduit before the thoughts are unwrapped in the interpretation process.

⁴ An interesting connection should be pointed out between what I have said so far and the notion of *permissible statements* or *utterances*. When statements or utterances are felt *not* to be ‘permissible,’ this is usually related to what common sense dictates as a norm within a given community, and hence to ideology.

⁵ A strong argument for not forgetting the cognitive dimension is made by Chilton (2005). Note that neither cognition nor society/culture can be seen as taking precedence over the other. In theories of ideology, the focus may shift from one to the other. Thus Eagleton (2007, p. 19) describes Althusser’s view of ideology as a shift “from a *cognitive* to an *affective* theory of ideology,” adding:

– which is not necessarily to deny that ideology contains certain cognitive elements, or to reduce it to the merely ‘subjective’. It is certainly subjective in the sense of being subject-centred: its utterances are to be deciphered as expressive of a speaker’s attitudes or lived relations to the world.

‘common’ sense implies, cognition is not seen as a purely individual property of human beings, even though each individual carries a unique apparatus in which the processing takes place – Vygotsky’s (1978) “mind in society.”⁶ What makes ideology special as a cognitive phenomenon, while it shares social situatedness with most other higher forms of cognitive processing, is that it also has aspects of society as its object (the next point to be clarified) and that its social situatedness involves a specific form of intersubjectivity or sharing (to be explained later), as well as affect and stance.⁷

A third general property of ideology, then, already hinted at in the Introduction and further underscored in the previous paragraph, is that the normative or commonsensical frames of interpretation which the term refers to bear on aspects of *social reality*. This is meant in a wide sense, including sociohistorical, socio-political, sociocultural, and similar aspects. But, for instance, ideas about the shape of the earth are not ideological under this definition, even though changes in such beliefs may be induced or hampered by ideological processes. Within the realm of social reality, of particular importance are *social relations in the sphere of publicness*, i.e., the public positioning of people in relation to each other, usually involving the level of (perceived) groups.⁸ More often than not, *relations of power and dominance* are involved. That is why Thompson’s (1990, pp. 7, 56) definition of ideology as “*meaning in the service of power*,” and his view of ideology research as the study of “*the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination*” touches the very core of what we should be interested in.

Yet, there are good reasons not to restrict social relations in the public sphere *a priori* to relations of domination for the purposes of ideology research. For one thing, at the theoretical level, powerless and dominated groups may – and usually do – have their ideologies too. Moreover, there is a good methodological reason. Whether patterns of meaning bear on social issues or on social relations is a matter of relatively straightforward analytical observation. But what functions are served by that meaning in relation to social patterns – the establishment and sustenance of domination being one such function – is an entirely empirical issue

Note also that the debate over cognitivism in the social sciences is very much alive, and that there are good reasons to argue against purely cognitivist interpretations in favor of giving center stage to constitutive practices (see, e.g., Dupret 2011, Watson and Coulter 2008).

⁶ This entire book is formulated against the background of a theory of linguistic pragmatics (as presented in Verschueren 1999b) to which the notion of ‘mind in society’ is very important. Central to the theory is the notion of adaptability (see Verschueren and Brisard 2002) which allows us, amongst other things, to talk systematically about processes of language use in terms of their status *vis-à-vis* the medium of adaptability which is the human mind, seen as the seat of cognitive abilities that have an essential link with the intersubjective level of society.

⁷ In Eagleton’s (2007, p. 20) words: “Ideological statements, then, would seem to be subjective but not private [...] On the one hand, ideology is no mere set of doctrines but the stuff which makes up uniquely what we are, constitutive of our very identities; on the other hand it presents itself as an ‘Everybody knows that,’ a kind of anonymous universal truth.”

⁸ I realize that the term ‘public’ evokes its opposite ‘private,’ that the distinction is not always so clear, and that it may even be related to aspects of language ideology (see Gal 2005). It is used here in an untheorized everyday sense.

that can, at best, be decided only upon completion of the analysis. Taking the final utterance of the introduction as our example again, if it can be established that the utterance is the expression of a vehicle view of language, it may also be the case that it represents a type of language ideology that allows institutions of various types (e.g., academia) to establish and maintain an in-group's domination by imposing certain communicative norms on others whose conceptualization and handling of language may not fit the same paradigm. Clearly a whole lot of analytical work would have to be done to establish the plausibility of such an interpretation, and a domination perspective cannot be taken as the starting point for the analysis. Even if simply differing views of language were involved that affect aspects of social interaction and relationships, of which none could be said to be dominant, that would not make the patterns of meaning that are at issue any less 'ideological.'

The strong focus on processes of domination in which meaning plays a role, even if it results from analyses, rather than antedating them, is the reason why ideology research is predominantly a critical enterprise, even if we do not follow Engels in his characterization of ideology as 'false consciousness.'⁹ The relation of all this to politics should be clear, where struggle is central and takes the form of *struggles over meaning* (categorization, highlighting, and perception – all to be discussed later) and *struggles over norms*. Thus typical 'ideological themes' can be seen to emerge, such as *identity*, which invoke further themes such as *prejudice* and *stereotyping*.¹⁰

On the basis of these elementary observations, I can try to present a preliminary definition of ideology in the form of the following thesis:

Thesis 1: We can define as ideological any basic pattern of meaning or frame of interpretation bearing on or involved in (an) aspect(s) of social 'reality' (in particular in the realm of social relations in the public sphere), felt to be commonsensical, and often functioning in a normative way.

Note the single quotation marks enclosing 'reality,' warding off suspicions that ontological claims are involved concerning a reality outside the meaning in

⁹ The study of ideology as a critical enterprise goes back to Karl Marx (see, e.g., 1977), whose position it was that what makes ideas into ideology is their connection with the conflictual nature of social and economic relationships. We also find this view very strongly in Althusser (see, e.g., 1971a, 1971b), who sees ideology in capitalist society as the cement that fixes a system of class domination. Such a critical angle, which was totally absent from the work of the French *idéologues*, was also suspended in the writings of Lenin (see, e.g., 1969) and Lukács (see, e.g., 1971), and in much of the work of Mannheim (see, e.g., 1936). These authors viewed ideology less negatively, either as a function of the political goal of promoting a proletarian ideology as a positive social force (as in the case of Lenin), or in order to objectify the study of ideology in such a way that the same type of analysis could be used for systems of thought that one wanted to criticize and for one's own thought (as in the case of Mannheim). For an extensive discussion of the false consciousness view of ideology (recently resurrected by Bénabou 2008), see Rosen (1996).

¹⁰ For a classic treatment of prejudice, see Allport (1979).