

# The Review of Politics

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## The Structure of Modern Ideology

By Francis G. Wilson

"THEORIES of Government!" exclaims Thomas Carlyle in the early pages of *The French Revolution*. "Such has been, and will be; in ages of decadence. Acknowledge them in their degree; as processes of Nature, who does nothing in vain; as steps in her great process." The social theorist of today takes more seriously than Carlyle the existence of ideology, for ideology is an expression of spiritual unrest in the face of history-making issues. In turn, ideology itself becomes a problem, and we are led to examine its nature. Especially is this true today, which is a time of passionate affirmation of ambiguous positions rather than the observation of political behavior.

Ideologies are systems of evaluation that seek to explain our experience. Finally, all ideologists must appeal to the test of historical verification. A prophecy has been made. Well, does the history of a generation or two or three bear it out? It is a pragmatic test with no time limits, and time will in the end save the ideology as long as interest can be maintained. The ideologist turns to the future: his is the "superstition of the future," as Maxime Leroy has said. Our problem here is to inquire generally into the nature of ideology as a social fact, and to state some of the characteristic theories of validity in current ideological systems.

In the first place, an ideology is not a complete system of metaphysics. As a system of evaluations, it is seeking to stimulate or to justify action. It is composed of a body of propositions that are intermediate between metaphysics and the immediate judgment of fragmentary policies. An ideology is composed of intermediate or secondary evaluations, which presume answers on more fundamental issues and look, meanwhile, directly on the theatre of political action. In the second place, an ideology consists of decisions on what are the fundamental facts in social movement. It is dynamic in its outlook; and it is dynamic in the determination of what evidence is relevant to

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the solution of a particular problem. Marxism may decide that the essential fact of historical change is the relations of production as they are correlated with the forces of production, but in any case it is no static conception of the world. The basic factors in an ideology are in theory fundamental because they are dynamic. The factors selected must explain why things happen; they must be causative, but they must at the same time explain change. The mechanics of change must be depicted with some degree of precision.

In the third place, an ideology must be suitable for fragmentary acceptance by the followers of those who are the leaders.<sup>1</sup> Ordinary people must be able to see some reason for believing as they are urged to believe, and, if the ideology is really effective, this belief in fragments of the system must result in action. Now the action involved is in most cases simply extending political support to those who are administering public affairs. Recently there has been a tendency in the preachers of militant ideology to stress the "myth" value of their doctrines. Ideology is not necessarily myth, indeed, to those ideologists who hold to science, and propositions that grow out of deep-seated metaphysical considerations, myth is an utterly dangerous vulgarization of popular thought. Sorel's myth of the general strike, the National Socialist myth of race, or the Italian myth of the nation, may result in political action, but it is a behavior of complete cultural irresponsibility. Utopian thought urges something that ought to be, but will not or may not be; idealism, in the popular sense, urges that something ought to be and can be; but political or ideological myth is the will to believe that something is, even if the experienced conviction has no basis in scientific fact. The myth is the ideology of the lesser breed.

The more profound consideration of ideology leads one back to the problem of the determining factor in social situations. What most ideologists are seeking is the "scientific" explanation of social dynamics. On the one hand, the "common sense" liberalism of the last century may take empirical evidence as binding, but stress the freedom of human choice in making history; on the other hand, the dialectic of the Marxians may suggest that some result in the future must be; it is

<sup>1</sup> See Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, tr. from the German. (1936), p. 52.

inevitable. It is objective, and it is outside the genuine freedom of choice of men. All ideologies appeal to men through ideas, apparently suggesting that ideas as forces are predominant; but in the same breath there are objective forces at work in history and these will determine the long-run consequences of behavior. Materialism holds ideas are derived from economic conditions, but Christian and democratic theory has held and must so hold that the autonomy of the spirit is the governing force in history. It is a conflict between ideas and process. Only one's ideology gives an answer.

All of us are interested in being able to prophesy correctly, but we do not want to be like Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, whom no one would believe when she told the truth about the future. How do we know that the future will be better than the past? Ideology must tell us why; and so it attempts. The pre-war socialists held that from democracy must come socialism, and from socialism a beneficent international world. Fascists now come along and say, "Quite so. But your international world is a world of revolutions and the denial of the cultural nation." Today likewise, we are not satisfied with a simple statement that there is interaction and mutuality between ideas as forces and the processes of social behavior. Lenin took Russia with an idea, but was it the idea or the circumstances that were predominant?

Ideology does not mean the primacy of ideas, since some ideologies stress in their dynamics the objective factors in any social situation. What is the role of ideas in political behavior? We may say that in both Bolshevism and National Socialism, as Gurian has indicated, that ideas are a facade to assist in the convenient manipulation of the masses.<sup>2</sup> Spengler tells of "wordless" ideas that are more fundamental than those that are spoken.<sup>3</sup> Christianity turns to the extension of metaphysics to a moral order, which men of good will are led to accept.<sup>4</sup> Some, like Whitehead, have suggested that in the end all history is idea, and that no civilization can endure without transcendental

<sup>2</sup> *The Future of Bolshevism* (1936).

<sup>3</sup> *The Hour of Decision*, tr. from the German (1934).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Heinrich Rommen, *Die Staatslehre des Franz Suarez, S.J.* (1926), for an excellent elaboration of this proposition, especially from the standpoint of the Christian development of Aristotelianism.

aims.<sup>5</sup> Our evaluations sometimes present us with such philosophical purity of ideas that process as objective seems negated. In the end the greatest of all political questions may be whether any transcendental aim, such as the Christian ideal of life, can be realized. If it can, our picture of the world is vastly different than if it cannot.

It must be clear from the present discussion that ideology is regarded as a philosophy of action; it is an evaluation of action and it is a prophecy of future experience. Ideology is not approached simply as a false explanation,<sup>6</sup> nor is it assumed that an ideology as such is false. Our discussion does not concern alone our adversaries and their ideas; it is a question of "my ideology" fully as much as "your ideology." Pareto, for example, develops his references to ideology around the famous denunciation of it by Napoleon in 1812 before the Council of State. The misfortunes of France were due to ideology, and he proceeded to contrast ideology with the study of history. Ideology, urged Napoleon, is a system of "cloudy metaphysics," though one can hardly fail to see that he in turn relied on the "sacred principles of justice" which might not be less cloudy.<sup>7</sup>

To Pareto ideology was a category of the conflict between theory and practice, ideology being essentially theoretical, as being characterized by no resort to experience. Ideology rests upon derivations that have little connection with reality, and which contrast sharply with the application of logico-experimental method. The critic might object that the real question is whether Pareto managed to get closer to reality than those he criticized; it would appear to some that even in this reading of the meaning of the term Pareto is an ideologist like his antagonists. Derivations, the interpretations of residues, usually overstep the limits of reality, he asserts, though in the case of myths people do not mind it. However, in many attempts at applying scientific method every effort is made to show that there is strict accordance between reality and one's conclusions.<sup>8</sup> He thus concludes that theory

<sup>5</sup> *Adventures of Ideas* (1933).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Albert Aubin, *Laicité et Liberté de Conscience* (1930), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Vilfredo Pareto, *The Mind and Society*, tr. from the Italian (4 vols., 1935), Vol. 3, Sec. 1793.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Sec. 1797.

is not able in politics to lay down useful prescriptions, and that often in politics one may take the prophecies based on elemental considerations and get just as good a result as the "ideological" conclusions of the derivations.

In somewhat the same manner we find Karl Mannheim distinguishing thought on the basis of its approximation to reality. For him in the end all thought is either ideological or utopian. The former type may be connected with actuality, while the latter is not associated with reality but is attempting to break down the existing structure.<sup>9</sup> Ideology itself is divided into two types, the particular and the total. For the latter, the total ideology, we observe the *Weltanschauung*, and since the ideology is that of our enemies, we accuse them of being unable to think correctly. In the particular ideology we are skeptical of our opponent; we believe that he falsifies, whether consciously or unconsciously. "The common element in these two conceptions seems to consist in the fact that neither relies solely on what is actually said by the opponent in order to reach an understanding of his real meaning and intention."<sup>10</sup>

Under this definition of the term, we have the problem of the distorted mind, the mind that cannot perceive reality. Our present-day concern over the way the enemy thinks, our disquietude over present intellectual life, is evidence of the difficulty of the ideological problem. The analysis of ideology, in Mannheim's opinion, arose out of the Marxian attempt to unmask their opponents. But the charge of being "ideological" is not a weapon of which the Marxians could retain possession; it is now used against all and sundry, including the followers of Marx themselves.<sup>11</sup> But what any ideology is attempting to do is to explain the course of the world, to catch the primary factors in historical dynamics. We may grant that it is important to show our adversaries have missed the mark, but perhaps it is time now to leave the invidious definition of the term. We may be at a point where it is possible to describe any philosophy of action as ideological. Ideology is in some senses a descriptive term; it need not always be normative

9 Mannheim, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

10 *Ibid.*, pp. 49 ff, 50.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 62, 67.

or deprecatory. Nor can we deny that if we approach ideology from the viewpoint of the advocate of it we must assume that more is involved than distortion and separation from reality.<sup>12</sup>

From another point of view Georges Sorel admits the separation from truth of the beliefs that result in action. But this admission does not imply the weakness of such thought, for Sorel argues the creative force of the myth of the general strike. The result of the myth is not connectedness with actuality but the creation of a future situation in which the proletariat will be the chief beneficiary. Sorel is admitting in effect that his ideological structure is animated by illusion, but he would not admit in any sense that the results are to be deplored, since he believes in the rectitude of the workers' cause.<sup>13</sup>

The juncture in history at which we stand today presents to us the non-authoritarian societies with a Christian and democratic ideology. This world-view stands in opposition to many of the propositions of materialism, while liberalism wavers between the Christian autonomy of the spirit in the attainment of moral order and the materialistic analysis of ideas. What democracy needs more than anything else today in the war of ideologies is some technique for judging them, some clear principles of "internal evidence" that may be applied in its own defense. It may be added that our democratic liberalism grew up in the West before the predominance of materialistic thinking, and it is hard to believe that historic, democratic liberalism is perfectly compatible with Marxism.

Democratic thought has, consciously or unconsciously, certain tests in dealing with the authoritarian denials of liberty. The democrat must insist that we approach the solution of our problems with reason; admitted myth is the *reductio ad absurdum* of any possible solution. But, on the contrary, the democrat may insist that any ideology must describe realistically the behavior of man in society. It is not sufficient

<sup>12</sup> In general this is what is attempted by Mannheim in his sociology of knowledge. All knowledge he argues is relational; he approaches knowledge from the standpoint of the possessor of knowledge who thinks in a particular historical and social context. He reaches what he calls a non-evaluative conception of ideology. Profound metaphysical questions are raised, of course, by the argument that knowledge is relational. See *ibid.*, pp. 74 ff.

<sup>13</sup> See Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, tr. from the French (1914).

to assume evil motives, or good motives to the exclusion of evil. What men do must be pictured, and the techniques of control must be listed in the bald light of reality. Since democracy is so largely technique—the technique of popular participation and control—it should not be afraid of any comparison between democracy and non-democratic regimes. Democracy is interested, like other ideologies, in the future, but it may insist that the past, history, must be used with honest fullness in making judgments about present experience and future hope. Finally, and above all, the Christian and democratic viewpoint must judge candidly the treatment of the individual human being.

No human being can be regarded as without his moral rights to live, to marry, to take a legitimate part in society; and no human being can be regarded simply as a means to some one else's end. What value is placed on the dignity of the individual human being, regardless of cultural, racial or religious differences? Here is the test that must be the stumbling block between democracy and autocracy. The millions of dead kulaks in Russia, the wandering Jews of today, and the underfed and undernourished victims of industrialism, must be allowed to add their voice of condemnation.

We turn now to a consideration of the essential points of some of the chief ideologies of the present time. What we can see, if we try, is a conflict on fundamentals as tragic and as inescapable as in any period of history. Ours may be, as Sorokin has argued, one of the most bloody periods in the history of the world, if we count the victims of wars and revolutions since the turn of the century. But it is also a time of fantastic chaos in the realm of ideas.

It must not be assumed that the modern anarchy as to the validity of ideas is based entirely on the experience of our recently secularized culture. Many of the ideas on which our thought rests today are not widely different from those held by thinkers in the ancient world in the West or by Chinese, Indian or Mohammedan philosophers. It is here that we can observe duration and spread in the theories of validity. It is perhaps true that the modern developments of science and secular thinking have added somewhat to the variety of the solutions available. The old ideas have endured, and will outlast some of the peculiar intel-

lectual inquiries of the contemporary world. One might hazard the guess that Greek rationalism will live longer than the propositions on which the approach to validity is made in analytic psychology or the dialectical materialism of the modern Marxist.

Rationalism is probably the oldest and the most respectable of the hypotheses as to how to test the truth of an interpretation. Rationalism itself is hydra-headed, for it has come through the distillation of Greek intelligence into the systems of Christian philosophy,<sup>14</sup> and from there into the modern secular rationalism that dissociated the function of the reasoning mind from the existence or the truth of an ultimate God. Reason has been at home with both transcendental and idealistic attitudes and with the empirical, fact-minded world of the nineteenth century. But through all of this it has been reason that has been presumed to be the final test of truth and falsity, and the final interpreter of the results of action. Reason is a peculiarly dynamic concept, and most individuals who act believe they are acting reason.

In the rationalism of the Greeks certain solutions were accepted as "wisdom" or "knowledge." If you know virtue, taught Plato, you will act in a virtuous way. To know was to act, though he did not admit that to act was to know. Aristotle's eudaimonistic answer to ethical problems was again a rational solution, for it was on rational happiness that his chief interest was centered. For the Greeks reason was dominant over the contradictions of experience; where experience pointed away from their solutions, the Greek philosopher could say that the contrary experience was irrational. An attempt was made by the Greeks, unsuccessfully to be sure, to chain the jungle-like richness of mental life, the spontaneity of life, with the bounds of reason as they saw it. As men are wise, they said, reason endures and spreads its influence.

If we contrast this rationalism as a test of validity with a basic modern trend, we see that today there is a general faith that facts will speak rationally for themselves. But get the facts, and the conclusion emerges as the day follows the night. This belief, this separation of

<sup>14</sup> We must distinguish theistic philosophy from Christian or other systems of theology. Theistic philosophy is simply compatible with theology; Catholic philosophers insist their philosophy is not based on their theology. Cf. Ehenne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (1937), Ch. II.

rationalism and empiricism, has led to the quantitative rationalism behind much of the contemporary examination of scientific method. Statistical technique for some is the highest instrument of the rational way of life. Our statistical assumptions of today are daring, indeed they may be as daring as any in the history of the Western mind. The Hindu, for example, searches for truth in another way, and for his culture no doubt his truth works and it has survived. The future, on the other hand, is before the daring and audacity of the statistician in the field of evaluations. Somehow the evaluative process has not always coincided with the quantitative technique, and many are beginning to doubt that facts speak at all, or if they do whether they have any sense of the meaning of themselves.<sup>15</sup>

Faith as a test of the valid is still alive and strong. It may be stronger in the future, but faith and revelation have shown an enduring survival power as a type of thought. Religious tests of validity have been accepted in every culture. To the person who rejects the religious test of validity, revelation and miracle are meaningless, and the spiritual power, the ultimate divine force of superearthly love, are nothing more than intellectual mirage. Revelation may be held to be continuous as with the Anabaptists and the Mormons, for instance, or it may be given once and for all as in the Catholic and the Anglican communions. But ultimately it is revelation, and reason in accordance with it, that gives the test of what is right and what is wrong. Religiously minded people stress the fact that they are rationalists, that their beliefs constitute the only rational interpretation of the universe.

We are interested here, however, in the duration and the extension of this form of belief. Religious sanction, and the rationalism of revelation have stood for centuries through every culture against the rising and falling of the empirical and materialistic point of view. Experience cannot be said to be incompatible with the principle of revelation, for countless millions of human beings have been able to live in the world and in a multitude of cultures in the belief that their revelation has given a true test of what is right and wrong. Experience and action

<sup>15</sup> Cf. M. R. Cohen, *Reason and Nature, An Essay on the Meaning of Scientific Method* (1931), *passim*, for one of the most thorough-going modern defenses of rationalism.

in the religious sense do not deny the existence of the empirical, though it may be argued, as in Hindu philosophy, that the higher reality of identity with the one or the Self is the only true reality. What is basic, however, is belief in the autonomy of the spiritual in relation to empirical data and the facts of experience. The spiritual power of the world lives by its own laws, and these laws cannot be explained by the principles of scientific generalization. God's providence is not governed by the speculation of astrophysics or by the findings of geography and geology. The rationalists fail always to indicate the sequence of history.<sup>16</sup>

Let us turn to another type of test of validity. The idea of evolution assumed a predominant position in intellectual life during the nineteenth century. The principles of biological evolution were transferred to all branches of thought as an interpretative device in rationalizing the world of fact. On the one hand, it was felt that evolution demonstrated a purposeless but eternal process of nature; and on the other hand many believed that evolution was working toward certain ends which were inherent in the process of evolution itself. Practically all agreed, however, that the results of evolution, whatever its nature, were beneficial to the human race. In this sense evolution provided a judgment of the validity of results, and perhaps a defense of the currently existing situation. If the present were not all that could be desired, the future would be better. From this point of view, Darwin examined the processes of evolution and Hegel proclaimed its teleology. Evolution became in the last and the present centuries a kind of touchstone idea that could explain whatever needed elucidation. If there was uncertainty, evolution would clarify the matter in the course of time.

If we look for a moment at the shambles remaining of the system of Herbert Spencer, or the variations that have been read into other interpretations of evolution, whether biological or social, it can be seen that evolution itself was part of the spirit of a time. The idea of evolution was one of those solutions that fill a gap in intellectual history; it was part of the intellectual climate of an epoch in Western Europe. As

<sup>16</sup> The works of Christopher Dawson are of particular interest in this connection. See *Enquiries into Religion and Culture* (1933), and *Religion and the Modern State* (1935).

a solution of any problem it is no doubt as difficult to apply as the greatest happiness principle of Jeremy Bentham. No specific solutions flow from it, yet the believer in the idea could use it as a test of validity. Evolution has worked for both radical and conservative solutions; it has aided the thinker who believes in the inevitability of poverty and it has been an inspiration to the frustrated revolutionist with a vision in his mind of the classless, stateless society.

We may have some sympathy for the evolutionists' point of view without making commitment as to the ultimate validity of it as a test of truth and falsity. To the conservatives, history—as evolved to the present—has been a test of validity; the things that are must be true or fitting for the present. In this way evolution filled the study of history with an idea, for history in the social field was laced around the idea of development. With the Hegelians, the rational was the real and the real was the rational. But history as an expression of evolution was an aspect of cultural mentality. As long as social groups could think in a given way, in a manner coherent with evolution, this principle was destined to rule in the minds of the scientists and the publicists. Evolution is a symbol of the changing spirit of evaluation; it conditions the solutions that will be accepted as valid in critical junctures. In the validities that arise from evolution the *Zerigeist* is sovereign, as always; but the predominance of this philosophy in the West indicates that it is a *Raumgeist* as well. Both together constitute a spirit of form in the technique of evaluating propositions in the field of social and political behavior.

The principles of biological and social evolution imply a contingent determinism. If certain things are done or occur then certain other results will follow. Evolution implies a fundamental continuity and dependence of actions in succession; it seeks to establish certain laws for the determination of the nature of this continuity and dependence. However, the variety of theories of evaluation which have come out of the atmosphere of continuity and dependence have brought about the separation of certain evolutionary theories from the original ideas of biological and social evolution of the last century. While evolution never really denied the principle of choice or voluntary action in certain

spheres, there are other views in relation to evaluation that suggest a much greater determinism than did evolution itself. In science during the last century the general principle seemed to be approved that if enough were known about any single particle of the universe its whole course of behavior could be predicted. On the other hand, the social sciences have been forced in fact to accept the principle of probable result rather than strict causation. At the present time science seems to be joining with the social studies in accepting a more flexible causation, so flexible indeed that probability rather than causation is the better descriptive work.

There are a number of explanations of the validity or invalidity of evaluations in action that suggest the acceptance of probability rather than strict causation or free will. These theories, as has been intimated, are related intellectually to the idea of evolution, but they have gone beyond the nineteenth century in many ways. They stress the importance of the external factors surrounding the behavior of individuals, in fact they deny the autonomy of the spirit or the reason and at the same time they do not accept a strict determinism as to the action of the human individual.

Experience and action would indicate that we can feel both determined and undetermined. Determinism is in accordance with aspects of experience, just as free will is fundamentally real to the individual as he is conscious of his actions. In this double reflection of experience we have one of the basic contradictions of experience itself. We act often as if we are free, and this type of behavior is part of the world of fact, that is, we in fact believe we are free in our actions. Yet at the same time we may act under compulsions of many kinds, and in this we do not feel free. Both of the aspects of experience we have mentioned form part of the reality of action. The theories of the factors that condition validity to which we must now turn are based on external and compulsive factors bearing in upon the individual.

One of the simplest of such tests of validity is found in idea of geographic and climatic determinism. Ultimately, say the exponents of these views, we can establish a correlation between the culture and activity of a group of people by considering a number of factors of this

character. Political and cultural geography may offer explanations of the economic activity of groups, but in addition to this the theory merges over into explanations of judgments as they are reflected in action. The external factors selected are, of course, part of our experience; they are empirical. But there is debate as to how significant they are, and in this appears the theory of validity. A proposition is valid, an explanation is valid, insofar as it takes into account the factors constituting the heart of the theory. From the earliest days of geographic climate investigation and theory there have been thinkers who have explained cultural preeminence because of climatic or other environmental factors. National pride has tended to feed itself upon an adulation of the environment to which the members of the nation have become accustomed. The Greeks, the Arabians, the French, the English and the Americans have all been myopic when they have looked at the geographic and climatic features they have loved. Such a determinism is vitiated, therefore, by historical and cultural relativism; to the person holding a given geographic point of view it offers a standard of judgment for certain social ideas. But the same idea is equally available for a number of similar but different interpretations.<sup>17</sup>

Turning from the external environment to the internal machinery of man, psychology offers, in certain of its developments, standards by which to test evaluations. For the most part the psychologists have been quite modest, and it has been only those outside the discipline who have been ambitious in offering on this basis principles of validity. It has been urged that while the political student should not attempt too ambitious an adaptation of psychology to politics, the psychologist should make every use possible of the materials of politics to develop the explanations of political behavior. Evaluations are more explained than justified by psychological inquiry, yet in the long sense of the term this type of investigation is in fact an ideological theory. Interpretations of action based on the irrationality of man can be traced back to certain psychological assumptions, whether or not these views are accepted by the professional student of psychology. Psychology deals with factors in many cases that are extraneous to the principles

<sup>17</sup> One of the classics of this point of view is Henry T. Buckle, *History of Civilization in England* (1857), Vol. I. See also Franklin Thomas, *The Environmental Basis of Society* (1925), for summaries of this type of theory.

of rationalism; they are factors outside of the reason or external to the reason.<sup>18</sup>

It is possible, therefore, to speak of a kind of psychological determinism as the foundation of many current theories of validity. Analytic psychology or psychoanalysis is the outstanding example of this type of thought. It may be urged that there is some conflict between the behavioristic phase of analysis and the rationalistic and therapeutic aims of the science. But even the most ambitious analytic therapist might hesitate to believe that it might be possible for all types of personality to become normal. The point of importance here, however, is that such investigations give standards for the explanation and evaluation of propositions; propositions are judged of course not for their rationalized content but in the light of psychological experience. The subconscious mind is often more important than the conscious, and this is true whatever particular phase of psychoanalysis happens to be considered valid. In the subconscious mind there is continuous activity that is organic with other forms of conduct. In a sense the subconscious is as external to the conscious mind as are the factors of geographic and climatic environment.<sup>19</sup>

A less striking approach to the evaluation of conduct and the propositions we may accept, is the qualified psychological determinism of such thinkers as Pareto and Michels. While Pareto may speak of elites, and Michels, for example, of the iron law or oligarchy, both are considering a common phenomenon from different vantage points. The idea of a governing class may be put into the same category. For a ground work of such theories, there is only one source and that is the observation of behavior, or action. It is assumed that human beings are likely to continue acting in the same way in the future as in the past. On this assumption the broad outlines of the future may be predicted. Only the elements of the process of action, political and social, can be so predicted, and never the specific details that will arise. The structure of a governing class is psychological. Whatever the

<sup>18</sup> On the theories that tend toward the denial of rationalism, see Cohen, *op. cit.*, Ch. I.

<sup>19</sup> For a brief introduction to this subject, see J. S. van Teeslar, *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (Modern Library, 1925); for an introduction to Freud, see A. A. Brill (editor), *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud* (Modern Library, 1938).



forces that explain the action of elites, the creation of oligarchies or external environment, whatever the ideology, the same process tends toward the repetitions of historical process.<sup>20</sup>

If psychological determinism makes only incidental uses of history to illustrate its points, such is not the case with those ideological theories which are themselves based on history. The critic may suggest that the use of history by either the historical conservatives or the proletarian thinkers is no less selective and illustrative than in the case of psychological or other theories. Whether or not this observation is correct depends almost entirely on the point of view of the debater, for Pareto would urge that his use of history is far more thorough than is the Marxian. Historical tests of validity are the most easy to accept and perhaps the most deceptive, for a historical generalization may be based on scant material. The historical conservative like Edmund Burke may be charged with a practical ignorance of history, yet what he found from his study of the past was a set of canons for testing the validity of the "radical" propositions of his time.<sup>21</sup>

Shadows have begun to fall over the principles of the historical school, and we live today in a reformistic world. Some one has spoken of black and red communists, and others have urged that the fascism of the Soviet Union is more dangerous than the anti-capitalism of Italy or Germany. But the great philosophy of change is naturally Marxism with all its sectarian variations. That its prophecy may be the purest utopian word-mongering cannot deny that the Marxist has a system which provides him with all of the tests of validity he will ever need.<sup>22</sup> The internal determinism of the psychologist must be rejected, for the steady social factors that have made history in the past and will make it in the future. Historical materialism, the sociol-

<sup>20</sup> See Vilfredo Pareto, *The Mind and Society*, tr. from the Italian, 4 vols. (1935); Robert Michels, *Political Parties*, tr. from the Italian (1915); Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, tr. from the Italian (1939).

<sup>21</sup> A similar statement may be made of the historical school of jurisprudence during the nineteenth century, this being true of practically all of the outstanding exponents of this interpretation of the nature and growth of law.

<sup>22</sup> The Marxian is inherently a prophet, and the Marxian philosophy is peculiarly adapted to the needs of the prophet. Max Weber emphasized the role of the prophet in his analysis of religion. The prophet is important in change, especially as to ideas, but he must rationalize any break with tradition. See Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (1937), pp. 563 ff.

ogy of dialectic materialism, is a set of judgments for use against the false evaluations of the non-Marxians. Yet these judgments are presumably placed against the empirical data of history. Experience with history and the present permits human beings to get along with and without the explanations of Marxian philosophy, and there is no reason to assume that the contradiction between Marxism and any other explanation or test is any greater than that existing between any two other broad systems of tests of validity.

Few attacks on the problems of testing evaluations have so stirred the Western imagination as have those views which rely on the data of cultural movement. Here we enter a melancholy world of beginnings and endings, but as ever the data of history provide the material for systematic generalizations. History is as accommodating, as chameleon-like, as ever, and in these new hands it becomes primarily cultural phase or cultural mentality rather than institutional stability or the dialectic of economic interest. Culture itself is regarded, however, as something superior to its various phases. The class struggle becomes thus one of the more simple aspects of human dynamics. Economic institutions are likewise bent to fit the cultural pattern.

In general, in the Spenglerian view, culture is a total organism that includes the life and activities of a people. It grows, matures and finally decays, carrying with it the psychological, economic, and scientific forms of related life. Any evaluation concerning political and social existence can be judged as real or unreal, true or false, in the light of the broad hypotheses included in *The Decline of the West*. It may be suggested that there is more poetry than science in this provocative work, yet it can also be urged that since the completion of the first draft in 1914 Spengler has received by the course of world events somewhat more than his share of confirmation as a prophet.

If Spengler deals with the more significant cultures known to history and the end of pre-history, Sorokin in his recently published *Social and Cultural Dynamics* finds the central focus of movement in types of culture mentality. The correlation of various types of human activity and thinking with the cultural mentality is both a substantive proof of the thesis he presents and a measurement of variation. Sorokin has

dealt primarily with the cultural mentality changes in the Western world, with only incidental comparisons from other cultural areas. The individual is drawn into the mentality of the society around him, he adopts its ways of thinking about lasting problems, and his evaluations are likely to coincide with the stream of dominant evaluations of the time. Motivation in action is a phase of the cultural mind and the integration of the culture itself. But it is clear that out of this explanation of cultural shift we can deduce a body of tests for the correctness of evaluations. What we think to be true or valid in our behavior is related to what is accepted in the cultural mentality of the time. People in the full swing of a cultural mentality think as the culture dictates, and it is this thinking that provides the basic tests for the validity of ideas. As the culture shifts, as there is revolt against the old mentality and the development of the new, there is a corresponding generation of ideas about true evaluations.

Cultural interpretations of life, as in Spengler, Sorokin, Ortega y Gasset<sup>23</sup> and others, result perhaps in an ideological relativism as to validity that can only be stabilized with reference to the predominant cultural situation. We all recognize, of course, that culture is dynamic, that it is always in flux. The contradictions of experience thus arise in duration, as well as in the contemporary situation but with spatial difference or location. On the other hand, it must not be thought that the cultural interpretation excludes the consideration of other tests of validity; the cultural point of view would insist only that the broadest aspects of living experience need be correlated in order to reach a judgment. Psychoanalysis is just as fundamentally a part of the cultural cycle or cultural mentality of today as is the development of technology.

Our own ideology is an outgrowth of the Christian and democratic traditions of the Western world. The modern defense of democracy and liberalism is a defense of the great intellectual achievements of the past. Our ideology is a phase of that cultural continuity which is represented in both the ideals of the Church and of the rights of man. For modern rationalism as it developed in the seventeenth century in England is to be traced back to the theistic philosophy of the thirteenth

and previous centuries. Democratic ideology is ours because it stands on the Christian principle of the autonomy of spirit in the history of the world, and because this freedom of the spirit in making history is part of the moral order of the human universe.

Christian and democratic thought must, like the patristic writings, accept the ideas of a large part of Greek rationalism. It can never accept the principles of modern materialism as predominant, though no one need be foolish enough to deny the importance of matter and the dynamic qualities it achieves in human relations. Psychological and cultural ideology is a more subtle challenge to the basic principles of democracy, but it is clear that in so far as either the moral order of the world or the autonomy of spirit is denied, they constitute erosive ideologies that democratic thinkers must reject.

The ideology of Western democratic countries is both a technique and a system of evaluations. It can afford to be realistic in its attitude toward political devices, since it is based on toleration of differences. It hopes for the practical reconciliation of opposing forces that are engaged in struggle. So Madison has pictured liberalism in the tenth number of *The Federalist*. In democracy there is no brutalizing myth like those of the authoritarian societies. Human values remain uppermost, and though ideals are attained slowly, if at all, it is never admitted in Christian thought that violence can be creative, as the Marxian insists in his irritation at the endurance of the bourgeoisie. The deepest conflict of our time is probably to be found between Marxian materialism and the Christian-democratic denial of the slavery of the spirit. The resolution of this issue is the greatest of the questions presented by the ideological tension of the present years.

<sup>23</sup> *The Revolt of the Masses*, tr. from the Spanish (1932).