

THE GROUP IN PLURALIST IDEOLOGY AND POLITICS

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Minority groups are currently receiving a great deal of attention from many different sources motivated by a variety of concerns. Scholars of liberal or Marxist theoretical persuasion, political party strategists, state advisers demonstrate, in different forms, a marked interest in minorities. For some critical scholars for example, minorities, and in particular cultural minorities, are particularly well suited historical subjects to lead the struggle against imperialism in this phase in history.¹ Liberal scholars look upon minorities as the appropriate means of both liberalizing society in breaking down social barriers to equality, and at the same time of conserving the best in tradition.² Political party strategists focus on minorities as a source of electoral support and, depending on the party's ideology, either minimize the differences between a given minority and the rest of the electorate as do the Liberals and the Conservatives by proposing conciliatory appeals, or accentuating the distinctions into irreconcilable differences as do the péquistes. The state identifies in activist groups, particularly in urban centres, a form of militancy exploitable to its advantage in two distinct ways: by delegating greater responsibility for the management of local social services in response to group demands for greater direct participation in community affairs the state seeks, on the one hand, to reduce the cost of such programmes and thereby contain the depletion of its dwindling resources in this period of economic crisis, while, on the other hand, to generate a legitimacy by converting resistance into cooperation.³

Minority groups have not just recently sprung up. Indeed, most western social formations have a history of politicized minority groups of various degrees of militancy. Some of these groups, mainly in the form of regional

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minorities often of distinct cultural identity, have constituted formidable decentralizing forces within the nation state assuming, in some cases, separatist forms of considerable strength. The struggles of such groups have not been without difficulties, obstacles and setbacks in the face of resistance, often of crushing proportions, from the established power structure. In the last few decades, however, new developments have arisen on the political and ideological levels making for a more favourable setting for at least certain forms of minority group action. The "group" as a unit of action has assumed a prominent place in political practice⁴ and as subject in ideological discourse.⁵ This political and ideological climate in which the dominant class in various fractional forms of group organization such as the manufacturers' association, the bankers' association, the oil producers' association and so on, as well as the working class organized in trade unions as a group unit of action, provides a setting favourable to the group organization of minorities. Indeed, minority groups organized as specific linguistic, ethnic, cultural or regional groups enter an already legitimized pluralist group form of political and ideological practice. It has often been contended that in Canada and in the United States, group politics rather than class politics dominates the political scene and that the dominant ideological images which mediate social identification are group rather than class images.⁶ That is, Canadians and Americans tend to see themselves first as belonging to such and such a group and secondarily, if at all, as belonging to such and such a class. Thus, although in recent years minority identification and minority political action has acquired a new form and a new salience, they have prevailed for several decades. Political action is mediated by the group and channelled to group-defined demands which largely flow from the specific occupational, religious, ethnic, linguistic, regional, etc., character of the group's identity.

If the dominance of the group at the political and ideological levels is an accurate depiction of the current and recent history of our society, what sense can we make of this predominance? What are the theoretical foundations of pluralism in its political and ideological forms? Can we assume that there is and has been a retreat from class politics and class ideology, or can we more justifiably believe that pluralism is a form of political and ideological class struggle which situates the locus of conflict between disparate groups rather than between opposing classes and that through this the bourgeois class exercises its dominance at all levels of the social structure? It is the latter hypothesis that appears to be more fruitful in understanding our situation and in this paper we examine the theoretical basis of group dynamics of the pluralist form of bourgeois class domination.

If we hope to demonstrate that group ideology and politics marks neither the end of the political class struggle nor the end of the ideological class struggle as many prominent ideologues have been arguing for some time,⁷ but

rather than group ideology and politics which we have already referred to as pluralism are particular forms of class struggle, we should begin by theoretically distinguishing between group and group conflict on the one hand, and social class and class struggle on the other. That is, we must determine the respective specificity of group and group conflict and social class and class conflict and identify the particular field in the social structure in which they are constituted.

Class in relation to mode of production

As is generally well-known and well-worked out by Marxist theorists, the theoretical foundation of social classes is the mode of production.⁸ It is on the abstract level of a mode of production that the constitution of social classes as a structural effect becomes intelligible. More precisely, social classes are seen as the effect of the economic structure of producers and non-producers in relation to the means of production. In the capitalist mode of production an antagonistic relation between the working class and the bourgeois class is the effect of the productive relation in which the surplus product, produced by the direct producers (working class), is privately appropriated by the non-producers (bourgeois class) owing to the latter's ownership and control of the means of production. Thus the relations of production is the level at which classes are constituted in antagonistic relation to each other. Classes occupy a position opposite to each other in a social relation of class struggle. The surplus product thus, in the form of surplus value, constitutes the working class and bourgeoisie and at the same time constitutes this very class relation as an antagonistic relation of struggle.

But the mode of production of the surplus product does not simply imply an economic relation, for the reproduction of the economic class relations involves and indeed necessitates political and ideological relations.⁹ A mode of production is thus constitutive of economic, political and ideological structures each of which occupies a particular place in the whole and has a particular specificity such that neither the political nor the ideological are directly reducible to the economic even though they both owe their specificity or their relative autonomy to the requirements for assuring private appropriation of surplus value. In this sense, the economic level can be said to be determinant in the last instance or that each level, including the economic, is overdetermined by the others in a complex articulation in which the economic is determinant in the last instance. The antagonistic class relations at the economic level are not simply reproduced on the political or the ideological levels in exactly the same form. Indeed, neither the political nor the ideological forms of class struggle are reducible to the economic. The political and ideological class struggles, as effects of the political and ideological structures overdetermined

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by the economic, take a form not of a struggle between opposing classes in a dominant-dominated relation but rather a form which conceals this very relation of force operating on each level. Below we will look at the political and ideological forms of class struggle.

Social class is a concept then, which denotes the effects of the structures constitutive of a mode of production. As Poulantzas formulates it, "classe sociale est un concept qui indique les effets de l'ensemble des structures, de la matrice d'un mode de production ou d'une formation sociale sur les agents qui indique les effets de la structure globale dans la dominance des rapports sociaux."¹⁰

Political and Ideological Constituents of Mode of Production

Economic, political and ideological class relations as relations of forms of class struggle are intelligible on the abstract level of mode of production. On the concrete level of social formation, a particular mode of production rarely if ever exists in its purity. That is, there is not a coincidence between social formation and mode of production.¹¹ Social formations are constitutive of modes of production not in a form in which one mode exists along side or parallel to another but in an articulated form. Rather than a co-existence of modes of production marking a social formation, there is an articulation of modes of production of such character that one mode of production is dominant and that the very reproduction of another mode of production derives or is the effect of the dominance of this mode of production. It is an articulation in dominance making for the dominance of one mode and the reproduction of others the very effect of this dominance. Such an articulation marks not one or another level of the modes of production, for example, the economic. It is rather a complex vertical and horizontal articulation of all levels. It is the specificity of the articulation that precisely distinguishes between particular concrete social formations.

How can these Marxist theoretical constructs which serve to depict and situate social class help us to understand the pluralism of groups in North American societies? Is a social group simply an empirical category with no theoretical foundation? In other words, is a social group entirely unintelligible on the abstract level of mode of production or for that matter on the concrete level of social formation taken as a theoretical construct? Or does the group have a basis in the capitalist mode of production and if so at what level?

In order to determine whether or not a social group has a basis in the capitalist mode of production, let us look more closely at the three instances and in particular the political and ideological levels constitutive of this mode. We leave aside for the moment the question of whether or not the capitalist mode of production has undergone structural and historical changes in which social group may possibly be constituted as an integral effect of one or other

instance of this mode. As we saw above, the economic level which, in the capitalist mode of production is not only determinant in the last instance but also reserves for itself the role of dominance, constitutes the working class and the bourgeois class as the effect of the structure of relations of production. That is, the structure of relations of production, namely the form of appropriation of the surplus product, i.e. surplus-value, determines the working class and the bourgeoisie. We may say that the particular structure of surplus-value distributes the direct producers and non-producers into two classes: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie each situated at opposite sides of a conflicting productive social relation. The particular structure of the capitalist surplus product, i.e. the fusion of the necessary labour and surplus labour in time and space, has a political effect the separation of the political instance, the state superstructure, from the economic.¹² For with the fusion of necessary and surplus labour in time and space, no longer does the state directly mediate relations of production as in precapitalist modes. With this structural and historical transformation in the appropriation of the surplus product, the law of value becomes the mediator of the relations of production assuring the reproduction of these same relations. The state superstructure or political instance and the economic instance become two discrete spheres their separation being necessitated by the very requirements of reproduction of the social relations of production.

A political instance 'set apart' from the economic which is now governed by the law of value can best maintain conditions for the reproduction of productive relations by creating the legal framework facilitating the flow of capital including the exchange between capital and labour. Nicos Poulantzas has examined in detail the structural basis of the capitalist state in *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, in which he proposes that the political effect of the capitalist state structure is the distribution of the agents of production into a class of legal owners of the means of production and a class of non-owners of the means of production making private property a legally binding basis of differentiation of class.

Les structures du politique, notamment la superstructure juridico-politique de l'État, ne sont pas des classes sociales, pas plus d'ailleurs que les structures de l'idéologie. Elles ont cependant pour effet, dans les rapports sociaux, et à leur niveau — rapports sociaux juridico-politiques et rapports sociaux idéologiques, — la distribution des agents qui en sont les porteurs en classes sociales. Plus particulièrement, dans le cas du droit, on sait que cet effet dépend de la propriété juridique formelle des moyens de production.¹³

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We would disagree with Poulantzas that the effect of the political structure is the distribution of agents of production into classes on the political level. Rather the agents of production are distributed as individual, free contracting agents with legally binding rewards and commitments. This juridico-political effect is reinforced by the peculiar capitalist ideological effect. Let us examine this ideological effect and see the way it relates to the juridico-political effect.

The nature of surplus-value and the concomitant separation of the sphere of production from the sphere of circulation holds the key to the particularly bourgeois nature of the ideological effect of this structure. Marx pointed to circulation of capital as that sphere in which specifically bourgeois ideological notions are generated¹⁴. In the very exchange of commodities, an exchange always mediated by the most abstract form of commodity, namely money, labour-power and salary retain a formal equivalence and owing to the separation of the sphere of circulation from the sphere of production, the real non-equivalence between labour and salary is concealed. For the equal exchange between labour-power and salary on the level of circulation is unequal on the level of production as the exchange value of labour-power becomes use-value and produces a value in excess of the value of its own reproduction. Of course, these exchanges are made possible in the first place by the separation of the direct producer from the means of production, the necessary access to which is only attainable by selling his labour-power in exchange for a salary. We know that in this very separation of the direct producers from the means of production is a "freeing" of the direct producer to enter into contracts "freely" with capital. These very contracts themselves have their basis in the sphere of circulation and claim validity on the basis of equality. They are however the ideological effect of the inequality of value between actual labour and labour power. The dominant ideological effect of surplus-value and the separation of the sphere of production from the sphere of circulation is the distribution of the agents of production on the ideological level not as classes of owners and non-owners of the means of production but as equal individual subjects in the sense of individual centers of initiative and unique masters of personal conditions. Such individualist formal equality underlies the entire system of legal contracts mediating exchanges between capital and labour.

This ideological effect overdetermined by the economic at the same time has as effect on the economic level what Poulantzas calls an "isolation effect".

Elle consiste en ce que les structures juridiques et idéologiques qui, déterminées en dernière instance par la structure du procès de travail, instaurent, à leur niveau, les agents de la production distribués en classes sociales en "sujets" juridiques et idéologiques, ont comme effet, sur la lutte économique de classe, l'occultation, de façon particulière, aux agents de leurs rapports comme rapports de classe. Les

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rapports sociaux économiques sont effectivement vécus par les supports sur le mode d'un fractionnement et d'une atomisation spécifiques. Les classiques du marxisme l'ont souvent désigné en opposant la lutte économique "individuelle", "locale", "partielle", "isolée", etc., à la lutte politique qui tend à présenter un caractère d'unité, voire d'unité de classe. Cet isolement est ainsi l'effet, sur les rapports sociaux économiques 1) du juridique, 2) de l'idéologie juridico-politique, 3) de l'idéologique en général. Cet effet d'isolement est terriblement réel: il a un nom, la concurrence entre les ouvriers salariés et entre les capitalistes propriétaires privés.¹⁵ (Emphasis is that of the author).

In this legalist ideological matrix in which the dominant principles are equality, free contracting agent, equivalent exchanges, the individual acquires the attributes of subject, his own reason as the first and ultimate authority determining free choice and the concomitant responsibility and obligation of contracts. The equality and individual freedom of this ideological matrix appears to negate the presence of class at least on the level of ideology. One individual as commodity owner, be he owner solely of labour-power or not, has the same legal rights as any other commodity owner in his freedom of choice and contractual obligations. Class, however, is not absent from this level. Indeed, one may say that it is present in its very absence, for the equality and freedom of individual subjects is a specific form of capitalist equality and freedom in which the bourgeois class exercises its dominance on the ideological level. The contractual exchanges on the basis of equivalence in the sphere of circulation conceals the inequality in the sphere of production where surplus-value is privately appropriated. It is a relation of bourgeois dominance over the working class but is not, of course, a dominance which is perceived even by the bourgeois class itself as a relation of class dominance. Rather, the bourgeoisie perceives this form of equality and freedom as the universal form of equality and freedom equally valid for itself and for all other classes. On this point Althusser argues that

dans l'idéologie de la *liberté*, la bourgeoisie vit (...) très exactement son rapport à ses conditions d'existence: c'est-à-dire son rapport réel (le droit de l'économie capitaliste libérale) mais investi dans un rapport imaginaire (tous les hommes sont libres, y compris les travailleurs libres). Son idéologie consiste dans ce jeu de mots sur la liberté, qui trahit autant la volonté bourgeoise de mystifier ses exploités ("libre") pour les tenir en bride, par le chantage à la liberté, que le besoin de la bourgeoisie de vivre sa propre domination de classe comme la liberté de ses propres exploités.¹⁶ (Emphasis is that of the author).

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Equally on the political level classes are present as a relation of bourgeois dominance over the working class although not in precisely the manner in which Poulantzas argues, but rather in the manner in which they are present on the ideological level. Class dominance on the political level is exercised through such means as contractual arrangements between exchanging commodity owners which is the legal-political framework of private property and which secures the conditions for accumulation of capital. Even if Poulantzas is right that the agents of production are distributed as a class of owners and a class of non-owners of the means of production on the political level and this as the effect of the political structure, a political class struggle following from this cannot but be attenuated by a whole series of ideological implications derived from the ideological structure.

The "Group" Effect

The abstract notion of capitalist mode of production makes intelligible a number of theoretical constructs in particular, class, proletariat and bourgeois, and individual subject which is the effect of the ideological and political structures. While class is necessarily present on all three instances of the mode of production, individual subject is intelligible on the ideological and political levels and as the effects of these structures overdetermined by the whole mode of production which is, itself, determined in the last instance by the economic. In this account we do not encounter "group" on any of the levels constitutive of the capitalist mode of production.

Do we encounter it on the concrete theoretical level of social formation? If we conceive of a social formation not as an empirical notion but rather a theoretical concept of an articulation of modes of production in which one mode of production as the structure in dominance overdetermines the whole, we are still not likely to encounter a group effect where the structure in dominance is the capitalist mode of production as is, of course, the case in Canada and the United States. Can we then conclude that group is not comprehensible at the theoretical level of social formation and that it is simply an empirical category?

A crucial point in helping us arrive at a sound conclusion regards possible structural and historical modifications of the capitalist mode of production in its process of maturation. We should inquire precisely into any possible modifications in the effects of this mode of production at the advanced phase of accumulation in relation to the economic, political and ideological forms of class relations. If we encountered no identifiable group effect in the mode of production we have just briefly reviewed, it may be the result of our having limited our consideration of the structure of the capitalist mode of production to a particular phase of its development, namely to the competitive phase. To

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attribute to the capitalist mode of production solely features characteristic of its liberal, competitive phase would be to deny any internal dynamic to this mode and to ignore a number of historical developments marking its growth. Below we examine those modifications at the level of relations of production which we argue are relevant to the "group" question.

There is nothing novel in the observation that the social relations of production propelled by the economic class struggle have undergone modification. A double concentration of capital in the form of monopolies and oligopolies of multinational dimension on the one hand, and on the other the organization of labour in the form of large trade unions marks the advanced capitalist form of relations of production. It is in the effect of the double concentration of capital on the political and ideological levels that we can determine a group basis in the very capitalist mode of production at the advanced phase of accumulation.

We saw briefly above that where capital's extraction of surplus-value from labour is conducted in conditions of competitive market, the effect on the ideological level of the unequal exchange and thus exploitative relation between capitalist and labourer is an interaction of freely competing individuals of whom one is equal to another, each an independent actor and a legal subject. The agents of production are reconstituted ideologically not as exploiting and exploited classes but as free, equal subjects and freely contracting individuals to legal agreements.

In the concentration of capital both in the form of large corporations and trade unions (variable capital) is a new historical development in the relations of production as well as a structural development which can be understood at the abstract level of mode of production. If the normal progression of capital accumulation leads to a concentration of capital in the form of large corporate capital, the organization of the working class into trade unions did not come about as a result of a deterministic operation of objective laws of capital reproduction. The working class has paid dearly for the right to negotiate salary settlements in a fierce class struggle in which its claim to a right to strike as the ultimate bargaining resource has been achieved at the cost of bloody repressions. Neither does this imply that the working class in the Third World negotiates the conditions of its own exploitation from the vantage point of a politically sanctioned right to strike, for the history of the working class struggle is met with devastating armed repression by the state.¹⁷ In advanced capitalist social formations, a proportion of the working class is organized in trade unions although not by any means the entire working class nor is the proportion equal for all sectors of the economy. In the monopoly sectors there is a higher degree of unionization just as there is a high degree of corporate capital concentration but in the more "competitive" sectors there remains non-unionized, semi-skilled and unskilled workers as well as smaller

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family enterprises however difficult their survival becomes in the current economic crisis.

The historical development of politically sanctioned negotiation of salary settlements between capital and organized labour, involves political and ideological changes which are discernable at the structural level of mode of production and which are fundamental to our understanding of pluralist ideologies and politics. The structural modification on the level of the capitalist mode of production with regard to the double concentration of capital lies not in the simple unionization of the working class nor in the concentration of corporate capital as such. The modification lies in the manner in which the two forms of capital are constituted: the trade union and corporation are juridically constituted as formally equal agents of exchange. On the level of circulation each collective occupies a "fixed" and opposite position in relation to the other and the salary levels are negotiated between them. The issue is one of where to insert the line dividing the workers' portion of the total value produced, from the corporate capital's portion. The issue in the exchange is the quantity of total value to remain as surplus value for private appropriation. That the juridical constitution of these agents as equal is merely a formal equality and not a real equality is seen in the fact that the issue of exchange is not and cannot be, within this structure, the worker appropriation of the total value, i.e. the reappropriation of the means of production by the producers of value.

The effect of this structure on the ideological level is a "group" effect where the agents of production are distributed not as classes of exploiters and exploited, nor as independent, singular individuals, but rather as collective entities. Labour constituted as collective group subject, equal but different from capital as collective group subject.

The ideological group subject acquires a number of characteristics. A group subject is not simply an arbitrary aggregate of individuals, it is not simply a strategic assemblage of persons for the purpose of more effectively pursuing some pragmatic goals. It is rather a collective with an internal coherence. Individuals are united by a common vision, common interest, common destiny. The group becomes the collective actor differentiated one from another not by a power disparity or other forms of inequality but simply by the distinguishing feature which constitutes its asset and marks its peculiar identity. All groups in this ideological sense are equal, as were previously the individuals — equal in the pursuit of their interests, subjects as centers of initiative, singular units of action.

On the juridical level where the group subject is created, the group effect assumes the form of legal equality between collective parties to a contract. The group as legal subject is the responsible party in legal agreements which are binding on all concrete individuals forming each collective party as if in-

separable elements of the singular but collective legal unit. The whole body of labour and corporate law which indeed constitutes the dominant form of bourgeois law is based on the collective entity concept. The group association is endowed with a "corporate personality" linked either to its collective executive or to some abstract organic level beyond its component members.¹⁸

The analysis so far proposes the group effect on the ideological and juridico-political levels not as an empirical component of a given ideology nor of a given juridico-political practice of a specified state, for the characteristic of these latter is that they are immediately open to observation and have an empirical existence where the group effect is discernable at the abstract level of mode of production as a theoretical construct. The group effect rather than being itself a particular component of empirical ideologies and political practice that we may empirically point to is rather that element which circumscribes and lends internal coherence to particular ideologies and particular political practice. It is what Roberto Miguelez calls a "matrix", ideological or juridico-political, on which specific ideological representations, ideas, etc., are imprinted and which conditions the character of these very representations. The ideological matrix of group subject provides the basic logical structure of the possible ideological modalities which regulate the form of specific, concrete representations. In developing the notion of matrix in particular reference to ideology, Miguelez points out that

ce que l'analyse du mode de production dévoile lors de l'examen de la sphère de la circulation ce ne sont pas des éléments concrets, encore moins des éléments discursifs mais une *matrice* à partir de laquelle et sur laquelle viendront se forger, comme à leur "base", toutes les notions, idées, jugements du "libre-échangiste", c'est-à-dire des agents soumis aux lois du mode de production capitaliste. Plus particulièrement, c'est sur cette matrice que viendront se forger les éléments idéologiques (des idéologies dominantes) — y compris les éléments discursifs (des discours dominants), et c'est sous le mode de la critique demystificatrice, de l'analyse de ces "illusions" qui est conduite, à ce niveau, la lutte idéologique des classes dominées.¹⁹ (The emphasis is that of the author).

As we traced the ideological matrix of group subject as the effect of the relations of production, this matrix cannot but be the dominant ideological matrix — dominant in the sense of containing a relation of dominance of the capitalist class with the working class. The presence of the dominant class in an ideological matrix as a necessary feature of structure of class relations is well put by Miguelez,

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l'effet essentiel ou décisif repérable au niveau du mode de production capitaliste demeure, dans un certain sens, le même — l'occultation de l'organisation classiste de la société — l'évolution ou les transformations dans la forme de l'effet, autrement dit dans ce que nous avons appelé la "matrice" idéologique du mode, qui est la matrice idéologique dominante.²⁰

Ideological and juridico-political modalities of group action: Conflictual cooperation

Just as the group effect on the ideological level is an ideological matrix of group subject which conditions the range of ideological modalities, by the same token, a group effect on the juridico-political level is a matrix of "group" action which circumscribes the modalities of institutionalized political action including general norms on which specific rules and regulations defining political practice are based. The juridico-political matrix of group action is constitutive of a relation of political dominance of the capitalist class as it is the effect of the relations of production on the political level.

If the analysis so far is correct, it points to two important factors, namely that the capitalist class exercises its dominance on the ideological and juridico-political levels and that the form of this dominance is the ideological group subject and juridico-political group action. These are not small or insignificant revelations which the theoretical analysis at the abstract level of the capitalist mode of production of advanced stages of accumulation makes possible. It is indeed fundamental to a critique of particular empirical ideologies and political practice which, if approached directly through only empirical methodological means, appear as egalitarian and libertarian and from which are concealed the whole basis of capitalist class dominance in social relations. The notion of matrix and specifically the group form of ideological and juridico-political matrices permit us to determine the basic principles, the dominant modalities, the class character of particular pluralist ideologies and pluralist politics pervasive in advanced capitalist social formations. But it does not suffice in itself to account for features of a given ideology and politics of a substantive nature. It cannot, in itself, therefore, account for the variation between particular pluralist ideology and politics. In other words, we cannot simply reconstruct particular pluralist ideologies and politics on the sole basis of the group matrix. A given pluralist ideology or politics is not derivable as such from the group matrix. The particular specificity of a given American pluralist ideology and pluralist politics as compared to those in the Canadian context is determined in part by the specific forces in the class struggle. But the group ideological and juridico-political matrices also play a determining role in that they provide the logical structural apparatus within which specific ideological themes as well as, and perhaps even more importantly, specific

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connotations and specific forms of political action are inscribed. On this very point and again in particular reference to the ideological matrix, Roberto Miguelez is particularly relevant.

L'analyse des idéologies ne peut être conçue que comme une analyse à la fois théorique et historique: théorique dans la mesure où la connaissance de la matrice idéologique dominante ou des modalités idéologiques les plus générales correspondant au mode de production — ou à la phase où se trouve celui-ci — oriente globalement mais dans ses paramètres décisifs l'analyse: historique, dans la mesure où la connotation idéologique précise d'un élément idéologique précis est affectée nécessairement par l'histoire idéologique de l'élément.²¹

From the group effect as the ideological and juridico-political matrices of group action, we can derive the principal ideological modality and modality of political action which we may refer to as "conflictual cooperation" or compromise between groups. Or, another way of formulating this proposition: the ideological and juridico-political group effect has a conflictual cooperative effect on the modality of interaction between groups. We can see this in the very derivation of the ideological and political group effect itself of the economic structure of the double concentration of capital which on the level of circulation replaces the competitive market and the concomitant modality of competition by the negotiation of salary settlements between two collectives of opposing but "fixed" positions. That is, each collective as such is not "free" to accept or reject the offer under the compelling regulating sanction of competition where the buyer of labour power chooses the cheapest offer and the seller of labour power chooses the highest bidding buyer in a free flow of the labour power commodity. The competitive principle of a free market determines which buyer confronts and exchanges with which seller. Neither the trade union nor the corporate collective is "free" to choose the other in the exchange. For these agents of exchange are juridically constituted as fixed collectives. The juridico-political presence in this structure, as we saw, goes further: not only are these agents of exchange constituted as collective bargaining agents but they are constituted as agents of equal power occupying opposite positions. They are formally equal. The effect of this structure on the modalities of intervention in the exchange is one of conflictual cooperation. That is, mutual concession, give-and-take, compromise become the modalities of exchange. The breakdown of these modalities is stalemate in the form, for example, of strikes and lockouts, preventing the occurrence of exchange until such time as one side or both concede to some of the opponent's demands or at least to resume negotiations.

The modality of compromise and concession at the economic level is clear-

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ly one in which the capitalist class exercises its dominance, for each agent of the exchange juridically constituted as equal bargaining agent seeks to maximize its relative share of the total socially produced value and the issue, as we saw, is one of where to insert the dividing line between the worker's portion and the corporate portion and not a worker reappropriation of the total value. Such a revolutionary issue as a worker reappropriation of the total value is precisely what this structure excludes. The modality of compromise on the economic level as the effect of the juridical component of the structure of exchange becomes the dominant modality of action on the political and ideological levels. The modality of conflictual cooperation is inscribed in the juridico-political and ideological matrices of group action: conflict as a mark of the ideological equality of group subjects, each of which expresses and pursues its own demands, cooperation and compromise also as a mark of the formal equality of group subjects as a necessary requirement for the co-existence of a plurality or diversity of equal group actors. Conflict and opposition thus go hand-in-hand or at least along side cooperation in the form of reconciliation and compromise. Communication becomes one based on a mutual recognition of differences and of undisputed right of each group to seek to preserve its differences. Such communication secures agreements between opposing parties for the coexistence of differences occurs within the framework of reconciliation. In this ideological matrix of group subjects and the dominant modality of conflictual cooperation, the contradictory class interests are reconstituted as distinct but reconcilable differences between equal groups. Conflict is contained by rules of moderation within which compromise can be achieved.

This juridico-political and ideological matrices of group action and the modality of conflictual cooperation is the structure within which pluralist ideologies and politics propelled by the class struggle take form. Although it is on the historical level that the emergence of concrete issues can be appreciated, the structurally derived modality of conflictual cooperation is not without some consequence for substantive issues. The norms of moderation and compromise predetermine in part the type of issues and the form in which they can be promoted. A whole range of non-negotiable issues over which there can be no compromise are disqualified or at least disadvantaged by the rules. This, of course, is not to say that radical, revolutionary issues do not arise, for in fact they are the motor of historical change. It is to say that such issues are disadvantaged and even suppressed by the very dominance of juridico-political modality of conflictual cooperation of group action. This type of issue can only be admissible if it is translated in away that eliminates its revolutionary import.

Conflictual interaction between group actors emphasizes not the elimination of one by another but rather the mutual recognition of each other's

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rights to its own differences, the necessity of coexistence and consequently the imperative of cooperation, moderation and conciliation. This does not mean that such a modality of political action leads on the concrete level to an objective equalization of groups in terms of their power to promote their interests. It allows for, indeed, nurtures inequalities between groups but inequalities which derive from degree of ability to achieve compromise. Political majorities and political minorities are constituted in this way. The group's effectiveness in arriving at mutually acceptable agreements with others of expressed differences such that each group obtains something and no one obtains all nor loses all determines its relative power vis-à-vis others. The conflictual cooperation between groups leads to a power differentiation between groups which is linked not to distinguishing characteristics of the group, i.e. occupation, ethnicity, etc., but rather to its dexterity in achieving compromise with other groups. It achieves power from entering majority coalitions in the formation of political majorities. For the ideological formalism of politico-juridical rules discount any inequality between groups as arising from the position they occupy within the social structure just as they discount inequality between individuals. Power inequality is simply an expression of the group's inability to employ effectively the rules of compromise. But such inequality owing to the failure to be included in political majorities, i.e. ruling political parties, is not a permanent, legally sanctioned condition. It is but temporary. The moment the group concedes compromise, embarks on the game of give-and-take, it converts from relatively powerless political minority to power wielding political majority.

As we have stated repeatedly, the political modality of conflictual cooperation between groups can be derived from the political matrix of group action, but the constitution of actual political majorities, i.e. the formation of coalitions of groups and the particular issues on which compromise occurs is a historical matter. The class character of the hegemonic fraction of the political power block in the context of the political class struggle is a factor of decisive importance. If the analysis of mode of production tells us that the ideological and political effects of the advanced capitalist relations of production are such that ideological and political dominance is accorded to the capitalist class, it is the concrete level of social formation and the class struggle in its various forms that is indicative of which fraction of the dominant class has hegemony in the power block. This is a critical factor for it is the particular class interests of the hegemonic fraction of the power block which will determine the nature of agreements arrived at through negotiation. In other words, the constitution of a political majority from a series of particular groups with conflicting interests is orchestrated by the hegemonic fraction of the dominant class. It is this which determines which groups will constitute the political majority and more importantly on what terms the groups will enter the political majority. In the

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dialectic between the dominant modality of action and political issues — a dialectic mediated by the hegemonic fraction of the power block — the resulting articulated general programme derives from a process of filtration of issues: the retention of just such conflicting issues as are translatable into a sufficiently moderate form as to unite opposing groups, and the exclusion of a whole range of possible contradictory issues whose differences cannot be internally regulated by the principle of moderating synthesis.

We may say on the basis of these considerations of the structural and historical determinants of group politics that the majority principle and rules of conciliation constitute the structure in which issues are filtered such that contradictory demands and even milder incompatibilities with the dominant class interests are eliminated or translated into a form in which the dominant class interests are asserted.

Both on the ideological and juridico-political levels, power is concentrated in the diverse group-constituted majority. That is, a majority acquires the legitimate power to govern. Its governing right is justified by its being a majority. The quantitative character of majority is accompanied by the qualitative trait of power. Majority rule has legitimate power.

The same ideological qualifiers apply to political minorities but in inverse relation, of course. A political minority is smaller and without legitimate power to make legally binding decisions. That it is small and powerless and thus a political minority, attests to its having been less effective in applying rules of moderation in winning group support. That is to say, that although it is constituted in the same manner as that of a political majority, it does not succeed as well in reconciling group differences sufficiently to form a majority itself. Remaining without power is the price the minority pays for this political ineptness. Thus the lack of power on the political level is justified in terms of the political minority's relative smallness which, in turn, is ideologically linked to an inability to mobilize support by compromise and conciliation. The strategic ineptness at reconciling differences or the refusal to compromise, for indeed, a political minority may reflect the insistence of this or that group to pursue its demands unmodified, carries the political price of being assigned to the opposition without the legitimate power to rule. Smallness and powerlessness go hand-in-hand, inseparably, whatever the reason for the smallness.

The Group effect implication for social minorities

The modality of conflictual cooperation between group subjects as the dominant modality of action of pluralism, has some important effects on the ideological characterization or connotation of a social minority. Historical factors may account for the smallness and relative powerlessness of a given social minority, usually cultural minority, as its objective characteristic. Such

historical factors as economic, ideological and political struggles may account for such a minority group's unwillingness or even inability to conform to the dominant modalities of action of compromise and moderation. But small and powerless as ideological qualifiers of social minority have a particular connotation, one which is based both on the ideological significance of the rules of compromise and on the historical experience of the minority. Ideologically, powerlessness of a minority, its place in the periphery, the margin of society is linked to its smallness and this in turn to the dominant rules of compromise. What, more specifically, are the relations which are drawn in a pluralist ideology between smallness and rules of compromise? Moderation and compromise is the key to integration into a majority group, which is often itself constituted as a majority from a number of minorities on the basis of such rules. The place of privilege, indeed of dominance which the social majority occupies is ideologically its reward for moderation and compromise. By the same token a social minority carries the ideological stigma of failure at moderation and compromise. It is here that we can see that the pluralist modalities of action ideologically recasts the minority's real history. Whether the minority is such as a result of a struggle to resist integration and thereby refusing to operate within the rules of compromise or whether it is such as a result of being inept at the game of compromise, is a distinction which is blurred or eliminated in pluralism. The rules of compromise allow for no distinctions between inability and refusal: they are indifferent to the group's possible motivations. Whether it is non-conformist by choice or by an ineptness in participating in a dialogue of conciliation with the greater majority is of no great consequence to the logic of compromise. Social pluralism cannot mean, within this framework, a social diversity whose mode of cultural interaction claims validity by virtue of its success at compromise translated into a collective wisdom. This form of social pluralism demands conformity, integration into its ways as the superior, legitimate ways. A social minority incapable of adjusting to the means of the majority should content itself to an inferior social status. It is the price of non-conformity.

Ideologically and juridically groups are treated indifferently, interchangeably, equally. What divides them can be reduced to common denominators. The formula ideologically reconstitutes the objective contradictory interests of direct producers and non-producers to a common interest to sustain economic growth. Even the contradictory class interests of communal vs. private property is reconstituted as conflicting interests between groups reconciled through the formula of coexistence of both private and public (state) ownership and control of means of production as a more effective means of assuring expansion and sustaining negotiated rates of growth.

A variety of organized groups within rather broad social movements which have emerged in the last 15 years or so such as the women's movement, the

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environmentalist, anti-pollution, anti-nuclear movement and so on are, to some extent, becoming integrated within political majorities to the degree that they operate by means of the juridico-political modality of compromise. While women's groups are numerous, a factor which attests to their heterogeneity in respect to their political demands and degrees of militancy, those groups demanding opportunity to achieve the valued social resources equal to that of their male counterparts are the most likely to be reconciled to the rules of compromise. For indeed, they seek integration into the mainstream, on terms which call for some modification in the male culture — modifications achievable through pluralist compromise. These groups constitute the majority within the women's movement and not surprisingly they are the politically dominant groups, for as neither a distinct cultural minority nor a distinct class promoting distinctly working class demands but as groups seeking to join the main stream, they adjust to the political rules of compromise and accommodation and join more readily the dominant political majority. Environmental groups, too, are disparate in respect to demands and degrees of militancy. But just as in the case of the women's movement, the moderate groups whose demands and action are most compatible with or adaptable to compromise are the most readily integrated into the political majority.

The very factor of diversity within social movements such as the women's, the environmentalists', is itself exploitable by the ideological and juridico-political matrices of group action, for as the most moderate groups are integrated into majorities as if they were the sole or at least the most representative of the whole movement, the more radical groups are excluded without there being a serious threat to the rule of compromise as the legitimate modality of political intervention on the basis of its capacity to assure representation.

This brief consideration of the effects of the ideological and juridico-political matrices of group action on the concrete level of ideological and political conflict reveals that the antagonistic or revolutionary potential of conflict of group action is neutralized. While conflict acquires the form of conciliatory resistance in politics, in ideology it becomes a principle of defense of liberal freedoms such as freedom of expression, freedom of association and so on. Pluralist conflict is not only compatible with the dominance of the capitalist class but is indeed the form in which the capitalist class exercises its political and ideological dominance. The insight is only possible via a consideration of the juridico-political and ideological matrices of group subject and the modality of conflictual cooperation as the group effect of the double concentration of capital at the level of relations of production. Particular pluralist ideologies and politics differ one from the other depending on the particular forces in which they emerge and studying them solely empirically is not easy, nor often possible to see the presence of class dominance in pluralism and of the way in

which the dominant class exercises its dominance. It is not surprising that a variety of empirical studies of pluralism arrive at the conclusion that class dominance may be present in pluralist ideological and political conflict but not necessarily. To argue the necessary presence of class dominance in pluralist ideology and politics is neither to advance a fatalistic argument nor, and especially not, an apologetic argument for the dominant class. The juridico-political and ideological matrices of group subject and group action contain the contradictions of which they are an effect, the fundamental one being that between capital and labour. This contradiction not only cannot be resolved within the ideological and juridico-political matrices of action, but these latter owe their existence to this contradiction. The matrices exist insofar as they can check this contradiction. When the contradiction surfaces in the form of a class struggle in which the working class rejects all grounds curtailing its pursuit of its class interest of reappropriating the surplus product, the ideological and juridico-political matrices and the modality of compromise collapse. The realization of the working class interest cannot be achieved within a context of compromise with the capitalist class, for the contradictory nature of class interests cannot lend itself to class compromise. Class compromise can only mean the subordination of working class interests to those of the bourgeoisie.

The structural limits and class bias of the juridico-political and ideological matrices and the modality of compromise can also surface when cultural minorities set forth to preserve their cultural identity on a basis of real equality. It is at these moments that the ideological group equality reveals itself as a false, illusory equality, uncompromising in the social relations of force which it attempts to conceal, paradoxically, by compromise. But as long as cultural minorities operate by means of the dominant modality of compromise, the demands they advance for cultural survival must be compatible with the majority programme and, on the other hand, the majority programme must be accommodating to the demands for cultural survival of the minority. Of course, the accommodation can only be one of degree — a degree tolerable to and compatible with the hegemony of the majority culture. In the long run, these rules of compromise on cultural issues have one of two possible consequences: a) high degrees of total assimilation or b) the retention of cultural identity as a mark of inferior social status and lower economic advantage. In both cases the cultural dimension reflects the pattern of economic relations between the cultural minority and the larger social formation, i.e. the character of the relations of the minority bourgeoisie with the dominant fractions of the larger bourgeois class and with the minority working class, as well as the relations of the minority working class with the whole class structure. The juridico-political and ideological matrices of group subject and the modality of compromise are more likely to lose their legitimacy vis-à-vis a minority group of the second type, that is, a minority group whose retention

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of its distinct cultural identity and thus its resistance to assimilation is tied to a marked economic dependence and whose claims to real equality, cultural and economic, is not satisfied and indeed cannot be satisfied within the framework of compromise. In this context of cultural group radicalism, the contradictions of pluralist ideology and politics can be revealed, for the necessary integration which the rules of moderation and compromise anticipate and indeed produce, is the very state which the cultural minorities resist. The very nature of the demands of cultural minorities contradict the juridico-political rules by which the demands are modified in the process of being translated into policy. If the cultural minority succeeds in achieving at least some distance from the political hegemony of the majority, as may be the case in federal state systems where the cultural minority is concentrated in a distinct territorial unit of some degree of political autonomy such as a state or a province, it, itself, adopts rules of compromise in relation to the group pluralism constitutive of the social formation within this political unit, with the difference that, being the majority in relation to the latter, it determines the basis of conciliation and degrees of accommodation to its own minorities. But where the claims to cultural distinction achieve advanced or radical proportions, the federalist relation can be only one of marked instability as the cultural minority aims through various means toward total political secession. Recent history of Quebec comprises both types of forces.

With a political separation, the cultural minority is transformed into a cultural majority. Its relation toward cultural minority groups parallels its relation to the hegemonic majority in the larger social formation but in reverse, for if the argument is correct that a group effect on the ideological and on the juridico-political levels and the modality of compromise is the effect of the capitalist relations of production at the advanced phase of concentration, then these same matrices and modality of action will mark the new social formation, to the extent that the new feature of the new social formation is but the different constellation of fractions of the dominant class in the power block. As the capital-labour economic structure persists, the contradictions of this structure will be reproduced on the other levels, militating against the possibility that the political rules of negotiation and compromise will lead to what Habermas refers to as a "true" consensus²² between all parties to an issue. For such a consensus can only be achieved where all parties are united by a true, universal common interest, itself conceivable only when the relations of production are such that the producers of the surplus product are also the appropriators and controllers of it. In a structure in which the surplus product is privately appropriated, the interests of producers and the interests of non-producers are diametrically opposed, contradictory, and a consensus, even in the form of a compromise, is consensus produced in conditions of class domination and can be but an ideological consensus compatible to the

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interests of the dominant class. It is a false consensus insofar as it claims universality on the basis of a compromise in which all parties have equal input and bargain from equal power positions. It is false insofar as this ideological depiction hardly coincides with the objective social relations between classes in the capitalist mode of production.

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Notes

1. See for example, Michèle Lalonde and Denis Monière, *Cause commune, manifeste pour une internationale des petites cultures*, L'hexagone, Montréal, 1981.
2. See Jean-Claude Vernex, *Les acadiens*, Éditions Entente, Paris, 1979; Norman Sheffe, ed., *Many Cultures, Many Heritages*, McGraw-Hill, Toronto, 1975; Dean Wood and Robert Remnant, *The People We Are: Canada's Multicultural Society*, Gage, Toronto, 1980.
3. This current conjunctural relation between groups and the state pervades in many advanced capitalist social formations according to Alain Bihr, "L'inavouable compromis", in *Le monde, diplomatique*, jan. 1980. See also my "State and Ideology in Advanced Capitalism", in *L'idéologie et la reproduction du capital*, Raymundo de Andrade, et al., University of Ottawa Press, 1981.
4. On the basis of empirical research of contemporary political practice, a large number of pluralist scholars point to the group as the basic collective unit of political action and as having replaced the individual of previous political practice. They accordingly propose modifications to democratic theory in recognition and defense of this change. Amongst the influential proponents of this position are David Truman, *The Governmental Process*, Knopf, 1967; William Kornhouser, *The Politics of Mass Society*, Free Press, Glencoe, 1961; Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1962.
5. The notion of ideological subject which will be discussed below is developed by Louis Althusser in "L'idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État" in *Positions*, Éditions sociales, Paris, 1976.
6. Opinion surveys conducted for the study of electoral behaviour as well as many interpretations of aggregate electoral results seem to indicate that the major determinants of opinion and voting behaviour are region, ethnicity, religion, rather than class. See Mildred A. Schwartz, "Canadian Voting Behaviour" in *Electoral Behaviour*, Richard Rose, ed., Macmillan, N.Y., 1974, for a synthetic review of electoral studies in Canada, many of which argue this point.
7. See for example, Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology*, Free Press, N.Y., 1962; Seymour Lipset, *Political Man*, Mercury, London, 1963.
8. The structuralist Marxist theoretical tradition has developed a rich articulated body of constructs which is particularly useful for working out the group question in pluralist ideology and politics. To situate our arguments, we begin by defining some crucial concepts, the structuralist nuances of which we do not pause to relate to, compare with and evaluate against historicist formulations even though much of Marxist structuralist theorizing has been conducted in critique of and in debate with historicist Marxists as well, of course, as non-Marxists. This is not because we consider the debate resolved in favour of the structuralists but because the comparative substantive issues are examined in a number of published texts (see for example Louis Althusser, *Pour Marx*, François Maspero, Paris, 1966; Nicos Poulantzas, *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, petite collection Maspero, Paris, 1978) and to engage in them here would take us away from our immediate objective and perhaps add little to the clarity of the 'group effect' argument.
9. See in particular Louis Althusser, "L'idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État", *op. cit.*
10. Nicos Poulantzas, *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
11. Günder Frank advances a model of coincidence between mode of production and social formation in *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1967; and in *Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution*, Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1969. For a critique of this conception, see Roberto Miguelez, "Le concept de 'formation sociale' dans l'analyse des sociétés dépendantes: le cas de l'Amérique Latine", University of Ottawa, 1980.

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12. This thesis is defended by Nicos Poulantzas, amongst others, in *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, *op. cit.*
13. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
14. Marx's analysis of circulation in *Capital* especially in chapter 6, vol. 1, points to circulation and its separation from production as the basis of ideological notions of equality and freedom.
15. Nicos Poulantzas, *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales*, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
16. Louis Althusser, "Marxisme et humanisme" in *Pour Marx*, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-2.
17. The more intensive exploitation of the working class of the Third World, in relation to the exploitation of the working class at the centre of accumulation, is accompanied by a form of political domination which relies heavily on physical coercion. This contrasts to that of the centre where political and ideological "persuasion" of the working class is dominant. These distinctions in economic, political and ideological relations cannot be grasped merely as marking different phases of the development of capitalist relations of production, but indeed, as marking a total unified, articulated system whose centre of accumulation determines and at the same time is dependent on the various forms of control of the periphery. See for example, Samir Amin, *L'accumulation à l'échelle mondiale*, Anthropos, Paris, 1970; *Imperialism and Unequal Development*, Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1977.
18. See W. Friedmann, *Legal Theory*, Stevens & Sons, London, 1967, especially pp. 559-72 for an account of various bourgeois legal theories of the "corporate personality".
19. Roberto Miguelez, "Le 'peuple' et l'idéologie" in *L'idéologie et la reproduction du capital*, Raymundo de Andrade, *et. al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-7.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 129.
21. *ibid.*, p. 131-2.
22. See Jürgen Habermas's consensus theory of truth as the basis of genuine democracy in *Legitimation Crisis*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1975, especially part III, pp. 95-143.