Johann Visagie

Ideology and culture: reflections on posthumanism, multiculturalism and Africa

First submission: April 2003

This article introduces a structural model for ideology critique. The model is contextualised within the broader framework of a "discourse archaeology" and interpreted within the context of posthumanism which is compared with so-called postmodernism. Finally, the article explores the implications of the model for certain forms of multiculturalism, the concept of "Africa", and Afrikaner protest politics.

Beskouings oor posthumanisme, multikulturalisme en Afrika

Hierdie artikel stel 'n strukturele model vir ideologiekritiek voor. Dié model word in die breër raamwerk van 'n "diskoers argeologie" geplaas. Vervolgens word die voorgestelde ideologiemodel binne 'n "posthumanistiese" konteks geïnterpreteer, waar laasgenoemde met sogenaamde postmodernisme vergelyk word. Verder word die implikasies van die ideologiemodel vir sekere vorme van multikulturalisme, asook vir die konsep van "Afrika", en vir die huidige Afrikaner-proteskultuur verken.

Prof P J Visagie, Dept of Philosophy, University of the Free State, P O Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300; E-mail: vboschjj.rd@mail.uovs.ac.za

I n the general context of cultural studies, this article considers three constructs that have featured prominently in the field (as well as in other contexts):

- a kind of critique designated with the prefix "post-", with post-modernism and poststructuralism being the most prominent;
- the precepts of a critical discourse known as "multiculturalism", and
- the concept of "Africa".

All three of these constructs may also be said to be of major relevance to ideology theory — and this goes for "critical theory" as well. They represent, as it were, three intertwined perspectives of cultural critique. I would like to consider these three perspectives and their interrelationships critically, within the framework of a specific ideology theory, the "ideological topography of modernity", or the ITM model. I will also explain why I believe that this particular theory of ideology, and the application I am attempting here, may be conducive to a kind of "posthumanism". However, given the formal-methodological aspect of ITM, such a connection is by no means necessary. On the other hand, a posthumanist worldview may just as well attach itself to the larger theoretical enterprise of which I take ideology theory to be part, an enterprise introduced elsewhere as "discourse archaeology" (Visagie 2001). Although this archaeological theory includes various subtheories besides ideology theory, and although some of these other theories (for example logosemantic theory and metaphor theory) are undoubtedly useful for a comprehensive critical understanding of postmodernism, multiculturalism and Africa, I will limit myself here specifically to the focus on ideology as the basic context of analysis.

The analysis which follows may be compared to a series of concentric circles. We will begin with the broadest methodological-theoretical context (discourse archaeology); move quickly into the specialised theory of ideology; take two steps back again, to explore the still broader context of a posthumanist worldview and its relation to post-modernism; proceed again beyond ideology theory to a more contracted view and a more limited theme, namely the application of ideology analysis to the discourse of multiculturalism, and ultimately

narrow the perspective still further, so as to focus on Africa and finally on South Africa and Afrikaner culture.

1. Discourse archaeology and the task of ideology theory

The most natural way to approach an encompassing ideology theory, is to regard it as an integral part of discourse archaeology (which can be thought of as a philosophical specialisation). It is concerned, roughly speaking, with the ultimate "grounds" that many different kinds of discourses portray themselves as uncovering (grounds such as "God" or "Nature" or "Society" or "Science"); but also with uncovering the deeper grounds of such discourses themselves, and ultimately of discourse as such – whether it belongs to a scientific-theoretical, or an everyday-practical, or an aesthetic-artistic context.[1]

These archaeological excavations can be undertaken on different levels, with different goals, utilising different methodological tools. Thus, a discourse archaeology should consist, in my view, of different kinds of analyses or subtheories. The version of discourse archaeology that I find the most useful (the DA model) involves a whole complex of such subtheories concerned with typical archaeological themes, such as:

- the kind of ultimate determination signified by the notion of principles (in any field of knowledge);
- the basic structural "postures" of the human condition (joy and suffering, work and reflection, etc);

---

1 The practice of (a form of) discourse archaeology is present in the work of the well-known French philosopher Michel Foucault, for example. Derrida's fascination with, and work on the problem of the origin is also an archaeological enterprise. Like Ricoeur, Foucault actually uses the term "archaeology", but much more systematically, as the label has a bearing on the basic nature of his work. Eventually, however, he had come to reserve the term for only part of his project, the main themes of which, namely the historically constituted deep structures of knowledge, power and subjectivity, would actually fall under one of the subtheories of discourse archaeology, the version discussed here (see below, where mention is made of cross-cultural themes).

- the basic framework of concrete ethical life (in both individuals and communities);
- the conceptual-semantic ground-structures of philosophical discourse (the way in which formulas like "cultural context determines everything" are constituted);
- the metaphorical ground-structures of conceptualisation (as in the work on metaphor and conceptual blending by George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Mark Turner and others);
- the cross-cultural ground-themes that inspire intellectual awe in communities and individuals; themes that come into conflict with one another, each being believed to constitute a kind of ultimate horizon (such as nature, knowledge, power, and personhood);
- the grounding of culture and society in rationality, creativity and communication,

as well as other topics of similar import, like truth theory and philosophy of mind.

Among these topics is the theme of the ideological structure of discourse. I take this to be the analysis of how discourses are shaped and determined through various forms of domination. Of course, in the archaeological perspective, discourses are also determined in other ways (hence diverse subtheories); ideological relations are only part of the picture. To think that everything can be explained by relations of domination is actually to fall prey to a specific form of ideological domination.[2]

2 Let me briefly illustrate the way in which the conceptual-semantic, metaphorical and ideological subtheories, for example, link up to the three levels or stages of archaeological analysis mentioned above. First, such analysis selects and compares discourses celebrating some kind of ground, origin, or centre: Nature or Culture, for instance (to keep to familiar, "grand" examples). Secondly, the analysis focuses on the originating structures whereby such a discourse is actually generated. This is where discourse archaeology really gets to work. For example, the actual conceptualisation process that relates Nature to society, or Culture to science, in a very specific way, would be analysed by the DA subtheory dealing with conceptual-semantic ground-structures. The metaphorical nature of such conceptualisations would be analysed by the DA subtheory dealing specifically with this aspect, while the ideological paradigm within which

Naturally, postmodernists would tend to protest against the project of a discourse "archaeology". The very notion of studying "grounds" or "origins" of some foundational kind would seem to them to have been sufficiently "deconstructed" by Derrida, Rorty and others. But such perceptions are themselves simply confused and, indeed, highly "deconstructable". It has repeatedly been shown that Derridean or Rortyan discourse (to take them as examples) cannot escape postulating its own origins — be it the flux of signifiers or social contingency, or whatever. In fact, I would contend that what we know of the nature of thinking makes it impossible for anyone to launch a large-scale critique of knowledge, culture, or society without conceptualising grounds, origins, ends, roots, or centres of some sort. And the clear or veiled presence of such terms in postmodernist discourses cannot be explained away by some kind of verbal magic, to the effect that we should not allow words to mean what they plainly, and in context, do mean.[3]

Leaving aside the larger context of discourse archaeology (and the DA version of such an enterprise), I will now focus on the requirements for a minimally satisfying ideology theory. I will refer to one possible

the cognitive constructions find expression (for example "New Age" naturalism or ethno-nationalistic culturalism) would be analysed by the DA subtheory of ideology. (The domination features of ideology will be discussed below.) Thirdly, conceptual-semantic, metaphorical and ideological structures (among others) come into archaeological view as origins or grounds or centres in their own right, but each within a field of operation that is severely limited by the others. This is the only kind of relativism of "origins" and "centres" that is really rational and realistic (cf Visagie 1994, 1996 & 2001).

3   In the case of Derrida, for example, his dependence on origins (or transcendence) of some kind comes to clear expression in statements such as this: "Unconditional hospitality is transcendent with regard to the political, the juridical, perhaps even to the ethical" (Borradori 2003: 129). Note how the DA subtheory of cross-cultural ground-themes (according to which the concept of society, abstracted from its coherence with similar themes like nature or personhood, is one of the origins ceaselessly invoked in theoretical thought, whether ancient, modern or "postmodern") and of conceptual ground-structures (according to which the notion of "fluctuating language" is as much philosophically structured as is the metaphysical notion of eternal ideas) hovers in the background of the critical view expressed here.

version of such a theory, the one to be implemented below, as the ITM ("ideological topography of modernity") model.[4]

2. Nine criteria for ideology theory

The following nine criteria, briefly listed, indicate what I think a comprehensive theory of ideology (with practical as well as methodological intent) should conform to, and, I would contend, govern the design of the ITM model (which is of course not to say that this model is devoid of the typical problems of theories, as such:

- First, the term "ideology" is to be taken in its negative or critical (as opposed to neutral) sense, which has proven to be its only really interesting sense, as the literature attests.[5]

- Secondly, the critical concept of domination should be fully exploited so that we can speak of ideological mechanisms on a cognitive as well as a social level.[6] Ideology analysis thus deals with the way in which certain norms, values or goals dominate other norms, values or goals as well as (familiarly) with the way in which certain groups in society dominate others.

- Thirdly, both spheres of domination should be conceived of as consisting of a multiplicity of "formations".[7]

- Fourthly, the complexity of the ideological world should include the way in which ideological formations evoke counter-measures that themselves immediately tend to lapse into ideological patterns.[8]

---

4   Thus, ITM theory forms part of DA theory, but both represent only possible versions of an ideological and an archaeological theory.

5   Against the theoretical usage that excludes all but a "worldview" connotation of the term, for example in "sociology of knowledge" contexts.

6   Against the classic Marxian conception and its "critical theory" variants, as well as theories of dominating cultural discourses that alternatively ignore social forms of domination.

7   Against theories that target either a unitary cultural complex such as "science-technology", to which "capitalism" is sometimes added, or a simple social category like "class".

8   Against theories that see the whole of society and culture in the relentless grip of some central dominating power — except for the few enlightened critics.

- Fifthly, ideology theory should encompass not only relations of domination (in both senses) in "ordinary/everyday" culture and society, but also in the specialised arenas of scientific-theoretical and artistic-aesthetic discourses, for example.[9]

- Sixthly, ideology theory should distinguish sharply between power (which is not in the service of ideology as such) and domination (into which power is transformed, almost invariably, if only partially).[10]

- Seventhly, an adequate ideology theory should be able to explain the shortcomings of other conceptions of ideology "structurally", while simultaneously addressing and reconstructing the "truth elements" of these conceptions.[11]

- Eighthly, ideology theory must in itself be a theoretically sophisticated construct, capable of complex distinctions, far-reaching generalisations, and novel and non-apparent abstractions and explanations. On the other hand, in appropriate contexts, it must be communicated in simplified terms, in an informal and "popularising" mode.[12]

- Ninethly, an ideology theory should be strongly self-critical, and see itself as unavoidably enmeshed in at least some of the very relations of domination that it aims to critique.[13]

9   Against theories that fail to generalise the concept of ideology sufficiently — most, in fact.

10   Against the ubiquitous demonisation of power, for example in the negative evaluation of the very concept of the state.

11   Against theories that are structurally unable to enter into this kind of inter-theoretical communication.

12   Against both the postmodernist and the scientistic-rationalistic detractors of social "theory", with the political Chomsky at the forefront of the latter.

13   With reference to the "truth elements" criterion, the ITM model can structurally "locate" (elements of) the conceptions of the following thinkers (in particular): Habermas, Chomsky, Foucault, Lyotard, Heidegger, Marcuse, Horkheimer/ Adorno and Christopher Lasch. Less well-known Christian philosophers whose insights can be reconstructed are: Jacques Ellul, Herman Dooyeweerd, D H Vollenhoven, H van Riessen, Bob Goudzwaard and Calvin Seerveld. Connections between ITM and the work of these social and cultural critics are discussed in Visagie 1994. Probably the only ideology theorist who has given notable expression to this ideal is Adorno.

3. Fleshing out ITM: the lie of the land

In this section I will briefly survey some key features of a specific approach to ideology analysis, namely the ITM model referred to above. The overview will note some of the basic structural components of the model: spheres, worlds, levels, formations, mechanisms, strategies, and so on. This will be followed by a reference to two "adjacent" theories — that is, theories or subtheories that are conceptually adjacent to ideology theory (within an overall archaeological architecture). This is necessary since these theories involve distinctions that will be needed later, when we come to evaluate multiculturalism and "Africa". Finally, I will remark on the specific relation of ITM to the nine criteria we have just outlined.

But, by way of a more general perspective, let me commence the description of ITM by stating that it is an attempt to apply the above guidelines in a certain way, one of several ways that one assumes are open for such application. The master metaphors of the model are those of landscape or topography, and the geometrical circle: they help to "figure out" what ideology means. The model provides for two different spheres of domination; for different cultural levels of dominating discourses (from macro to micro); for different discursive "formations" situated on these levels (such as techno-scientism, selfism, ethno-nationalism, consumerism, the social movement culture, and so on); for different categories of social domination (class, race, gender, culture, and so on) that interact with the formations in various ways, and for different "worlds" of ideology such as ordinary-everyday experience, scientific-theoretical reflection (here we find philosophical or inter-disciplinary as well as intra-disciplinary ideologies like structuralism, critical realism, ultra-Darwinism, and so on) and artistic creation or aesthetic criticism (like romanticism, expressionism, surrealism, and so on). Of course, the intention is not to brand science, or the concern with the self, or the social movements as intrinsically ideological. The idea is rather to analyse the ideological aspect of such phenomena: the level at which they begin to assume the characteristics of ideologies.[14]

---

14 With reference to the dominating discourses I have referred to, and the macro-micro levels on which these function, a word of explanation. Techno-scientism, given its cultural power, will obviously function on the macro level, as a "steer-

ITM focuses on discourse in so far as it mediates group domination on the one hand and represents conceptual forms of domination on the other (these forms consisting of the dominating effects of some norms and values upon others, as well as the cultural dominance of a complex of discourses). In terms of group domination, attention is paid to discursive strategies such as legitimation, standardisation, the use of metaphor and the creation of enemy images, and so on (cf Thompson 1990: 60-7 for examples). In terms of conceptual domination, the main mechanism postulated is the mode of "hypernormative" conceptualisation. Basically, this entails conceptually "moving" some norm, value or goal from its relativising coherence with other norms/values/goals in a certain domain, and "landing" it in a "hyper-normative position", from where it dominates the concepts with which it "formerly" cohered so closely. This domination occurs in various ways, one of which is a kind of "filtering" whereby, for example, the concept of the just or the good or the beautiful is determined as that which is (in some way or another) in line with the hypernormative norm/goal, say for instance something like scientific understanding (in the case of scientistic reasoning) or national survival (in the case of ethno-nationalist discourse).

The mechanism of hypernormative conceptualisation seems to suffice for describing ideological processes in the ordinary-everyday world at a certain level. In the worlds of specialised (scientific and aesthetic) discourses, a more elaborate analysis of power relations between concepts is needed — especially in respect of the genuine theo-

ing power" of modern Western culture. Something like ethno-nationalist ideology, or the selfist ideology, will function on "intermediate" or more "central" levels, and on the micro level we will find personalised ("pastoral") ideologies that cater for individuals, like consumerism, aestheticism, moralism, and so on. I may note that, while there is an argument to be made for classifying media power as a "steering power" (think of what may be labelled as the mediatisation of contemporary culture), it seems more accurate to situate media power topographically "between" the steering powers (techno-science, political-administrative and economic power) and the social protest culture that reacts against these powers. One reason for this topographical positioning is that it captures the fact that the media does in fact give expression to this discursive conflict, contrary to what Chomsky believes (in adhering to a somewhat old-fashioned ideology theory, cf the fourth of the criteria outlined above).

retical constructs. This is where the conceptual-semantic subtheory of DA, which analyses ontological or metaphysical formulas, interacts with ITM.

Much more can be said about ITM theory in general, and about specific forms of analysis in particular, but in the present context this is not necessary, and we may move on to the issue of (ideology-) "adjacent" perspectives.[15]

These perspectives may be thought of as "theories" in their own right, theories that are not part of the ITM model in the narrower sense, but that can be pictured as "immediately adjacent" to it, in the context of social and cultural archaeology. The idea is that ideology analysis is in need of these "back-up" theories explain certain features of the ideological world. The first of these is a theory of social and cultural differentiation or "learning processes" (to borrow a term from Habermas). Such a theory (a version of which was formulated by Max Weber) is needed to describe the differentiation, integration, and individualisation processes that have produced the "developed" Western culture (with its relatively autonomous scientific-technological, moral, legal, aesthetic, economic and other domains) that ITM analyses in its ideological forms. The same theory must also compare these cultural learning processes with relatively undifferentiated cultures in which such differentiation of domains is not found, and venture to explain the difference. It is in the context of this particular theory, and its link to ideology theory, that an answer is also to be given to questions (coming from multiculturalists, among others) regarding the supposed superiority of Western culture and society. Without going into the matter now, I can only point out that the inter-theoretical link here makes it impossible to separate "development" from its dark

---

15   For more detailed discussion of ITM, cf Visagie 1996. In recent work on ITM, it has seemed necessary to broaden the scope of the "social domination" sphere of the model, so that it can also accommodate more "refined" kinds of domination than "raw" class or race or gender polarities. I am thinking here of themes such as the struggle of groups to gain not only legally enforceable rights but also authentic social recognition (cf Taylor 1992); the micro-distancing that can occur between subgroups of a given subculture, and the exclusions ("underclasses") that can almost invisibly arise in terms of employment, housing, higher education, and so on (cf Habermas 2001: 50).

side: the massive ideological deformations of modernity — deformations that are, ironically enough, ideologically absent from isolated and un- (or under-) differentiated societies. I will return to this crucial point below.

A second "adjacent" theory is (an acceptable version of) globalisation theory. Again, it can easily be shown that there is a very close conceptual link between this theory and the two preceding ones, because normative globalisation is evidently related to social and cultural differentiation and (especially) to integration. At the same time, the ideological infiltration of these integration processes accounts for the bad name that globalisation currently has, and for the reactions it evokes from social protest cultures around the world. I would also like to point out in passing that the link between differentiation theory and globalisation theory actually accounts for something that many find bewildering, namely the accelerated individualisation processes that appear to run counter to globalised integration on various levels. But "appear" is the operative term, because differentiation theory makes it clear that intensifying individualisation can run parallel to intensifying integration.[16]

At this stage, and with a view to the topics introduced below, it may be useful to pose the practical question: what does the ideology analyst (working with ITM) actually do? There are various ways of answering this question. One description might be something like

16 The cultural analyses of Charles Taylor, for example, show a clear awareness of this relationship. Cf also Habermas 2001: 75-6. Actually a third perspective or "adjacent theory" should be distinguished in the present context: that of the "lifeworld" (in roughly the sense of Habermas) in which (in the ITM reconstruction) normative learning processes, differentiated life-spheres, and ideological topography come together in that immediate and unreflected sociocultural world in which we live from day to day with utter familiarity. This lifeworld is populated by constituent lifeworlds — the social structures in which we exist, such as family, neighborhood, city, state, and so on. Note, by the way, that the differentiated "autonomous domains" that I have listed in connection with the first adjacent theory are not described here in the context of a Habermasian dualism between "lifeworld" and "system". To my mind such a dualism is unnecessary and distorting: administative-bureaucratic structures and the domain of the economy (the Habermasian "system") are also part of an all-encompassing and all-integrating lifeworld (and its ideological counterpart).

this: Briefly put (and keeping to the "everyday world" of ideology), the ideology specialist analyses discourses to determine the precise nature of the discursive constructions operating at the level of their ideological "deep structure". The analyst takes into account both the hypernormative mechanism and the other legitimising strategies relating to the sphere of group domination. In terms of the former, an analysis can begin when (for whatever purpose) some ideological formation or other (ethno-nationalism or whatever) is identified, and the exact mode of its hypernormative declensions or distortions (of science, history, society, art, morality, politics, education, healthcare, or whatever) is determined. The relations between this hypernormative logic and the logics of other ideological formations that may be linked to it are then traced, to see how different hypernorms are themselves involved in a play of dominance.[17] The focus thereupon moves to the possible relation between this topographical construct and actual forms of social domination, pinpointing the exact forms involved (denominators of class, race, gender, age, or whatever), and the type of interaction that occurs.[18] In this connection, the particular legitimising strategies that occur are determined, as well as their links with hypernormative modes of conceptualisation.

Alternatively, the ideology analyst may consider the object of analysis as something that is not already represented on the ideological landscape (as ethno-nationalism is). Think of something like the social and cultural functions of a large city, or the phenomenon of "higher education", for example. The ITM heuristic determines that the analysis views such an object through all the topographical levels, in order to ascertain if, or more probably how, they impact on the object concerned. In other words the mistake of identifying an object with a specific ideological formation/discourse must be avoided. On the other hand, one may expect some of the ideological connections that come to light to feature more prominently in the complex ideological profile of the object than others. More abstractly, the analyst will in the end also have to pose the question whether this object, if it carries

17   Think for example of the relation between state security and national survival.
18   For instance the relation between securocratic ethno-nationalism and apartheid-racism, and the systemic effects of the one pole on the other.

enough ideological "weight", should not in fact be added to the architecture of the topography itself.

So much for two different ways in which ITM analysis may be described. There are also other ways. However, actual practice and formal description are also two different things. And of course one does not want to fall prey to a methodological positivism. The further unfolding of this article (except for the next section) might itself be seen as a kind of demonstration of the ITM approach. But it will present a picture rather different from the one just painted, which I suspect is a good thing, and possibly an indication of the kind of "manoeuvering space" one actually wants here where theory, methodology, freedom and creativity come together.

Looking back at the nine criteria outlined above, we should perhaps note here the actual way in which ITM attempts to satisfy them. To begin, the model is negative in the sense of interpreting ideology as domination, but the latter concept (distinguished from normative power) is expanded in terms of the two spheres or two "halves" of the ideological landscape — discourse domination and social domination. Each sphere comprises a multiplicity of ideological structures, and the "upper" (or discourse) sphere exhibits lines of tension between different ideological levels — notably between the steering and the social movement levels. Furthermore, the discourse sphere differentiates into two sectors (or "worlds") of specialised discourses, relating to theoretical and aesthetic norms. The analysis of ideological mechanisms in both spheres postulates complex cognitive constructs, ranging from the rhetorical "strategies" behind social domination to the "hypernormative" conceptualisations that denaturalise norms and values.[19]

In terms of the communicative aspect of ideology theory, it may be pointed out that, in spite of the highly idiosyncratic structure of ITM, it stands in a "structural dialogue" with the concepts and models of many other theorists. For example, the kind of "structural

---

19 The complexity of these constructs cannot be adequately shown here, as this would infringe upon the space allowed for the other themes of this article; for further and more formal discussion, the reader is referred to other writings by the author, cited in the bibliography. However, the nature of hypernormative constructs will receive some attention below.

space" that can accommodate neo-marxist perspectives is apparent in the upper levels of the upper sphere (where techno-science, economic power and administrative reason can be "accommodated"); Foucault's notion of "pastoral power" can be accommodated on the lower levels of this sphere in terms of a level of "protective power"; Christopher Lasch's critique of the culture of narcissism informs the "central" formations of selfism and the achievement ideology.[20]

Finally, in relation to the element of self-criticism, the understanding of ITM is that the critical analyst *of* the topography is herself also situated *within* that topography. This "situatedness" is perhaps most precarious at the micro-levels, where ideology reaches most intimately into individual lives — ultimately via "pastoral havens" that consist of such hypernormative attractions as prestige, possessions, art and entertainment. From another perspective, ITM can possibly criticise itself for being "structural" and formal enough, but insufficiently developed in terms of (provision for) concrete social and historical context. This criticism has been levelled against the model by Thompson (personal communication).

However, there is an underlying problem here: the question of whether or not a given project may legitimately and unavoidably abstract from concrete contexts, for the sake of developing "deeper" theories. This issue has even received some notoriety in the "linguistic wars" raging with varying intensity between Chomskyan theorists and their context-sensitive opponents. The latter include postmodern anti-theorists, which brings us to the next topic.

4. Posthumanism and its relation to postmodernism

A certain reading of ITM may suggest a philosophical worldview — a rather attractive one to my mind — that can perhaps be labelled as (a form of) "posthumanism". I am referring to the fact that one can have a version of ITM that

- indexes all the well-known philosophical paradigms (located in the scientific-theoretical area of the topography), thereby interpreting them (in a technical sense, with reference to their "decon-

---

20 All of this is elucidated in other discussions of ITM — see the preceding bibliographical remark and note 13.

structable" conceptual-semantic ground-formulas, as above) as ideologically distorting, and

- similarly lists (in a different area of the topography) all the celebrated norm, value, and goal constellations of modernity (like technoscience, freedom, progress, happiness, self-expression, moral and artistic autonomy, etc), hereby indicating their faulty functioning in modern culture.

This raises the question of the viewpoint that ITM (or even DA theory as such) itself must necessarily represent.[21] The version of ITM that I want to discuss here does not introduce itself with reference to religious paradigms, or find an Archimedean point in any of the accepted alternatives: the idealisation of science, or morality, or aesthetic experience, or whatever. On the contrary, these alternatives are topographically "shelved" (as far as their micro-functions are concerned) as "pastoral shelters".[22] Moreover, this version of ITM is also heavily dependent on the DA subtheory that stresses the all-pervasive coherences of reality, making it impossible to select any of these (or other) shelters (or indeed any topographical entity at any level) as a point of departure, even apart from their ideological functions. And on top of this, the apparently healthy postmodern relativism that all of this seems to lead us to is indexed along with the other paradigms, by ITM as ideological in nature.[23]

How can we make sense of such "post-postmodern" relativity? One may be struck by the fact that, in its apparently totalising critique (of ideologies and critiques), the version of ITM that I am exploring seems to imply, unavoidably, a kind of other-worldly per-

---

21 The matter of DA theory's "worldview" (a theme that also transfers to all the subtheories, including ideology theory) is something to be settled in the context of a particular subtheory that deals with all manner of "in-house" philosophical issues such as the interrelationships between subtheories, shared characteristics, relationships with other disciplines (like psychology or the philosophy of science), and so on.

22 By implication, the historical *gnosis* of Foucault or the aesthetic commitments of Adorno must be rejected as a basis for the critique of ideology.

23 Which means that postmodernism is not as relativist as it appears, and that it is to be seen as one of the philosophies belonging to the ideological topography of modernity — in spite of epochal pretensions.

spective: in fact one which resembles a religious transcendence view-point, from which the values of a secularised society are all rejected, and the world and everything in it ontologically relativised. Call this the religious critique of "humanism" (with which we are all familiar). Of course, various secular-philosophical discourses have been descri-bed (or have described themselves) as rejecting "humanism" — think only of Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault. But the ITM that I am de-scribing here, while recognising the advanced state of these anti-humanist critiques, ultimately rejects them as based on ideologised formulae — a fact that may seem to accord with the religious critique of humanism, except that religion is not brought into the debate; in-deed, is questioned from a post-metaphysical standpoint.

While this ITM may take over from religious and philosophical critiques the concept and the rejection of "humanism", it is crucially important to realise that it does not take over the reasons for this re-jection. Given the initial humanist revolt against institutional and metaphysical religion; the kind of humanistic modernity this revolt engendered; the secular anti-humanism and postmodernism that reacted against this modernity, and the religious critique of all three develop-ments — the emergence of a critique that recognises the first but is dissatisfied with all the other developments can only be of a "posthu-manist" nature in a very particular sense of the term. It is a critique that cannot go back to any previous position. It is sympathetic to the Enlightenment's path to worldliness, to religion's radical refusal of this worldliness, and to postmodernism's pathless worldliness. But the humanism that is rejected here is (in ITM context) a humanism that, in its revolt against religious authority, "reason" and unreason, could not help dressing itself in hypernormative discourses and prac-tices.

To adopt a position that would merit being labelled as posthuman-ist (in the above sense) today would amount to rejecting the essen-tially hybrid character of modernity as it actually exists (a tragic mix of emancipation and domination) and distancing ourselves from it, as if we had in fact been "converted" to an other-worldly transcendence standpoint, from which the damaged state of our world could be acknowledged. For a posthumanist, the term "humanism" actually stands for this hybrid world. Posthumanists think "as if" they belong

to another place, another reality, one that stands in judgment over all humanist modernity. This judgment can (or should) be realised in (among other things) radical-critical reflection ("theory") and in radical-critical action ("practice"). Ideology theory can be one particular expression of such reflection. But the same ideology theory (the version being discussed) also holds that the analyst sits in judgment on him/herself. For, though we should think as if we were not "of the world", in actual fact we cannot do otherwise than remain "in the world".

Unlike postmodernists, posthumanists do not think that modernity can be left behind in a new worldview.[24] At most, posthumanism can be a gesture or a movement within the modern world, but running counter (*qua* intention) to its humanist form. Posthumanists are sensitive to the fact that their own critical tools have to be forged largely from modern materials, and they know that ultimately their own discourse cannot — in places — escape the ideological traps of modernity. The problem with postmodernism is not that it wants to set itself off against the contorted forms and shapes of modernity (posthumanists are in agreement with this); it is that it has a utopian vision of a break with the past; that it seems to be more interested in de(con)struction than in reconstruction (of systematic thinking and of the normative elements in modernity); that it cannot recognise its own reproduction of the imbalances typical of modernity, and that its "index" of idols and illusions therefore cannot be as (topographically) extensive as the one that posthumanists are working on. In fact, from where we stand, postmodernism can be seen as a form of late humanism, as one of the successive anti-humanisms (in the irrationalist tradition) within humanism.

On the other hand, it is true that postmodernists also possess insights into the failed freedom of modernity. Therefore they should not be looked upon as mere targets for posthumanist critique. Their insights into the modern condition must also be co-opted within it. Co-opting is a communicative gesture that does not really fit in with the deconstructionist ethos, which prefers a more aggressive approach and a form of immanence criticism that is quite legitimate but limited in scope. A more complex critique also includes attention to specific

24 Modernity is still a relatively young epoch, historically speaking; its forces are still vibrant and energetic, and their interactions are still growing in complexity.

ideological settings, as well as the constructive moment of comparing the "criticising" theory/model — which theory is a deconstructionist taboo — with the "target" theory/model.[25]

Although posthumanists do not actually possess a transcendent viewpoint, they have access to a critical tool that may in some sense come nearest to such a viewpoint. This is the tool of an understanding of the relation between uniqueness and coherence.[26] I mean the very broad, basic and general truth (virtually a truism) that things are unique and that they cohere with one another. These two polar truths, taken together, have an extremely sharp critical implication. It is that nothing must be hypostasised, over-emphasised, selectively privileged, or one-sidedly promoted.[27] This would disturb the set of immediate coherences in which a given thing exists, simultaneously detracting from the uniqueness of the things surrounding it.[28] And this, in a nutshell, is what modernity and humanism are guilty of (in ideological terms): a vast topography of such imbalances.

Therefore, a central task of posthumanism is to become clear about the real extent of this enticing but unstable landscape that forms part of our lifeworld. However, as stated before, modernity also represents certain learning processes, certain differentiations and inte-

25　The conclusions reached at the end of this paragraph are linked to some subtheoretical perspectives derived from DA. The reference to an "irrationalist tradition" is also part of the ITM topography, and situated in the area of theoretical ideologies. I use the concept of co-optation in a technical-theoretical sense, derived from one of the DA subtheories dealing with communication as a groundstructure, and with various communication models. Co-optation represents one of these models — it may be compared to the combat, consensus and compromise models. Deconstruction essentially opts for the combat model. Finally, with regard to the various forms of criticism, these distinctions (together with the concept of redeemable "truth elements") belong to truth theory (or a theory of truth).

26　This "tool", in a refined and developed form, counts as yet another DA sub-theory (of which there are about 16 altogether). It also deals with the phenomenon of "dualism": something that happens when some basic coherence is disturbed.

27　It is in this context that the religious critique of humanist "idolatry" has, in principle, a certain lethal effectiveness.

28　Of course I am not talking about value priorities as such, or about a science abstracting its object of study from a network of coherences.

grations (an emerged multiplicity of uniqueness and coherence) that nobody wants to dissolve, in spite of the damaged forms in which they function. This is the normative achievement of modernity without which the ideological topography would never have existed. (After all, the ideological form of science or art, or the self, presupposes their emerging individuality and autonomy.) Thus, besides defending the uniqueness and coherence of things, posthumanists also defend the right of the formations and discourses of modernity/ humanism to be redeemed — to have their relative truth moments saved from the wanton destruction of "radical" critiques (which are therefore not as radical as they themselves imagine).[29]

Does the foregoing sketch of a specific posthumanist attitude imply that it is spiritually barren? No, not necessarily. The kind of posthumanists I have in mind can be just as serious as institutionalised religions about the need for a spiritual dimension to life. In somewhat more technical terms, this is the need for a basic human "posture" of contemplating and experiencing the extraordinary and the overwhelming, to complement the "posture" of everyday-involvedness in home and work, and in the material world.[30]

29 Underlying the final comments of this paragraph is a "constellation" of four DA subtheories, linked together by the discursive context in which their respective "objects" are mentioned: ITM; the "ideology adjacent" theory of cultural differentiation; truth theory (cf note 25), and the uniqueness/coherence/ dualism (UC) theory. Regarding the latter, I note in passing that Habermas's theory of rationality, Chomsky's model of aspects of the world, and Ricoeur's model of hierarchical levels of human experience, all depend on some version of a UC thesis. On the other hand, Derrida's infamous *différance* depends on ignoring the coherence, inherent in human categorising, between identifying something (the positive element) and at the same time distinguishing it from something else (the negative element). Derrida's original double-trick was to isolate the negative element and to semiotise its conceptual-analytical character.

30 The reference here is to DA "postural theory": an ethical/moral model of a set of postures (a dozen or so) depicting the human condition and attempting to answer one of the ultimate questions: what must I do? This set of postures offers a unique field of play for ethical or moral theories. It also constitutes a continuing temptation for selective privileging of one or more postures.

However, this posthumanist spirituality does not necessarily have to subscribe to what it takes to be an essentially metaphysical-dualistic worldview (matter versus spirit; body versus soul; time versus eternity; etc) in order to attach a deeper meaning to reality than a shallow materialistic worldview allows, or to have spiritual experiences, or value spiritual growth. And I am not talking about a "New Age" type (in fact an ideological type) of spirituality here, which mostly comes down to a mix of scientism, selfism, and "new consciousness" transformationalism, together with various other elements from the social movement culture. Rather, I have in mind the spiritual needs of human beings, and the possibility of having these needs "really" met — that is, by the very reality in which we find ourselves. The many parts of this whole (of reality) can come to us in ordinary-everyday occurrences, or in theoretically disclosed understanding, or in art, or in spiritual experience. That is the wonder of it. For example, the lifeworld — of which mention has already been made — is something that overwhelms us in our daily lives, in our moment-to-moment involvement with the world; it is also something that can be analysed sociologically; something that can be artistically represented; and, finally, something that can really grip us, in our moments of deep-contemplative awareness, as the source not only of our troubles, but also of justice, solidarity, healing and care (think of the social relationships and societal institutions that provide for all of this, even if imperfectly), and even of the basic existential security that our daily routine presupposes.

There are many other large realities in our lives, not just the lifeworld as such, and basically the same thing goes for them as well. For example, we know from our cognitive and linguistic understanding that various things exist in hierarchical relationships in space and time, and we can make a theoretical study of philosophical formulas involving such relationships. For example, think of some or other X preceding or grounding or transcending some or other Y (which is in fact what is done by the DA theory of conceptual-semantic formulas mentioned above), but suddenly experiencing this ordinary cognitive-linguistic reality at a totally different level. This happens when, on a deep existential level, we are "addressed" by what should take precedence in our lives at a time of crisis, or what constitutes a trustworthy

ground for the most important decisions that we have to make, or what transcends meaninglessness, suffering, and death. It can even happen that we feel addressed by Beginning or End, Ground or Transcendence itself. Although in one sense we are dealing throughout with the same concepts (familiar from ordinary thought and language), in another we are not, since these concepts can be thought or spoken or written in ordinary/everyday contexts, or analysed at a theoretical level, or seen to represent a deeply motivating force at a spiritual level.[31] In fact, it appears to be something like this latter kind of motivation, linked, for example, to the category of ungraspable transcendence, that enables Caputo (1997) to find a kind of "religion" in the works of Jacques Derrida.

Let me briefly refer again to some basic postures of human existence. Working, caring for one's family, seeking contemplative distance, letting go of what needs to be released, accepting suffering and guilt, striving after hope, joy, or compassion — these "ordinary" acts also mark the "spiritual" path. This is not a strange belief, but part of the Jewish-Christian tradition, illustrating its typical "earthliness". In terms of postural theory, it boils down to the fact that one must thus distinguish between contemplative and ecstatic experience, and also

31   This distinction was emphasised by the neo-Calvinist Dutch philosopher, Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977) in his notion of a "religious ground-motive" (cf for example Dooyeweerd 1960: 113-172). Another of his notable contributions was a theory of so-called modal law-spheres (also explained in the book just referred to), a model which (aside from its metaphysical elements) has some remarkable similarities to Chomsky's idea of the "aspects of the world" which different disciplines may study in an attempt to determine the principles characteristic of these aspects (cf Chomsky 1996: 31-54). Other versions of "aspect models" are found in the philosophical distinctions of Habermas and Ricoeur, linked to conceptions of unique but cohering values, norms or principles (cf note 29). Remarkably, this kind of basic distinction is not (to my knowledge) found in anti-rationalist philosophies. In the DA model, an adequate theory of principled "aspects of the world" (the biotic, physical, "science-forming", linguistic, aesthetic, and moral aspects feature, among others, in Chomsky's informal conception) constitutes the first subtheory, followed by the postural subtheory (cf note 30). A spectrum of "aspects" also provides some fundamental categories, which can be used in a number of other subtheories. In ITM for example, some of the aspects can serve as a partial index of "pastoral" ideological formations (cf note 14).

between these kinds of experiences and the rest of the postural spectrum. Although the former offer us only a distinctive kind of spiritual experience, they have come to be generally identified with what is called spirituality. But the point here is that the larger realities which ordinary human acts represent can on occasion encounter us on a "deeper" spiritual level, as imperatives that arise to preserve our existence in some way.

Precisely which parts of reality are "at hand" to assist someone in meeting his/her deepest concerns, and precisely how this happens, and how this encounter comes to be conceptually modelled — all this is largely a matter of individual circumstances, temperament, talent, and so on. It is a matter of individual journeys, explorations, creations.[32] A first thing this does not mean is that a community of people thinking similarly on these issues cannot exist — even if thinly spread across cities, countries and cultures. Such spiritually-minded posthumanists would be very interested in communicating with one another, with the institutional religions, and also with spiritually-minded scientists, artists, and philosophers (across the ages). One of the reasons for this interest in communication is that the posthumanists' holistic models of reality allow them to understand and reinterpret elements from such diverse (religious/philosophical) worldviews as, for example, Jewish and Christian anthropomorphism; its mystical offshoots; humanistic scientism; the being and transcendence metaphysics of humanist existentialism; New Age spiritualism; Hinduist changelessness, or Zen-Buddhist flux and emptiness (with its close ties to Derrida's deconstructionism). All of these represent various visions of an Origin, a Ground, a Whole, a Transcending Immanence. But in a certain sense everybody speaks the same language in so far as we experience the same reality and share the same conceptual apparatus for thinking, not only on a concrete-practical level, but also with regard to abstract-theoretical and even "spiritual" thoughts. (The universal terms I have just used to talk about "various visions" actually illustrate this.) There is even a kind of spiritual appeal to be discerned by posthumanists in the nature of communication — itself also one of the larger structures of reality. Continu-

32 The element of individual and creative interpretation, in the context of one's own salvation, is remarkably prominent in Jewish mysticism.

ously expanding our own understanding of reality helps us not only to be aware of the ultimately Real (in its unity and variety), but also to understand the Realities confessed by others, and to see where they fit in, wherein their appeal lies, and what they have to teach us.[33]

The second thing that all of this does not mean is that such (spiritually-minded) posthumanist "communications" are not highly critical. They are, extremely so. They also avail themselves of the scientific and philosophical tools of critique. They relentlessly pick out the dualisms, hypostatisations, metaphorical imbalances, and ideological deep structures in what people have to say. And they are very much aware of the critical edge given them by the Christian roots of their Western culture, when it comes to the appreciation of the world on the one hand, and sensitivity to the idolisation of its contents on the other.

One of the advantages of this kind of understanding of spirituality is that there is obviously a deeply satisfying continuity here between our lives in the world and our scientific understanding as well as our spiritual experience of the world. What we have here are different dimensions of the same reality, not two or three fundamentally different realities.

Finally, however, it must be noted that a posthumanist spirituality (or even just "posthumanism" as described above) is definitely not an integral part of ITM or of DA theory in a technical sense.[34] In other words, it is possible — and this is as it should be — for some-

33 An example of the kind of communication that can be facilitated here is the realisation that Buddhist "emptiness", deconstructionist absence and Christian-philosophical notions of absolutisations or hypostatisations all meet in the theme of the pervasive relativity of reality. From her side, the posthumanist believer attaches importance to deep experiences of the "differences-in-coherence" that characterise reality and produce its endless relativities (the theme of UC theory, cf note 29), and also has a spiritual-existential understanding of the dark world of idolatry and ideology that opposes the (grounding) truth of a certain groundlessness. Therefore, she can have interesting and mutually-enlightening conversations (as Rorty would put it) with her Calvinist, Buddhist, and Deconstructionist friends.

34 Such interpretative issues would, however, be "structurally" allocated to a special subtheory of DA, the internal "house philosophy" of the enterprise, as it were, where the various subtheories and their interconnections are also articulated.

one with other worldview persuasions nevertheless to make practical, methodological use of these theories or to work on modifying their design.

5. The pitfalls of multiculturalism

In the context of this article, I take "multiculturalism" to be a virtual (sub-)movement, forming part of the broader social movement of PC ("political correctness") with which we have been familiar since the late eighties. In its "strong" form, multiculturalism not only affirms cultural diversity but actively questions the Eurocentric cultural superiority assumed to be implicit in the structures and models of the academic world, also seeking to replace these — especially in respect of the literary canon — with the creations of dominated and repressed cultures. This is meant not only to counter the effects of Eurocentrism as an ideology, but also to instil a cultural pride that is tragically lacking in the people (especially the youth) of such repressed cultures.[35] In the course of its development, multiculturalism has at times formed alliances with poststructuralist and neo- or post-Marxist philosophies (among others), and come to constitute an ingredient of the "critical theory" mix.[36]

Approaching multiculturalism from the ITM perspective, and following the internal "heuristic" of this model (in roughly the Lakatosian sense), the first move is to focus on the suspected ideological aspect of the target discourse (for whatever reasons this tentative assumption, which, on further analysis, may prove false, has been made). Thus postulating a form of multiculturalism as a typical ideological discourse (in the ITM sense), the next move is to locate it within specific topographical "co-ordinates". One of the main "formation" categories on the socio-cultural topography is "social move-

---

35 "Strong" multiculturalism contrasts with a "weak" version which (in its weakest form) serves only to signify the ideal of having various cultures live in "harmony" with one another, on university campuses, for example. In South African institutions of post-apartheid higher education, the term "multicultural", in the latter sense, has become part of the administrative vocabulary.

36 Note here the topographical links between the more immediate socio-cultural world of ideology, and the theoretical-philosophical ideologies.

ments". This category, as a theoretical construct, is juxtaposed to the macro-level category of "steering powers" (as noted above). These steering powers are the familiar targets of standard ideology theory: techno-science in particular, as well as political-bureaucratic and economic power structures — sometimes labelled as "the system". Now, the formation of the social movements exists in the "vicinity", as it were, of this steering complex, but there is a tension between the two. For in crucial respects, the goals of the advanced social movements are at odds with the systemic strategies and tactics of "the system".[37]

Various other analytical manoeuvers can be performed around this complex of goals and motives, but I shall pass over them and proceed with the most important steps of our target analysis. Having located multiculturalism within the topographical category of the social movements, one may refine this finding in various ways. For example, a formational discourse-entity labeled as PC (referred to above) may already be part of the diagnostic with which we are working, alongside other entities of the same category (the ecological movement or the gay liberation movement, for example) or interacting with them. In the case of PC, one would clearly indicate the collective nature of this entity with respect to the goals of the other movements. One can also attach subdiscourses to these categorical entities — for example the different types of feminism or the notion of "deep ecology" — and depict their interactions with other entities of the same category. In the case of multiculturalism, we do not have a subdiscourse in this sense, but rather PC as a kind of collective ideology, of which the multiculturalist movement forms a part. Assuming this analysis to be correct, the next crucial step would be to specify the hypernormative profile of multiculturalism explicitly — for it is only if we can actually link multiculturalism to such a profile that the initial assumption can be corroborated, clearing the way for this particular discourse to be topographically "indexed".

37 This is why Habermas appears to have addressed his communication theory to the critical awareness that the movement culture represents. In the present context it is not necessary to enter into the structural relations that exist between the movement culture and other topographical formations. I can perhaps add here that, apart from the social movements, religious fundamentalism (situated on the level of the institutions of "protective power") also poses a problem for "system" power.

The particular "slot" of the hypernormative mechanism from which control is exercised on its domain of action may in fact contain more than one identifiable norm or goal or value. In the case of the revolution ideology, for example, concepts such as "revolution" itself, or "the struggle", or "the people" can all attain hypernormative status. In the case of multiculturalism, the same variability would apply, in principle. What I want to draw attention to, however, is the hypernormative power of the concept of culture in multiculturalism. What I have in mind is the tendency of this discourse to judge various accomplishments, products or works against the crucial criterion of a given cultural horizon. And while we must acknowledge that culture certainly is one of the "largest" of realities, we should also realise that the same goes for nature, knowledge, personhood, and so on — together with all the intertwinements that exist between them (such relationships being the object of DA's cross-cultural ground-themes). In terms of the ideology that it opposes, multiculturalism focuses on the equally culturalist logic (basically Eurocentrism) associated with colonial domination (which ITM refers to the sphere of group domination). In terms of its approach to repressed cultures, multiculturalism seems to espouse the view that the creations of these cultures can and should hold their own against the dominant culture, because of the very fact that they are "Other" and bear the authentic signature of repressed cultures now finally coming to self-expression, recognising the merits of, and taking pride in, in their own creations — that is, in their cultural identity/difference.

The problem with this whole approach is that cultural criteria as such do not yet represent aesthetic criteria (or other sets of criteria) as such — although of course art and culture (together with everything else) are intimately interwoven. For example, many of the standards that critics apply to works of art are not normally explicitly thought of as being intrinsically limited to the contingent time and space and style of a "home culture" — otherwise there would not be the intercultural appeal of internationally recognised artworks, or the intercultural interest in what leading critics have to say, or the implicitly trans-cultural tone of their reasoning. I am not saying that one can create or evaluate outside a social or a cultural context, nor that this context does not colour what we make and think — only that moral or legal or scientific or aesthetic reasoning or insight is not as such

merely about cultural expression. Furthermore, in our reasoning on these other levels, we have to intend to come to grips with principles or structures or norms that at least seem to transcend our local cultural boundaries (hence the possibility of the moral, legal, scientific, or aesthetic criticism — including self-criticism — of culture). Postmodernists who try to deny this, taking the stance of culturalist relativity, are (in the very discourse that they create to this end) involving themselves in performative contradictions (as Habermas would say).

The general picture of the hypernormative structure of multiculturalism is then that of a kind of culturalism (in the commanding conceptual slot) tending to dominate the "domain" of its subjugated concepts or structures or aspects (as indicated above), whereby a given culture then becomes a criterion for what is considered to be, for example, aesthetically or artistically good. But facets other than that of art will join it in constituting the hypernormative domain that is at stake here: questions about education, morality, politics, economy, history, language, religion (and so on) all come to be approached with a certain cultural "awareness" as their overall contextualising factor. Situated in the hypernormative slot, this is the factor among all the others that is not itself related to a contextualising factor, as this would go against the hypernormative logic of having some central point of reference for deciding what is evident, natural, reasonable, or just (within a significantly large set of circumstances).

The multiculturist call to take pride in one's own — because it is one's own — fits particularly well with another hypernormative discourse, that of selfism: the familiar ideology of egotistic narcissism that many analysts have written about. Here, the "self" has hypernormative status in concepts such as "discovering" or "creating" or "fulfilling" or "expressing" (etc) oneself. Part of the story in modern forms of this central ideological formation is taking pride in who and what one is, without the traditional qualification of having to refer to what one has actually done or achieved.[38] It is easy to see how this

38 Here we encounter the topographical link between selfism and its counterpart, a rampant achievement ideology — and the current tendency for the former ideology to internalise the achievement hypernorm constitutive of the latter. Classic studies of the selfist ideology are Lasch (1980) and Taylor (1991). Cf also Hewitt (1998) for the connection with achievement ideology.

hypernormative constellation (which has its own effects on art, morality, or education) can accommodate the multiculturalist's cultural
pride — although one hypernorm is of a collective and the other of
an individual nature. I leave aside the theme of other inter-ideological
(topographical) relations in which multiculturalism may be involved;
the possibility and the theoretical context and scope for such analyses
has, I hope, been clarified by the foregoing remarks.

Although I have noted some affinities between multiculturalism
and poststructuralism (with its one-sided stress on multiplicity against
unity), it is understandable that someone like Derrida would not feel
comfortable with a culturally-centred discourse (or indeed with any
kind of centred discourse).[39] In this respect, the kind of understanding between, for example, deconstructionist, neo-Calvinist and posthumanist critiques that I referred to earlier is, once again, possible.
Speaking of Derrida, it should perhaps be mentioned here that Paul
Ricoeur (1998: 51-7) also criticises an ideology of group identification
and cultural difference, specifically in terms of the social fragmentation that it engenders.

Of course, multiculturalists are right about the dark side of Eurocentrism and Western culture. They are right that the creations of
this culture reproduce its own fatal blind-spots. But they tend to
develop their own blind-spots, forgetting that the said cultural failures,
which are accompanied by moral failures, nevertheless contain traces
of normative insights and normative structures that can be recognised
and rescued from the ideological casts and cells in which they are
held captive. As for the dominated cultures now awakening to emancipation and authenticity, they ought to be just as suspicious about
their own ideological connections, both past and present. And strong

39 Cf Derrida 1999: 55-6 for remarks on the theme of Africanisation. In the same
    interview, Derrida correctly criticises what in the ITM framework would come
    down to an ideological-topographical link between selfist and "protective power"
    discourses, resulting in a hypernormative constellation in which morality, specifically the aspect of forgiveness, comes to be conceptually dominated by concerns with the self and its psychological health. An outcome of this is that one
    forgives not for the sake of the other, but for that of the self. Remarkably, this
    is a conception that seems to be the standard in the world of contemporary clinical psychology.

multiculturalism is probably not the best philosophical defence available for a project of cultural emancipation. It is true, as Charles Taylor (1992: 63-73) has famously argued, that the creations of cultures struggling for recognition should certainly be regarded with positive expectations about, for example, their intrinsic artistic worth. But such a presumption should then be put to the test. I would suggest the test of independent aesthetic or other criteria (to be argued about) that are not just a totally idiosyncratic reflex-product of the culture concerned, being automatically expressed in everything produced by this culture. Otherwise, as Taylor notes, it is just a case of respect on demand. And this is something that totally contradicts the recognition that these cultures really seek. It must also be conceded that the kind of reasoning and the kind of norms we employ to judge some product or way of life from another culture can be influenced (broadened, expanded) by what we can learn from that culture, for cultural learning processes are interwoven with intercultural communication.

Remarkably enough, Taylor (1992: 51-61) himself seems to fall prey, on occasion, to a culturalist logic. This happens when he advocates (in the communitarian style of thinking) a shift in the classical liberal view of rights that enable threatened cultures to lay claim to group-distinguishing legal protection in order to ensure their survival. Taylor appeals here to a kind of cultural survivalism that reminds one of Lasch's (1984) critique of selfist survivalism. A crucial omission here, however, is the notion of criteria against which to measure the issue of cultural survival. It seems historically problematic to assume that a given culture must be continued, even to the extent of making this a legal issue. Furthermore, there is the point raised by Habermas (1995) concerning the need for the conscious appropriation of a culture by its "members", who have become convinced of its intrinsic value. In this regard, new generations must have the chance of affirming or contradicting this choice, and legal guarantees go against this freedom. One should also realise that a culture contains both positive and negative elements (as with the whole concept of a "tradition"), so that the rational evaluation of culture should heed a normative warning against any holistic survivalist imperative.

Let me conclude this section with a remark on one of the most important "truth moments" in multiculturalism. When we reconstruct

this element in the light of the theories of cultural differentiation and globalisation mentioned earlier, it comes down to the fact that, amid the differentiation and integration processes that mark socio-cultural learning, with globalisation as a kind of culmination of integration, multicultural discourse is in a position to emphasise in particular the individualisations and the emergence of "local colour" that should be part of the whole process. Cultural individualisation and cultural integration are not at odds with each other; although factual tensions may of course arise, they are in principle complementary normative components of cultural development.

6. Remarks on ideology and Africa

It is obvious that multiculturalism and the ideal of emancipated African cultures (including its constituent cultures) are highly relevant concepts for the black peoples of Africa. The appeal of these concepts has culminated in so-called Afrocentrism's critique of Eurocentrism, which has itself become part of multicultural discourse. From the foregoing it will be clear how the ideological trap is sprung here: one ideology evoking another; one culturalistic discourse answered by another — two manifestations of the same hypernormative machinery.[40]

Taking the ideological measure of Africa against the ITM topography, the first thing to note is of course the historical effect on this continent of Eurocentric culturalism (the discourse ideology) playing its part in the creation of a specific set of colonial relations of domination ranging over diverse regions and cultures (the social domination). In respect of the history of South Africa, we encounter at a later stage the statist imperialism of the British Empire, and more recently white Afrikaner ethno-nationalism, which took a decisive turn in the struggle against British imperialism, consequently creating race-based relations of domination (one type of group domination) in the social sphere (the infamous apartheid).

---

40 From a topographical perspective, in the case of both Euro- and Afrocentrism (and similar cases), one can speak of a formation of "macro-culturalism", structurally "higher" and more encompassing than the individual kind of culturalism that relates to a people/nation as in ethno-nationalist ideology.

This ethno-nationalism, which included its own forms of statism and economism, was in turn a stimulus for protest. Apartheid was eventually dismantled (at least in the legal sense) with the culmination of a liberation struggle that saw the African National Congress party come into power in 1994. But this did not happen without another ideology entering the equation. I am referring to the revolutionary, or "people's", or "struggle" ideology which was active in black politics before the demise of apartheid. What occurred historically in South Africa was a true ideological spectacle: concepts of morality, justice, education, and so on, were hypernormatively dominated by Afrikaner nationalism on the one side, and, in a relation of ideological symmetry, by revolutionary populism on the other (cf Schoeman 1998: 55-102). Thus, a host of norms, principles and values were caught in the political cross-fire, and it did not look as if they were going to have a chance of free development within their own operational areas. But with the emergence of the New South Africa, the emancipation of norms and principles has indeed progressed in important areas. As for the "normative" casualties of the conflict, we know from ideological battlefields of the past that history will be more forgiving of the side of sedition.

With the current relevance of university programmes in "African studies" (or some such label), it is certainly worth reminding ourselves how this kind of "study" can become ideologically infected: caught in the snare of one or more -isms (Euro-, Afro-, ethno-, or populocentrism). As Edward Said (1978) has noted in the case of the Orient, ideological discourses are in fact able to create fictitious countries and cultures, and in the present case we should be aware of a construct called "Africa". However, in the case of Africa, we need to heed the fact that such a fictitious Africa can be projected from the side of the "natives" as well as from that of the "settlers".

The foregoing remarks offer some preliminary idea of how the ITM topography can be applied to Africa. But there remains much to be said in this regard. For example, it should be clear that the "steering powers" of ideological modernity (eg techno-science, differentiated and systemic administrative-economic power), or the central authenticity and achievement ideologies, among others, can only penetrate to Africa from the ideological landscape of the West. There

is no doubt that this has taken place, but within the limits that still make Africa an "Other" to the highly modernised societies of the West. This means that young urban blacks, for example, are actually living in a kind of ideological war zone, experiencing daily the conflict between their native "communalist" ethos (with community values dominating individuality) and the modern images of a Western-styled pleasure-and-achievement individualism.

Of course, Africa has its own indigenous equivalents to the ideological structures we have been discussing here: there are the fixations on tradition and on the community, for example (countering the Western involvement with progress and the individual).[41] And, in correspondence to ITM's social sphere of domination, there have always been stark forms of social power structures in Africa (gender-, tribe- and age-related structures, for example). But in the past these fixations and domination structures have operated in the context of relatively undifferentiated communities, which constitutes a major difference from the kind of landscape for which ITM is designed. As for the path that Africa can follow in terms of systemic differentiation and integration processes, such learning processes are tied to the very notion of "development". An authentic African critique of ideology will have to free itself of the kind of cultural relativism that would exclude any reference to an axis of social and cultural development, and come to recognise the structural intertwinement of cultural states of "pre-differentiation" with social states of group domination.

But this is not to say that cultural and social development is synonymous with the way the West has developed (a Eurocentric fallacy). On the contrary, Africa has much to learn from the ideological mistakes of the West. A de-ideologised multiculturalism can in fact

---

41 Which is of course not to say that ideologies of communality (such as "the people", or the nation, or the state, etc) are unknown in the West. For some illuminating perspectives on the positive and negative aspects of African and Western cultural frameworks, cf Van der Walt 1997. As to the question of whether the term "ideology" should be used in connection with thought and action in relatively undifferentiated societies, I do not think that there is a substantive issue here: people are free to use terms as they wish, with proper explanation. Personally, I would not use the term in this connection, given its technically defined meaning in the theoretical model I am applying here.

give this real "saving perspective" to its adherents. However, the accompanying perspective would have to be a cautionary one, warning that there seems to be no way to realise societal and cultural evolution without making any ideological mistakes. We learn permanently like a child learning to walk: stumbling forward, falling, getting up, going forward a few steps.

Naturally I am aware of the fact that cultural relativists (or "culturalists") would not want to entertain the notion of "relatively undifferentiated" cultures or societies. They would read this as typical Eurocentric hubris. But there is really no way to escape using some such notion, explicitly or implicitly. The hubris can be countered by an awareness of the dismal ideological failures of more developed societies and by the recognition that development, in principle, does not entail copying certain Western styles of development, as well as by the realisation that ideals such as happiness, peace and contentment are not in any case directly tied to development — that in fact the scarcity of these values has become a notorious clinical problem in highly industrialised Western societies (Dews 1986: 166). On the other hand, it would be an Afrocentric hubris that would preclude the possibility for Africa (or other developing cultures) to take over any achievement of modernity (in any field or area or sphere) and to accommodate it to the individuality of the "receiving" culture, possibly "de-ideologising" it in the process.

On the whole, if one considers what is occurring in (internally developing and internationally socialising) Africa today, as seen from an ideology-critical perspective, a rather depressing picture emerges (sadly complementing our picture of Western modernity). There is a world of complexly-related hypernormative discourses — technocratic economism, politicism, revolutionary populism, statism and ethnicism, to name but a few — that can partially compare to what we are familiar with in the West. And these relate in various ways to a complementary world of group struggles and social structures of domination — among them reverse racism, ironically enough. For Africa, just as for the West, the only hope lies in cultural and societal self-criticism. Ideology theory can play a small but important part in achieving this. Clearly, it would be highly instructive to take some of the ideological structures just mentioned and analyse exactly how

hypernormative logic determines perceptions and interpretations (of history, morality, justice, education, and so on) in each individual case and in individual socio-historical contexts, or exactly how various local discourses, implementing certain discursive strategies, facilitate forms of social domination. In relation to ideology theory, the African experience can make an important contribution, not only in constituting an object for theory (exemplifying both suffering under, and actively creating, forms of domination), but also in shaping and reshaping theory itself.

7. Africa and Afrikaner protest culture

At this point I would like to turn, finally, to an ongoing South African debate. I have in mind what I will call the neo-Afrikaner protest (mainly involving white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans who feel culturally deprived in the "new" South Africa) against what is perceived as a black African political onslaught against Afrikaners and their culture — particularly in terms of educational policy and the alleged domination of the Afrikaans language by the administrative privileging of English (although both count among the official languages of the country). Against the background of what has emerged so far, I think the following can be said about this emotional issue — yet another illustration of how ITM can be used to focus on the ideological aspect of the whole debate:

- The Afrikaner protest campaign can (and indeed occasionally does) attempt to find support in multiculturalist discourses, some of them expressive of a poststructuralist type of pluralism. This theoretical "infrastructure" lands the protest discourse in some of the difficulties that have been examined above. Also, with a certain historical irony, the neo-Afrikaner brand of multiculturalist activism is actually a manifestation of a formerly repressive (ethnonationalist) culture.

- From the outset it must be clear that there can be no question about the fact that governments have to respect cultural rights (including language rights). In a multicultural state, such cultural rights have to be harmonised and integrated within a juridical framework. A lack of such integration causes a government to enter

into a relation of domination (not to be confused with political empowerment) with its own subjects. The integrative task of the state can, for example, even involve government-sanctioned institutions of higher learning with a specific cultural character, where language and religion are institutionally inscribed. In terms of ideology theory, this is the reverse of group domination, namely a manifestation of a group's cultural freedom (to be distinguished from group autonomy in the political sense) — a concept that takes on specialised and technical meanings when it comes to the legal-moral principles of state government. A government may even be involved in helping to uphold an institution where a culturalist ideology is clearly in control, as long as this ideological discourse does not begin to create relations of domination in the social sphere. Governments react to social injustice, not to conceptual (hypernormative) injustice.

- A normative responsibility rests upon Afrikaner protesters (as well as non-protesting members of the culture) to care not only for their own culture, but also for the emerging national culture (and indeed for an integrated global culture, which is the unavoidable result of globalisation processes). This flows from the normative requirements of socio-cultural integration and differentiation dynamics. One may also say that it flows from a general anti-ideological principle of "balance", which I will informally formulate here. In terms of the various social "identities" that people have (or "offices" that they hold), a person is not first of all A, and then B, and only then C; rather, he or she is all three (and more) simultaneously, with varying value commitments tempered by minimal responsibilities. Thus, I am not first and foremost a researcher; secondly a family man; thirdly involved in social activism, and so on. This kind of reasoning would actually be typical of the pastoral ideology of careerism, with the "first" responsibility in fact dominating and distorting the others. In the same way, I am not a loyal Afrikaner "first and foremost" (ethno-nationalist ideology), but rather simultaneously an Afrikaner, a South African, and a citizen of the world, among other things.

- Noticeably lacking from this protest campaign is a concern with political-moral remembrance and sensitivity. A people and a cul-

ture which were the agents of apartheid (and as a whole still pride themselves on their religious beliefs) should not allow themselves to forget the horrors of the past in the name of a "healthy concern with the present". Painful lessons have to be borne in mind for the sake of a culture's spiritual transformation, integrity, and on-going self-critique. In terms of ideology theory, we should be aware of the hypernormative domination of moral responsibility by national pride. Such domination can even create the ostensibly moral ideal of a "strong and manly" culture.

- It should be remembered that a given culture's future is something that has to be debated and which requires communicative affir-mation from its members — automatic legal protection of a mi-nority culture can actually suppress this "democratisation" of culture (as noted above). This perspective flows from an insight into the dangers of a "survivalist" ideology, where the goal of survival (on whatever level) rules hypernormatively over various norms and principles of human conduct. Over and above this, there are in any case substantial legal-philosophical problems associated with the whole idea of "group rights" (cf Visagie & Pretorius 1993).

- The use of language is related to those social contexts ("life-worlds") that are normative for this use. In this respect a univer-sity, for example, is not the place for a celebration of one's lan-guage or culture *as such* — though it is a place where such ties tend to be obvious, and where they may also enjoy rights of their own. This means that matters of academic interest override any concern with cultural ideals in a situation where it is really the former that have brought a group of people together, and a lan-guage problem suddenly arises. Such a problem can only be over-come by some language(s) taking a "back seat" (on this occasion) to another. The choice of language here can only be determined by the goal of academic communication, not cultural self-expression. The same thing happens in a situation where one wants to com-municate something to, say, the widest possible audience. With reference to our critical theory, all of this has to do with prevent-ing the domination of scholarly or academic goals, as well as the communicative activities that are part of these goals, by a cultu-ralist ideology.

- The most radical members of the Afrikaner protest culture aspire to "self-government" of Afrikaners, and thus to a "Boerevolk" state. They confuse freedom from ethnic and cultural domination with an idea of self-governance, modeled on an outmoded notion of state sovereignty. But we also see leftist and "postmodernist" intellectuals, who despise the "authoritarian" or the "centrist" idea of the state itself, being drawn towards the (federal) model of a regionally-based constellation of "politically autonomous" peoples and cultures. This may seem consonant with multiculturalist ideals. But here, too, structural confusion between cultural freedom and political autonomy persists. In the first case above, it is inspired by ethno-nationalist ideology; in the second, by anti-state sentiments linked to post-Marxism or poststructuralism. It is easy to see how such arguments might in fact be co-opted by ethno-nationalist activists. And this is indeed one of the strange intellectual-political partnerships to be found in present-day South Africa.

8. Conclusion

Ideology analysts diagnose the discourses of cultures and societies. They try to penetrate the surface of these discourses, to uncover hidden layers of meaning, where the unrefined perceptions, the raw convictions and the blatant contradictions become apparent. Their task is to reveal to a society something like its own unconscious, to describe how the lust for domination arises in the conceptualising mind, and how this is connected to many views, programmes and pursuits that may seem only natural and necessary. What also needs to be explained is how such views arre actually transformed into patterns of group domination and structural violence.

The resulting stories that analysts tell about advanced societies in the West, about the cultural awakening of exploited societies, about a suffering Africa seeking its own "rebirth" — these seem rather dark and somber tales. The narrative is somehow always about the search for knowledge, freedom, fulfilment, or happiness, but it invariably depicts the protagonist going astray, losing the way, unable to become free of the illusions, the fixations and the obsessions. Or sometimes they become free of some, only to be haunted by others. This

is the story of the protest movements, in particular. And the tragic moment lies in the fact that the grand quest and the heroic struggle against outside forces are fatally flawed from the outset, from within. This seems to be a kind of ideological master-narrative, not only of societies but also of the individuals that live in them.

The writer of these stories, the theorist or analyst, is also in a predicament. For nowhere can the theory that is doing the work come up with a specific concept, value, goal or ideal that can serve as a clear and uncontested foundation, a platform, a shelter in the ideological storms. Such ideals were still embraced by earlier theories: scientific knowledge, social freedom, personal transformation, the restitution of nature, or the kingdom of some religion. Adorno felt the hopelessness, recognised that everything was compromised and contaminated, including critical reason and therapeutic theory itself. Yet he had one thing left: the pastoral shelter of ultra-refined music. More recently, the poststructuralists have also given up on centres and foundations. Still, one sees them turning to their own last supports, such as embracing the pure power that exists below — and beyond — good and evil, or riding the waves of fluctuating word-meanings that flow over all foundations, erode all distinctions.

But there are some writers of stories of domination who have wandered even "past" the "post"-modern encampments. They know that one cannot ever reach a mental space where no ground and no horizon and no relative centre exist. They also know that foundationalism is actually acceptable, as long as one has many things to serve as foundations, interacting with one another, deconstructing one another. This is actually the simple answer: the whole (of reality) and its parts. It is an answer that can and should be developed until one has a genuine theory with a number of interacting modules. The essence, however, can be expressed in a few words: the world as it is. That which can sustain practical life, and science, and spirituality. Only the world, as it is, can be the death of ideology.

Bibliography

BORRADORI G

2003. *Philosophy in a time of terror: dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

CAPUTO J D

1997. *The prayers and tears of Jacques Derrida: religion without religion*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

CHOMSKY N

1996. *Powers and prospects*. London: Pluto Press.

DERRIDA J

1999. Interview with Johan van der Walt. *Fragmente* 3: 35-61.

DEWS P (ed)

1986. *Autonomy and solidarity, Jürgen Habermas, interviews*. London: Verso.

DOOYEWEERD H

1968. *In the twilight of Western thought*. New Jersey: Craig Press.

FOUCAULT M

1972. *The archaeology of knowledge and the discourse on language*. New York: Pantheon.

HABERMAS J

1995. Multiculturalism and the liberal state. *Stanford Law Review* 47: 849-53.

2001. *The postnational constellation*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

HEWITT J P

1998. *The myth of self-esteem*. New York: St Martin's Press.

LAKOFF G & M JOHNSON

1999. *Philosophy in the flesh: the embodied mind and its challenge to Western thought*. New York: Basic Books.

LASCH C

1980. *The culture of narcissism*. London: Sphere Books.

1984. *The minimal self: psychic survival in troubled times*. New York: Norton.

LATEGAN L, D F M STRAUSS, J VAN DER MERWE (reds)

2001. *Die etos van menswees. Opstelle in die etiek en filosofie opgedra aan J H Smit*. Bloemfontein: Tekskor.

RICOEUR P

1998. *Critique and conviction*. New York: Columbia University Press.

SAID E

1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon.

SCHOEMAN P G

1998. *Ideology, culture and education*. Bloemfontein: Tekskor.

TAYLOR C

1991. *The ethics of authenticity*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

1992. *Multiculturalism and "the politics of recognition"*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

THOMPSON J B
1990. *Ideology and modern culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

TURNER M
1996. *The literary mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

VAN DER WALT B J
1997. *Afrocentric or Eurocentric? Our task in a multicultural South Africa*. Potchefstroom: Institute for Reformational Studies.

VISAGIE P J
1994. The name of the game in ideology theory. Unpubl Ms. Bloemfontein: University of the Free State, Dept of Philosophy.

1996. Power, meaning and culture: John Thompson's depth hermeneutics and the ideological topography of modernity. *South African Journal of Philosophy* 15 (2): 73-83.

2001. Philosophy as a language game. Lategan *et al* (reds) 2001: 93-106.

VISAGIE P J & PRETORIUS L J
1993. The ideological structure of the minority rights discourse in South Africa. *South African Public Law* 8: 53-67.