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Coercion and Consent:

The Mediation of Ideology in Photographic Practices

by

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MA by Research

Awarded by

University of Huddersfield

School of Art, Design and Architecture

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Abstract

The apparatus of photography has become incredibly prevalent since its original inception nearly two hundred years ago, undergoing many developments and incarnations whilst being utilised for many functions. Similarly, ideology, arising and developing from the same episteme as the inception of photography historically defined as modernism. Ideology has undergone its own advancements as a concept, considered in various ways to understand, frame, and legitimise an array of stances in political and moral economy, as well as a method of understanding social relations and power.

The following thesis traces the intersection of these two modes of signifying reality, through both their respective early histories and arriving at an analysis of their intersection within contemporary culture. Through the textual analysis of a range of political, philosophical, and critical theories, the thesis identifies key lines off enquiry where photography and ideology meet, particularly through the ideological theory of hegemony and two proposed dynamics crucial to the dominance of a group in power or attempting to attain it - coercion and consent.

Particularly noteworthy, in relation to the idea of hegemony, is the Gramscian notion of ideology as being facilitated by the formation of ‘common sense’. The thesis proposes that current mass practices of social photography as being a type of common sense is in its role as a means of signification, knowledge production and reproduction.

The final chapter of the thesis, with the aid of critical discourse analysis, surveys how a group in power, namely the recent Trump administration, uses imagery and rhetoric as part of ideological strategies to shape perceptions of reality via the use of the media spectacle. The thesis concludes with the position that photography, as a means of representation and signification is an effective tool in the dissemination of ideology. This tool is not only available to those in power but also those fulfilling emancipatory goals, and that research into the relationship should be ongoing as the world enters a precarious future.

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Introduction

Contemporary existence is increasingly lived and mediated through images and screens. It is a concern that emerges time and again as new technologies in visual media and representation have been introduced into society and mass culture. It can be regarded that, historically, new developments in visual media have aided and influenced major political shifts, particularly throughout much of the twentieth century. Ideology, as a critical theory, is a concept which has arisen and evolved in recent history which attempts to understand and explain how groups with political and economic power maintain a dominant influence over a population. Arguably this can be discerned by analysing the adoption of varying influencing and communicative strategies used by those in power, such as rhetoric and, via the apparatus of photography, the production of images. In this sense photographs can be considered as vehicular in the dissemination of ideas and beliefs, or ideologies, through its properties of signification, mimicry of reality, and that 'the structure of representation – point of view and frame – is intimately implicated in the reproduction of ideology (the 'frame of mind' of our 'points of view')' (Burgin, 1977, p.32)

This thesis posits that since it is the perspective of reality that ideology seeks to shape it can be proposed that photography is an essential practice to be used for the contesting, consolidating, and maintaining power. Furthermore, as part of contemporary existence, it is its compatibility with digital technology that has reconfigured the relationship between ideology and photography as part of a mass social practice, facilitating its circulation and consumption through emerging and monopolistic platforms which act as sites for overlapping discourses. This thesis will determine that the technology of photography, being historically

rooted and springing from the same epistemic context as ideology, has a shared relationship, not only revealed in the nature of the photographic medium itself but evidenced by how its apparatus and practices are put to service and exploited by groups in power. As such, images can be considered less neutral than supposed and are increasingly weaponised in assemblage with other strategies at the disposal of any power structure, as well as ascendant and emerging ideologies, maintaining adherence coercively or through the fostering of consent.

The history and theory of photography is increasingly informed by diverse interpretation and is in a state of ongoing development. Art historian Geoffrey Batchen recognises that as photography 'gained more prominence within the Anglo-American artworld' during the 1970's it prompted a period of writing on photography 'from trenchant critical voices' (Batchen,1999, p.4) These voices, including Susan Sontag, John Berger, and Roland Barthes, who published theoretical texts that are now central in the contemporary thought that informs current photographic practice and theory. The relationship between photography and ideology, or the way power is disseminated and maintained through the photographic apparatus, is a particular theme that emerges from this period of postmodern criticism. Batchen further identifies that 'this view of the photograph has come to occupy the centre stage of critical debate' and that between an 'intellectual milieu this view has become the dominant way of thinking about the medium' (Batchen, 1999, p.5). Three critics that exemplify this way of considering the photographic image include Allan Sekula, Victor Burgin, and John Tagg. Batchen has used a quote by Tagg to summarise the concerns and 'basic tenets' of these critics, and so it will be helpful to detail here in laying a foundation of thought that this essay will navigate, and hope to advance, in light of contemporary circumstances.

> Photography as such has no identity. Its status as a technology varies with the power relations which invest it. Its nature as a practice depends on the institutions and agents which define it and set it to work. Its functions as a mode of cultural production are tied to define conditions of existence, and its products are meaningful and legible only within the currencies they have. Its history has no unity. It is flickering across a field of institutional spaces. It is this field we must study, not photography as such (Tagg, 1984, p.63).

This quote, found in Tagg's, *The Burden of Representation*, highlights lines of enquiry in which to initially direct and conduct the following thesis: Primarily, how do institutions and agents define and set photography to work? Where does its functions as a mode of cultural production originate from and what informs it? The rhizomatic ways in which photography eventually emerges and develops certainly characterises disunity, but does not the conditions and period of the time in which it arrives, and continues to proliferate, unite it with the technological functions of its apparatus as a means of representation?

Aim and Objectives

It is the aim and objective of the thesis, expounded over the subsequent chapters, to determine and survey the overlapping origins and early dissemination of photography and ideology. The ideas of the thesis will be presented in a chronological order to establish links between historical precedence with contemporary examples. The focus of the first chapter will establish the historical background in which photography and ideology are formed and synthesised. Chapter two will advance the thesis by conveying the various definitions and advancements of ideology as a concept. This serves in highlighting its relevance within

critical theory, as a method by which to analyse aspects of culture and power relations, and thus providing the impetus as to why ideology may even be a necessity hegemonically. Chapter three will incorporate specific ideas and theories relevant in situating the relationship between photography and ideology as part of contemporary culture. It will consider how imagery can lend themselves to other ideological strategies, such as rhetoric, and how this might function by applying methodologies associated with critical theory, such as critical discourse analysis. To conclude, the thesis will introduce a case study so as to example contemporary political contexts that reveal contemporary usage of photographic discourse by a group in power, namely the Trump administration which presided over the USA (2017-2021).

1.0 Photography and Ideology: Conception and Intersection amidst the Dual Revolutions.

This chapter will establish the economic, political, and social environments in which photography and ideology emerge and begin to proliferate during the range of years between 1780 and 1900. This period is one in which, the foundations, and visual literacy, of photographic discourse is laid and where early definitions and usages of ideology are situated. The chapter will detail the dissemination of photography as a social practice through commerce, where its potential as a means of cultural signification arises, with an overview of the early implementations and uses of photography by organised state institutions for the purpose of data collection, cataloguing and surveillance as means of sustaining power. Finally, the chapter will evidence what is perhaps the first instance of photography, through the promotion and perception of the medium as possessing an evidentiary value, and thus used to promote ideological causes that serve a state. Concepts will be introduced that will become prevalent throughout the essay and will specifically aid in analysing the contemporary circumstances in which photography and ideology intersect.

The conception, public announcement and eventual dissemination of photography in the nineteenth century, arose in a world beginning to be transformed by what Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm refers to as the ‘dual revolutions’, the British - originated Industrial Revolution, taking off around 1780, and the French Revolution, spanning from 1789 – 1799. Perhaps then it is no coincidence that the main contributions to the invention of photography occurred in these two rival nations, representative of economic and political innovation, both of which had ‘produced centralized states long before any other European country’ (Wood, 2015, p.21). It will be pertinent to survey aspects of these revolutions, to understand the historical context which fosters the invention of photography, and to which its origin is

determined by, but to also consider the economic and political 'institutions and agents which define it and set it to work'. This period as well as marking the emergence of photography coincides with the introduction of the concept of ideology. It will also be relevant to provide an overview of the early development of its meaning and initial politicisation. The chapter will then conclude with an overview that aims to establish how photography begins to reinforce a new hegemonic order and why ideology might be a necessity for its maintenance.

1.1The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution can be considered an economic revolution retrospectively, a period where the 'shackles were taken of the productive power of human societies' for the accumulation of wealth, or capital, eventually restructuring society from one based on feudalist agrarian relations to one based on the means and relations of production (Hobsbawm, 1962, p.43). Its emergence is a result of historical developments within British society, particularly the rise of the mercantile capitalist and the open pursuance of the interests of business as government policy soon after the English Civil War. The Industrial Revolution also results as a culmination of slow historical technological developments along with shifts in social relations, leading to an economic 'take off' period in the 1780's (Hobsbawm, 1962, p.44). Amongst the emerging industries of coal and steel, the most profitable industry for its time, at least in Britain, was textiles and specifically the cotton trade. This explosion of increased profit was compounded and maintained by several factors: the slave trade, which was used to produce the raw cotton in the southern American states and West Indies before being shipped for processing in Britain (Harvey, 2018, p.78). British exports were usually forced upon colonised regions, usually through violent means. The deindustrialization of India's textile industry to force the sale of billions of yards of cotton to

the country is a case in point (Tharoor, 2017 p.7), in addition to the gunboat diplomacy such as that used in forcing opium onto China (Wong, 2000, p.94-97). Domestically, an abundance of cheap labour was derived from the lower classes, with both genders and children comprising the workforce, and labour power becoming a commodified as the population increased. The mechanisation in production methods, revolutionised by the 'spinning jenny' and soon impacting overland communication and infrastructure as the steam engine, railway, and canals, arguably produced the largest impacts on society, especially in term of its connectivity with the larger world (White, 2009).

The organisation and structures of this 'revolution' was soon exported aboard, the economic model of capitalism helping shape the countries and states within Europe and the USA, whilst other countries benefited from a supportive infrastructure at the behest of colonialist and imperialist foreign policies, laying a foundation in 'the domination of the globe' (Hobsbawm, 1962, p.15). Consequential societal effects of this revolution most relevant to this thesis are the developments in new means of production, via the mechanization of factories and mills. This in turn impacted the relations of production, domestically and internationally, through the rise and increase of a proletarian population, slavery and 'other forms of servile labour' (Harvey, 2021, p.67), resulting with the coercion into waged labour.

Domestically, urbanization, and eventually population growth was, and are still, some of the continuing impacts of this economic growth. Spurred by the Enclosure Act of 1773, 'a crucial aspect of the eighteenth-century rise of industrial capitalism' (Fruit, 2018, p.672), and the prospect of the new opportunities presented by the new factories and mills, people left rural conditions for the growing cities which soon became sites for employment and impoverishment (McElroy, 2012). Over time the concentration of working labourers in the

industrialised areas led to forms of organised dissent. This materialised in reformist movements such as the Chartists, and mass public protests such as Peterloo and the Swing Riots (The National Archives, 2022). These movements were largely reactive to exploitive and particularly harsh working conditions, decreasing rates of pay and artificially inflated costs of living. One example of this can be demonstrated by the protectionist economic mechanics of the Corn Laws (Marx, 1852, 2019, p.591- 592), the origins of which were rooted in the then recent agrarian past in serving to protect the landowning mercantile with political influence. The laws kept grain prices domestically high through the restriction on cheaper imported grains. This law was not repealed until 1846, albeit reluctantly after years of petitioning and protest by those in favour of free trade economics and timed during the Irish Potato Famine (Irwin, 1989, p.55). It might be considered that the repeal may be demonstrative of an example of what Foucault refers to as 'calculated distribution' (Foucault, 1991, p.221), defined as the way a group in power makes 'calculated' concessions to the wider population in order maintain a sense of control. It seems plausible why the repeal of the Corn Laws can be viewed in this way. Since the then Prime Minister Robert Peel, after repeatedly voting down its repeal several times in the years preceding, conceded to its dissolution possibly to diffuse the conditions for rebellion or revolution considering 'the country faced growing social discontent' (Irwin, 1989, p.46). Additionally, the New Poor laws, introduced in 1834 and amending previous relief laws that had a history stretching back to medieval times, added further discontent with the creation of workhouses which were used to coerce and indenture the destitute into employment in exchange for relief (Clark & Page, 2018, p.241).

The belief systems of these new industrial capitalist were disparate and only unified initially in the accumulation of capital, justifying the adoption of various coercive working conditions

and general divisions of labour in sometimes contradictory ways. For some, their authority was legitimised and informed by religious inclinations or the rational theories intrinsic to the philosophy of the enlightenment, through which the nature of relations between people and its societal impact was being explored through various concepts. Philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes had previously argued, during the seventeenth century, that a strong state system should reflect laws of nature made evident through self-interest and competition, with the emphasis on a sovereign and absolute leader, influencing the traditionalist conservative sections of British society who comprised the ruling classes (Lloyd & Sreedhar, 2020). In 'The Social Contract' by Rosseau, the advocation for 'small states, united by common aims and a nationalist sentiment' would influence the political dynamics of the French Revolution (O'Grady, 2018, p.170), whilst the works of Thomas Paine, such as *The Rights of Man,* had a great influence on the working-class movements in Britain which had been 'subjected simultaneously to an intensification of two intolerable forms of relationship: those of economic exploitation and of political oppression' (Thompson,1980, p.184). One philosopher developed an idea which is considered directly relevant to photography and its association with power, albeit via implication of the optical parameters of its design. Jeremy Bentham's concept of the Panopticon, the envisioning of a perfect prison based 'seeing without being seen' (Bentham, 2011, p.43). Its proposal stems from the increasing problem of crime, resulting from economic progress and new laws created to protect the landowning ruling classes. It was utilised by Michel Foucault as a model to trace the disciplinary bodies of society use to exert in the maintenance of dominance, forming a chapter around the concept in his work *Discipline and Punish; The Birth of the Prison* (Foucault, 1991, p195-231) which will be utilised further in the advancement of the thesis.

The main theoretical argument against the industrial capitalism, and its utilisation by state power to sustain itself, arrives in the writing of The Communist Manifesto, a call for revolutionary emancipation through organised opposition of the proletariat. Co-written and dispersed in 1848 by philosophers/economists Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels, the manifesto characterises the class antagonisms occurring because of the societal transformations precipitated by an industrial bourgeoise state. Marx and Engels deduced this period of relations to be an extension of historical circumstances, with the emerging capitalist model establishing 'new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones' (Marx & Engels, 2004, p.4).

1.2 The French Revolution and the Introduction of Ideology

As the Industrial Revolution was transforming the social structure of England, France was undergoing its own domestic transformations culminating over a period between 1789 - 1799 and referred to as the French Revolution. The causes of this revolution were a result of complex historical strains between social relations. The stringent class system imposed by the *ancien régime,* the ruling monarchy aligned and reinforced by the clergy, had fostered a feeling of disaffection within members of the nobility and the emerging middle classes, or bourgeoisie, who longed for:

> …efficient exploitation of the land, for free enterprise and trade, for a standardized, efficient administration of a single homogeneous national territory, and the abolition of all restrictions and social inequalities which stood in the way of the development of national resources and rational, equitable administration and taxation (Hobsbawm, 2014, p.76).

France was also struggling with its national debt, facing bankruptcy determined by costly wars. One of note was the funding of the American War of Independence, which was effectively a proxy war against the British, leaving the working class and peasantry privy to high taxes to help fund the military campaigns of the monarchy. In 1788 France suffered a particularly bad harvest impacting on the cost of bread, the staple diet of the lower classes, leading to a peasant revolt known as the 'The Great Fear' which expressed a solidarity with the political solutions put forth by the Third Estate (Hampson,1979, p.69-70).

The proposition of a proportionally representative constitution was led by a 'fairly coherent social group…the bourgeoise' (Hobsbawm, 2014, p.79) under the banner of the Third Estate, before transitioning into the National Assembly, to replace the structure of national hierarchy determined by absolutist divine right. The reforms, and variations of it, were repeatedly denied by the monarchy leading to several violent insurrections. This occurred most famously during the storming of the Bastille prison in Paris 14 July 1989, the act becoming symbolic as the prison was seen as 'the very image of medieval oppression and royal absolutism' (Hampson,1979, p.74). Perhaps more symbolic of the revolution was the famous public executions of the King Louis XVI and later Queen Marie Antoinette. As Civil War broke out in the country, division and despotism was prevailing between different revolutionary factions, with this period of the revolution known as 'The Terror' characterised by the executions of anyone suspected of being counter revolutionary, ending with the execution of its chief protagonist Maximillian Robespierre. Having arisen in popularity gradually from several successful military campaigns, and political manoeuvring, Napoleon Bonaparte ascended to become the emperor of France in the early nineteenth century with subsequent wars ensuing across Europe framed as an extension of the ideals and aims of 'liberty' from the French Revolution (Hobsbawm, 2014, p. 96-98). The political sloganeering of 'liberté,

égalité, fraternité' that helped propagate and legitimise the French Revolution have been appropriated by many political movements since. The egalitarian language generated and deployed during this period has become the basis for, and ingrained, into the politics of the nation state, patriotism and, by extension, nationalism and is echoed in the political verbiage, or rhetoric, used in contemporary society (Hobsbawm, 2014, p.73-74).

In amongst a range of cultural and historical ramifications, The French Revolution can also be said to have precipitated, at least, two things as a consequence: The legitimisation of the ascending bourgeoisie middle class as the dominant class in society, and the concept of ideology. Its origins appearing soon after the French Revolution, where its coinage in French, *ideolgie,* referred to the 'science of ideas', attributed to Antoine Destutt de Tracy, an aristocrat turned French Revolutionary Bourgeoisie. Destutt de Tracy was a member on the *Institut Nationale,* a group of scientist and philosophers 'who constituted the theoretical wing of the social reconstruction of France'. (Eagleton, 1991, p.66.) Here ideology was intended to challenge religious based metaphysics, which had dominated aspects of French daily life and thought, in favour of a rationalism that stood for 'political liberalism and republicanism' (Eagleton, p.69, 1991). These ideas soon fell out of favour as Napoleon Bonaparte rose to power through authoritarian means and with appeals to the passions and hearts of the people. Bonaparte himself disparaged the proponents with the term *ideologues,* chastising the applied rationalist politics as it deprived people of a 'consolatory fiction' (Eagleton, 1991, p.69) or, illusions, in the face of hardships. It is this first instance where 'ideology' is regarded in a pejorative sense, its tenets of 'free thought, free press, individual liberties, the integrity of representative assemblies and secularization' (Kennedy, 1979 p.358) were regarded as politically dangerous by Napoleon. The term was to be utilised by Marx in his work with Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology,* an attack on German enlightened philosophy,

primarily the ‘young Hegelians’ which they purported to be a product of an ‘illusion of consciousness’ (Engels & Marx, 1999, p.41) or, *false consciousness*, a concept which will become increasingly prevalent, though divisively, in Marxist thought and discourse. Marx famously uses the inversion of objective reality displayed by the camera obscura as a metaphor for the way in which ideology conceals material reality (Engels & Marx, 1999, p.47). Marx further critiques emerging capitalist ideology and advances the notion that the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling idea. (Engels & Marx, 1999, p. 64) This thought alludes to the concept of a singular ideology, the ideas of a dominant class, being disseminated on to a coerced social group bound up in class relations for exploitative ends through the division of labour. Ideology in this sense distorts the perspective of the working classes and their position within the material world, obscuring social truths and conditions. By proposing itself through a manifesto of emancipation from the exploitation of the proposed dominant class, Marxism itself becomes privy to accusations of being ideological itself. Marx’s concept of ideology is then advanced by various writer and thinkers, contributing at times contrasting thoughts on how ideology functions.

1.3 The Emergence of Photography

Right from the beginning, then, the taking of photographic portraits was a multi-national affair, requiring a collaboration of French, English and American contributors, and dependant on a steady series of technical innovations and legal negotiations, involving numerous hands and a range of skills (Batchen, 2018, p.39).

In 1839, the invention of two new processes were announced that introduced the world to photography, the first to do so being the ‘daguerreotype’ developed by Louis-Jacques-Mandé

Daguerre in partnership with Nicephore Niepce, and the ‘negative/positive’ process developed by William Henry Fox Talbot (Johnson et al., 2012, p.36). The motivations of both parties could be considered as digressive - Daguerre, having been a set designer and painter for touring dioramas, no doubt saw the possibility of what became the daguerreotype in terms of commercial application and revealed as such in his correspondences with Niepce (Newhall, 2012, p.17). Contrastingly, Fox Talbot considered the process as a method in overturning artistic talent as a means in the production of representations of the world, the idea to ‘…cause these natural images to imprint themselves durably, and remain fixed on the paper’ (Fox Talbot, 2016, p.17) stemming from the use of the camera obscura as an artistic aid, for which it had been used for centuries. In fact, it is Fox Talbot’s coinage of ‘photography’, Latin for ‘drawing with light’, which remains in contemporary use.

Upon the announcement of the daguerreotype, Daguerre himself was awarded a lifetime pension as a way of the French government obtaining the process for use in the public domain (Johnson et al, 2012, p.40). This nationalisation of the invention by the French government contains within itself an ideological symbolism ‘adding to material compensation and acknowledgment of service to the nation, it transformed inventors into soldiers of science to be integrated into a national and universal heritage’ (Brunet, 2000, p.92). This level of governmental involvement no doubt helped promote the process as the presiding means in photographic production, or at least temporarily. Along with strong interest from the French government, entrepreneurs like Richard Beard, Wolcott and Johnson and Antoine Claudet were some of the first to be convinced that money could be made with the new invention via portraiture, perhaps recognising the appeal of the daguerreotype as an object of novelty, and eventually setting up portrait studios in London, England (Batchen, 2018, p.30-31). The haphazard results produced by the initial Daguerre process united a

concerted effort to improve the overall procedures necessary in gaining a satisfactory finished likeness. Initially exposure times were long, with the first daguerreotypes needing up to 15 – 20 mins in sunlight to produce results, whilst the chemical fixing of the plates was often inconsistent (Johnson, Rice, Williams, Mulligan & Wooters, 2012, p.42).This early enterprising produced the first innovations of the medium and sparked the foundation of an industry for the production and dissemination of photography into the wider populace, fostered by an emerging appeal, and creating a profession as a result. The production of photographic apparatus only made permittable by the idealism and innovations in mass production and factory systems created in the early days of the Industrial Revolution, the production of portraits quickly emulated the production line from the factories of other industries. Over the next decades the daguerreotype would compete with, and be superseded by new and cheaper advancements, such as the collotype and the wet plate collodion process. These new processes would also introduce reproducibility as a possibility, relegating the daguerreotype even further as an outdated novelty. This competition of the new processes decreased the cost of production which in turn decreased the purchasing cost allowing for the accessibility of the middling sections of society to procure an object of their and another's likeness, ranging in forms such as the catre de visites, patented in 1854, France by Disderi. In his essay, 'The Democratic Image', Professor John Tagg observes that the nature of the early photographic portrait 'summoned up a complex historical iconography and elaborate codes of pose and posture' (Tagg, 1988, p.35). Tagg proposes that this was established historically by the role painting had played in symbolising power and social standing. As a consequence, these poses and postures were so 'passed on down the social hierarchy, as the middle classes secured their cultural hegemony' (Tagg, 1988, p.36).

The quick uptake in the mass consumerism of the photographic portrait can be regarded as the foundation of a social photographic practice, reflective of new cultural habits formulated from an historical relationship with previous forms of representation (painting) and materialised by the new scientific and mechanical processes unleashed because of industrial capitalism. An example of the photograph's cultural representational value determined by its commodification, it existed initially as a novel, private inter-family means of discourse and signification until the development of the half tone printing process in the late nineteenth century. The capabilities of the new printing techniques were 'economical and limitless' (Tagg, 1988, p.56) and allowed for mass reproduction, increasing the dissemination of the photographic image through various printed medias such as the newspaper. The new modes of production and reproduction precipitated the portrait's loss of remarkability as it became cheaper more accessible. This sense of uniqueness has been referred to as the 'aura' by philosopher Walter Benjamin, which can be regarded as the way 'the "one of a kind" value of the "genuine" work of art has its underpinnings in the ritual in which it had its original, initial utility value' (Benjamin,1934, 2008, p.11). Benjamin here is reflecting on how a unique character, of chemically produced photographs emerges and is exaggerated by its 'one of a kind' value considering the new mechanical means of reproducibility. The use of the phrase 'work of art' adds distance between the perceived nature of image, as the mechanical process 'removed the need for training of for skill' (Tagg, 1988, p.38) thus removing traces of the labour that chemically produced images imbue. As the formal ritual of the portrait reached a demise, a development in its expressive potential arose in the form of vernacular photography, propagated by new compact cameras such as the Kodak Brownie. These new cameras created a democratising effect by allowing anyone and everyone to photograph and in any context, with the price of processing included with the camera. The resulting images came to be known as a 'snapshot' and 'led to a casual use of photography' (Newhall, 2012,

p.129). This new development renewed a way of creating and consuming images, reflecting what Marx and Engels observe as a flawed aspect of capitalism whereby it ‘cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production’ (Engels & Marx, 2004, p.7).

Whereas the commercial nature of portrait photography can be interpreted as being reflective in its representational nature, constructed forms of representation began to materialise through ‘the emergence of new institutions and new practises of observation and record keeping’ (Tagg, 1988, p.5). In the late nineteenth century, the technicalities of the photographic portrait began to be utilised alongside direct institutions of power, primarily the law enforcement apparatus, as a means of documentation in the surveillance and archiving of criminal activity, which was a consequence of industrialisation and urbanisation. There had been disparate incidences of the utilisation of the photographic medium since its inception, used in prisons and asylums, but an organised system of recording and categorisation materialised in the form of the Bertillon system, initiated by Alphonse Bertillon in 1879, a French police officer and pioneer in the fields of criminology and biometrics (Bell, 2013). The Bertillon system worked by creating a series of classifications and categories made from individual ‘data sheet’. Each sheet was incorporated with anthropometric measurements and physical descriptions siting below two photographic portraits, a head on perspective and a side profile, known as the mugshot. This system was soon regimented and adopted by other countries in Europe as well as Canada and the USA and that ‘Bertillon’s work mobilized the vast photographic images in police archives into a larger communications network’ (Finn, 2009, p.26). This practice highlighted a new ‘disciplinary power’ as an aid in maintaining the ‘obedience’ of the citizen or subject, and though superseded by the fingerprint in the use of

identification, its legacy is still pertinent to contemporary existence in regard to how institutions track and collate data on individuals and the wider population.

The application of photography into the service of scientific research, and its various fields, is complicit in developing human thought and consciousness regarding the place of the human species in nature and the universe. The photograph was, and still is, instrumental in observing and representing the micro, coupled with microscope to reveal and represent worlds usually invisible to the naked eye, and the macro, through astrophotography. In 1859 Britain, Charles Darwin published a work on the theory of evolution, *On the Origin of the Species.* This work proposed a theory that deposes the then dominant idea of creationism, the origin of the world through divine creator, in favour of evolution, thorough descent from common ancestors, eventually adapting the theory to apply to human development in *The Descent of Man.* Darwin's hypothesis was soon adopted to account for the effects of the Industrial Revolution and the materialising effects on social life. This caused concerns that 'the artificial conditions of urbanized society – might in fact encourage the poorest, not the fittest, hereditary traits to be passed from one generation to the next' (Maxwell, 2010, p.81). This appropriation of Darwinian thinking also took a racist and anti-immigration dimension, with the idea of racial mixing being a threat to the genetic vitality of the nation. Francis Galton, who was a cousin of Charles Darwin, subscribed to and promoted this unfounded variation of the theory of evolution and invested a great deal of resource into supporting its conjecture. Galton coined the term eugenics, adapting it from the Greek for 'good birth' (Bouche, Rivard, 2014), to describe his application of science as a field with heredity traits as its central preoccupation, Galton considering that 'the mentally better stock in the nation is not reproducing itself at the same rate as it did of old' (Galton, 1907, p.11). For Galton composite photography formed

part of his methodology as a central means of producing ‘quantitative results’ being aware that:

> The enlightenment of individuals is a necessary preamble to practical Eugenics, but social opinion is the tyrant by whose praise or blame the principles of Eugenics may be expected hereafter to influence individual conduct (Galton, 1907, p.26).

It is with this preoccupation of rousing public support whilst attempting to legitimise his theories that the evidential nature of photography, as prescribed by the photographic representation of the criminal by the prison and asylum institutions, became of service to Galton. On invitation by these intuitions, Galton was consulted ‘to ascertain scientifically whether there were any specific features associated with criminality’ (Maxwell, 2010, p83). By utilising photography, Galton hoped to ascribe describable laws inheriting in the physical properties of an individual, connecting anthropometrics to specific crimes. Galton perceived that the compositing of images (fig 1) was a ‘means of determining and cataloguing all the traits of the human personality’ and ‘would provide constants for an individual’s social status and moral qualities’ (Fontcurbeta, 2014, p67). Galton would also apply this technique, convinced of its self-evidence, in an attempt to isolate genetic characteristics of British Jews, though largely from a prejudicial position. The pursuit of eugenics, through the representation and sorting of racial types, produced many supporters, influencing social bodies such as the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, ‘instigating a study in 1881 by the Anthropometric and Racial Committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science…its instruction to compile data on the physical characteristics of human beings in the British Empire and to publish photographs of the typical races to be

found there' (Maxwell, 2010, p97). The use of photography as a means of data collection was also put to service by other institutions and further afield internationally to support the British Empire.

Queen Victoria, the British monarch for which this era is named 'Victorian', was an 'early enthusiast' of photography, along with Prince Albert, and is regarded to have been 'more photographed than painted' and 'an eager collector of family photographs' cementing 'the tradition of the Royal Family' in the public consciousness, with herself being placed centrally in the spectacle of empire (Ryan, 2013, p.14 – 15). Innovations in transportation, overland and overseas, stemming from the Industrial Revolution through the establishing of railway systems and the steam ship, greatly increased the interconnectivity and expansion of the empire. Expeditions and survey missions, again under the guise of scientific research from institutions such as the Royal Geographic Society, were tasked with seeking new commercial opportunities and resources and quickly deployed the photographic apparatus to represent 'new' lands made accessible by these new transport methods. Africa, the Middle East, India, and Asia, or 'the Orient' as it was often referred to, were visually plundered during these survey trips, acting as a type of imperialistic reconnaissance. These representations comprised of botanical, topological landscapes, and ethnographic portraits. The aim of these portraits would even indicate attempts to measure and study anthropometric variations of its subjects such as this one of a male member of the Andamanese tribe, taken in 1890 by Maurice Vidal Portman (fig 2). The botanical and topographic studies, again like portraiture, borrowed much from the visual aesthetics of still life and landscape painting. Consequently, these depictions create an instance where the discourses of art and science overlap, a relationship that continues to develop. This ultimately led to a commodification of these 'exotic' locations with commercial photographers soon following, and often joining the

expeditionary teams exploring. These depictions of other lands and ‘other’ people helped foster an ‘imaginative geography’ through which the idea of the Empire was projected through, ‘produced in interaction with other media’ and that ‘the photographic construction of Empire operated on a variety of levels: as a means of exploration and surveying; as an 'art'; as a witness to 'progress'; and as a symbol of personal memories’ (Ryan, 2013, p.224 - 225). Photography was also deployed to depict the various military campaigns waged in service of the Empire, with British photographer Roger Fenton being regarded as the first war photographer. Fenton was deployed to the Crimean war in 1855 ‘at the instigation of Prince Albert’ and tasked ‘to give another, more positive impression of the increasingly unpopular war’ (Sontag, 2019, p.41). Fenton’s most famous, if not benign, photograph produced during his time in the Crimea is ‘The Valley of the Shadow of Death’ described as a ‘portrait of absence, of death without the dead’ (Sontag, 2004, p.43).

Summary

To summarise, this chapter has explored the historical, political, and economic contexts in which photography emerges and how these seemingly backgrounded factors become intrinsic in its commodification, dissemination, and its initial implementation by hegemonic state capitalism. Through the development of a class structure based on the coercion and exploitation, stemming from the Industrial Revolution, it has been revealed why ideology may be a necessary instrument in maintaining dominance, and through the emerging Communist manifesto how an emerging ideology might threaten that dominance. An overview has revealed how The French Revolution introduces new forms of political rhetoric which will be deployed in various forms, by various groups, for various means in the future and continues to do so in the contemporary moment. It also introduces the initial concept of

ideology which materialises as a result, though is quickly politicised reflecting how competing social groups will use the term ‘ideological’ as derogatory term. Its meaning, beginning to change again with its use by Marx exhibited in their work *The German Ideology*, will continue to do so as new theories are introduced, with its association with power, and thus photography, being revealed as the thesis advances.

It has been made clear, through the analysis of the evolution of photographic portraiture, that photography has inherited cultural and social reflective signifying properties, laying the foundations of its mode of ‘cultural production’, and that through the use of state apparatuses, such as law enforcement and the judiciary, these same aesthetic techniques can be used as a constructive signifying process to aid mass surveillance through archiving and cataloguing procedures, highlighting a ‘double system: a system of representation capable of functioning both honorifically and repressively’ (Sekula, 2020, p.102). Finally, through its use in advancing the theory of eugenics, it has been revealed how the nature of photography, its evidential and cultural signifying properties, can be co-opted for the propagation of an ideological cause, the promotion of ideas which reverberated with dire consequences for much of the twentieth century and continue to haunt the present through the stereotyping and demonising of immigration and multi-culturalism.

It is however pertinent to note that, though photography has an emerging relationship with mechanisms of power as so far detailed in this chapter, photography has also played a role in depicting working and social conditions which have supported social reforms. It has also been used to raise an awareness of the consequences of colonialism has had on indigenous populations through the depiction of atrocities and depravations inflicted. What appears then is not a one sided or one-dimensional history of the relationship between photography and

power, but a complicated environment of consisting of a myriad of perspectives, striving to legitimise a range of narratives and truths.

The chapter has, through the aid of a range of theorists and historians, now positioned photography at a point in history where its signifying properties will become even further implicit with the practise of ideology in maintaining structures of hegemonic power, its subsidiary groups, and the promotion of potential ascending groups, that all compete within the societal structure for dominance.

The period of history just explored is also distinguished by Michel Foucault as marking the emergence of the modern age, and for him represents a split from the classical age. It is also by Foucault's reckoning the basis of what he describes as a new episteme, introducing new branches of knowledge, a status that can be attributed to photography (Foucault, 2002, p.211). Just as the invention of photography assisted in raising a consciousness of one's own place in society through the production and dissemination of the portrait, it also orientated one's own place in the world via the landscapes and depictions of other countries as the social gaze and the colonial gaze sit alongside one another in the production and reinforcement of perspectives and the legitimizing of power.

2.0 Ideology: Origins and Advancements

Before continuing to explore the relationship, and association of photography and ideology, it is relevant to chart in further detail the history and defining theories of ideology, identifying key aspects that are linked to photographic practice to provide further context and relevance to the concerns of the thesis question. There is a wealth of thought and research concerning the role ideology has in society and its positioning in terms of cultural, social, and psychological studies makes it apposite in analysing contemporary experience.

The previous chapter has provided a general overview of the origins and initial politicisation of ideology and the beginning of this chapter will revisit these origins in more detail. The chapter will then trace the evolution of the theories of ideology, providing examples of any direct application with photographic practice. Although its development has been structured along Marxist thought and ideals, the chapter will attempt to consider how ideology has been viewed across the political spectrum as well as any criticisms pointed towards its development as a theory or practice.

> Ideology separated itself from the mythical and religious consciousness. It justified the course of action it proposed, by the logic and evidence it summoned on behalf of its views of the social world, rather than by invoking faith, tradition, revelation, or the authority of the speaker. Ideology, then, premised policies shaped by rational discourse in the public sphere, and premised that support can be mobilized for them by the rhetoric of rationality (Gouldner, 1976, p.30).

As briefly detailed in the previous chapter, the concept of ideology emerges at the end of the eighteenth century in revolutionary France. Initially it was adapted to be used as a 'philosophy of the mind' and referred to as 'ideology, or the science of ideas, in order to distinguish it from the ancient metaphysics' (Williams,1976 quoting Taylor, 1796, p.154). It was also detailed that Napoleon Bonaparte's 'attack on the proponents of democracy' (Williams, 1976, p.154) as *ideological* gives it the pejorative weight found in political, and theological, criticisms still used up to the present. It was also detailed how ideology, through the metaphor of the camera obscura, came into being used by Marx critically on any opposing view as an 'upside down version of reality' (Williams, 1976, p.154) and specially propagated by a ruling class to legitimise a position of dominance.

So up to this point ideology has started as a tool for epistemological and rational thinking, becoming a politicised slur and, with Marx and Engels 'using the term to refer to the distorted beliefs intellectuals held about society and the power of their own ideas. Those who produced ideologies suffered from false consciousness: they were deluded about their own beliefs.' (Eyreman, 1981, p.41). Human consciousness appears then as a particular frame in which to examine this early development of ideology and informs subsequent developments.

Aware of human consciousness being informed by types of thinking, thinking informed by ideas, these ideologists intended to wrestle 'absolutist power' away from the ancien regimé, upheld for centuries by superstitious and theological thinking which had helped to create 'illusions' and foster the social conditions in which the French Revolution arose, and to 'reconstruct society from the ground up on a rational basis' (Eagleton, 1991, p.64). The ideologists considered 'that scientific reason should penetrate to the inmost recess of the human psyche and is not only theologically logical but politically essential' (Eagleton, 1991,

p.65). It was this political framing at directing an enlightened rationalism into the restructuring of French society that instigated a consistent and prolonged suspicion of the *ideologues* as utopian and impractical by Napoleon. It wasn't just Napoleon's slurring use of the word ideology that led to its adoption by Marx. Antoine Destutt de Tracy, the originator of ideology as a science of ideas, had framed ideology in defence of the 'industrial entrepreneur as the heart of the body politic and capitol as its blood' (Kennedy, 1979, quoting Tracy, 1815, p.368) in his five-volume defining work on ideology, *Éléments d'idéologie*. As a result, ideology for Marx became 'a system of thought which seeks to justify the existing mode of production and the social relationships which spring from it' (Kennedy, 1979, p.368). In offering an alternative and 'scientific' method of analysing and remedying the inconsistencies of the capitalist system, Marx and Engels hypothesised that consciousness is affected by the historical material conditions that organise the modes of production and the resulting social relations, not the other way round, '… (but men) developing their material production, and their material intercourse, alter, along with their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life.' (Marx, 1999, p.47). Early Marxist thought thus regards society as being structured with an *economic base*, comprising of the means and relations of production, which influence and shape the *superstructure*, which consists of art, culture, and politics. The cyclical relationship between base and superstructure meaning that the modes of production 'determines the social, political and spiritual' (Barker & Jane, 2016, p.44).

Engels would later elaborate further on the Marxist notion of ideology in some correspondence to Franz Mehring, introducing false consciousness as a component by which ideology is an effective process in disguising the exploitative dimension in the relations of production and thus maintaining the dominance of a ruling class.

> Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, indeed, but with a false consciousness. The real motives impelling him remain unknown to him, otherwise it would not be an ideological process at all (Engels, 1893).

The idea of false consciousness shares the same contentiousness and history as ideology, even acting as a synonymous phrase in place of ideology. False consciousness for Marx and Engels means that 'cognition … is always subject to large-scale, economic, and political forces such as the domination of some groups by others' (Jost, 1995, p.398). Commodity fetishism is perhaps a relevant example of a kind of false consciousness in the proposed way that consumer products are imbued with illusory qualities, with the aid of marketing or rhetoric, and in doing so disguising its various means and relations of production necessary to its being, 'ideology is the crucial term in Marx's analysis of mind and consciousness, and commodities are his central physical objects in the real world' (Mitchell, 1986, p.161). French philosopher Guy Debord develops this idea further, considering that 'the fetishism of the commodity…attains its ultimate aim in the spectacle' (Debord, 2018, p.36). Debord's *Society of Spectacle* contributes, through prescience, a way in which to understand ideology as commodity fetishism, acting as both manifesto and critique of post-war consumerism. From a Marxist perspective, Debord contemplates the retreat of reality through experience to one based on appearances and images. For Debord, the spectacularising of society is an alienating tool, that's serves to uphold illusions that an ideology perpetuates through the management of appearances in relations to the world. It is clear how the text might be applied towards a criticism of current technologies and the prevalence of social media platforms, all very much vehicular in the disseminating of spectacle and ideology, but Debord himself

states that spectacle ‘cannot be understood as mere deception’ by mass media but is a ‘world view that has been materialised’ (Debord, 2018, p.3). This indicates that consciousness is inclined, or persuaded, towards spectacle, which is utilised to promote a ‘social relation mediated by images’ (Debord, 2018, p.3). This social relation could also translate as shared reality, as proposed above, and in this sense, we could further understand how images function ideologically to instil a sense of ‘delusion and false consciousness’ or contribute to the entrenching of beliefs (Debord, 2018, p.3). For Debord then the alienating effect of the spectacle is integral to the hegemonic ambitions of any group maintaining power over others, but in a way which is subtle or covert. The views of Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci can illuminate further how the managing of power through the uses of more illicit means such coercion and the forming of consent, or perceived consent, might be construed.

> Gramsci’s concept of ideology was distinctive and far more developed than that of his predecessors and contemporaries essentially because it overcame both epiphenomenalism and class reductionism. (Ramos Jr, 1982)

Ideology, for Gramsci, was not a matter of ‘class character … exclusive in their totality’ (Ramos Jr, 1982), but is ‘intimately blended and linked to common sense and to the everyday practises of everyone in society’ (Hoare & Sperber, 2016, p.91-92). Ideology, however, acts as a ‘terrain of struggle’ where various social groups grapple for dominance, or what Gramsci refers to as hegemony. Hegemony exists as ‘a temporary settlement and series of alliances between social groups that is won and not given’ (Barker & Jane, 2016, p.77). Popular culture, as well as the political and economic arenas, are particular sites where ideological struggles are exposed between various social groups competing for dominance. Hegemony is maintained via alliances with subordinate groups, ‘hegemony is thus constructed through the

power of attraction of the leading group and through compromises and concessions aimed at the conscious rallying of auxiliary forces' (Hoare & Sperber, 2016, p.122). Consent is mediated through civil society, 'the whole range of institutions intermediate between state and economy', including media, family, and religion 'which bind individuals to the ruling power' (Eagleton, 1991, p.114). Coercive means are presented as state mechanisms, such as the police and army, and are legitimized through an assumption of consent, or consent as naturalised. This generation of consent is diffused as a common sense from intellectuals, 'distinct from the classes that participate directly in the material reproduction of society' (Hoare & Sperber, 2016, p.33), 'as well as strategically placed social actors and agencies, such as political parties and social movements' (Howarth, 2015, p.205) The common sense is disseminated through cultural outlets such as the mass media and, perhaps more pertinently in contemporary society, the internet and its varying social media platforms. In this context it is easy to establish how photography, the production and circulation of photographs and moving image, plays a role in the process of generating consent and the naturalising of the common sense of a dominant group as well as any ascending groups.

> The culture industry, which involves the production of works for reproduction and mass consumption, thereby organizing 'free' time, the remnant domain of freedom under capitol in accordance with the same principles of exchange and equivalence that reign in the sphere of production outside leisure, presents culture as the realization of the of the right of all to the gratification of desire while in reality continuing the negative integration of society (Bernstein, 2010, p.4).

Culture was also a concern for Theodor Adorno, the German critical theorist, who imagined culture as being an 'industry' which propagated social 'myths' such as a classless society,

whilst imbuing its participants into capitalist ideology with a 'justification of the status quo and its promotion of social conformity' (Babe & Berry, 2016, p.113). For Adorno, and Horkheimer, the 'culture industry' equates 'mass culture' with the former expression coined to negate the idea 'that it is a matter of something like a culture that arises spontaneously from the masses themselves' (Adorno, 2010, p.98). Adorno no doubt formed this view after witnessing first-hand the rise of fascism and Nazi ideology in his homeland and being personally vulnerable and forced into exile due to his Jewish heritage. Joseph Goebbels, who held the position of Reichminister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda for much of the Nazi rule over Germany, geared the national media, newsreel and its film industry, largely by coercion, to promote the values of the Nazi party, considering propaganda as a 'creative art' which 'excelled in instigating or silencing popular wants, and instead of promoting valuable ideas, opportunistically exploited all ideas in its own interest' (Kracuer, 1947, p.299). Adorno likened the strategies of American media and popular culture to fascist propaganda in the way it 'indoctrinates audiences into irrationality, conformism, and compliance' (Babe, 2011, p.116). This is achievable, Adorno proposed, by recognising certain emotional and psychological susceptibilities of people 'playing upon their unconscious mechanisms rather than by presenting ideas and arguments' (Adorno,1994, p.219).

A parallel theory with mass media as its key component is Dallas Smythe's advancement of the 'Consciousness Industry' which hypothetically exists to support 'monopoly capitalism' through 'indoctrinating people into the ethic and behaviours required by the marketing aspect of monopoly capitalism' (Babe, 2011, p.133). Smythe considered that 'the primary information sector plus the consumer goods industries constitutes Consciousness Industry' (Babe, 2011, quoting Smythe, 1981, p.129) and that 'advertising, market research, *photography*, the commercial application of art to product and container design, the fine arts,

teaching machines and related software and educational testing, as well as the formal educational system, are all a part of it' (Babe, 2011 quoting Smythe,1981, p.129).

> I shall say that the reproduction of labour-power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order, i.e., a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they, too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class 'in words' (Althusser, 1971, p.6-7).

One theorist of ideology that has gained prominence within photographic theory, as well as aspects of philosophical thought, is French Marxist Louis Althusser and especially his notion of the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) and Repressive State Apparatus (RSA). Ideology for Althusser is the reason why 'exploited' sectors of capitalist society do not reject the system which exploits it. Althusser hypothesises that the role of the ISA and RSA is to facilitate the reproduction of the relations of production with the reproduction of labour power, through the internalization of a society's hegemonic cultural values, or ideology. This process is referred to as 'interpellation or hailing' (Althusser,1970, p.48) whereby the individual becomes a 'subject' through being recognised, a misrecognition, as such by the state apparatuses. Althusser uses the example of the expectations around the birth of a child, that the 'familial ideological configuration' establishes a 'pre-appointment' (Althusser,1970, p.50) in the condition of a subject. These concepts are well known to have been adapted from theories of the unconscious by the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud psychoanalyst via Jacques Lacan's proposed mirror stage (Strathausen, 1994, p.66). According to Althusser, building on

Marx's theories of the State Apparatus, the ISA is comprised traditionally of educational, religious, political, family and media institutions and dynamics. Whereas the RSA is made up of more overtly coercive forces of the state such as the 'Government, Army, the police, the courts, the prisons' (Althusser, 1970, p.17). Althusser differentiates the two types of apparatus by situating the RSA 'entirely within the public domain' and functions through the threat of repression and violence, whilst the ISA, partly, exists in the private, due to its plurality and dispersion, although Althusser explains both apparatuses are interwoven with both repression and ideology. (Althusser, 1970, p.18 - 19). As such 'all the agents of production, exploitation and repression, not to speak of the 'professionals of ideology' (Marx), must in one way or another be 'steeped' in this ideology to perform their tasks 'conscientiously' (Althusser, 1971, p.7).

Lacan's theories of the mirror stage and the symbolic order, whilst providing Althusser with a psychological explanation for the 'subjection' process mediated by the state apparatuses, also have the potential to act to understand and interpret how images, as an environment in which one enters and is conditioned by, is relative to Marx's notion of the consciousness being formed by the material conditions of life. An underlying principle of Lacan's thought is that the unconscious is structured like a language, building on Freud's notion of the unconscious comprised of representations, and that what 'characterises the human world is the *symbolic function* – a function that intervenes in all aspects of our lives' (Homer, 2005 p.41). In borrowing from Saussure's linguistic models, and structuralist semiotics, Lacan suggests that 'the relationship between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary and is determined by social convention' (Homer, 2005, p.43) adding that 'signification is always a process – a chain' (Homer, 2005, p.45) which binds lived experience into a 'circuit of discourse'. A link that bridges Lacanian thought with the overlapping notions of ideology and photography is

the idea of the ‘gaze’, since for Lacan the ‘subject constitutes itself in the gaze’ and is ‘not a “natural” self, free of the signifying technologies and media of mirrors, images and alphabets’ (Iskin, 1007, p.48). For Lacan then reality is based on fantasy, in that it is mediated via the presupposed constructed meanings of language and signs to allow for imaginary and symbolic relationships with reality. These ‘registers’ operate in conjunction with what Lacan refers to as the ‘real’, an inexpressible state of being experienced before any interaction with language or sign and thus ‘outside of symbolisation’ (Chapman, 2019). This framework of Lacanian psychoanalysis has found itself being applied by several contemporary thinkers when considering the material existence of ideology, perhaps most notably Slavoj Žižek who states,

> Ideology is not a dreamlike illusion that we build to escape insupportable reality; in its basic dimension it is a fantasy-construction which serves as a support for our ‘reality’ itself: an ‘illusion’ which structures our effective, real social relations and thereby masks some insupportable, real, impossible kernel (Žižek, 2019, p.123).

Žižek is a contemporary Marxist philosopher with a firm grasp on the aforementioned concepts of ideology, particularly adapting a cross pollination of the Althusser – Lacanian concepts, with a Hegelian sensibility, to survey contemporary society. He is renowned for his elucidation of ideology with the aid of popular cultural references, particularly film, and that cinema, according to Žižek, ‘is the ultimate pervert art’ which instructs the viewer ‘not what to desire’ but ‘how to desire’ (Žižek, 2006). Žižek’s, famous comparison of ideology, through the example of John Carpenter’s film *They Live (1988),* posits it as something that requires effort, even coercion, to recognise. Ideology is something that is not ‘imposed’ but is evident in ‘spontaneous relationship to the social world’ and how people perceive it (Žižek, 2016).In

this view Žižek seems to be echoing the Gramscian view of ideology as being linked to common sense, however Žižek takes this a little further by suggesting that one cannot repress or exit ideology and attempting to do so firmly plants one in its central illusory mechanism as 'it seems to pop up precisely when we attempt to avoid it, while it fails to appear where one would clearly expect it to dwell' (Žižek 2012, p.14). This takes ideology away from something that is purely experienced when engaged with culture or media for instance and advances the interpellation model proposed by Althusser.

2.1 Counterparts, criticism, and Alternatives to Ideology.

> Less often recognized are the various problems of definition inherent in the concept of ideology. Is an "ideological" mode of thought characterized by abstraction, internal consistency, external contrast, endurance through time, rationality, sophistication, a hierarchical ordering of idea-elements, parsimony-or some combination of these characteristics? (Gerring, 1997, p.960).

Perhaps the largest detriment to any concerns surrounding ideology is the opaqueness of its own definition which has been revealed to be contentious and contingent. While the original intention of its inception was meant to aid epistemological concerns, Terry Eagleton identifies the paradoxical nature in what make ideology *ideological* is the way it envelops discourse, particularly the way its 'utterance' is deployed 'into the arena of discursive struggle' (Eagleton, 1991, p.12). Žižek considers the paradox of ideology 'in that the stepping out of (what we experience as) ideology is the very form of our enslavement to it' (Žižek, 2012, p.6), further adding that 'a political standpoint can be quite accurate ("true") as to its objective content, yet thoroughly ideological; and vice versa…' (Žižek, 2012, p.7).

It is perhaps because of its multitude in use, its various concepts and definitions of ideology that is usage is not without its detractors. Marxism, being the main proponent of ideology as a concept, is ‘like all "scientific" theories designed for social action, is itself an ideology par excellence’ (Roucek, 1944, p.483). Early Marxist thought is predicated by the notion that ‘social class determines consciousness’ whilst also ushering a ‘dominant ideology theory’ through the base/superstructure model where ‘the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling idea’s’. It has been noted that both theories are potentially in conflict and that while

> the first suggests that each class forms its own system of belief in accordance with its own particular interests which will be basically at variance with those of other classes. The second suggests that all classes share in the system of belief imposed by the dominant class (Abercrombie and Turner, 1978, 151).

In the *Dominant Ideology Thesis* by Nicholas Abercrombie and Bryan S. Turner, it is suggested, in attempting to reconfigure Marxist perceptions on early capitalism in Britain, that ‘primary and secondary evidence all point to the fact that, in terms of religion and morality, the working class and the capitalist class occupied separate cultures’ (Abercrombie & Turner,1978, p.157). They also determine that ‘the dominant ideology is best seen as securing the coherence of the dominant class’ (Abercrombie & Turner, 1978, p.164) and ‘had the role of protecting the dominant class from the threats of intra-and inter-class struggles’ (Abercrombie & Turner, 1978, p.165). However, the intention of Abercrombie and Turner is not to discount the coercive elements of capitalism or the relevance of ideology but ‘to suggest that the importance of ideological compliance is exaggerated, and that the real significance of the dominant ideology lies in the organization of the dominant class rather than in the subordination of dominated classes’ (Abercrombie & Turner, 1978, p.161). This

analysis exhibits an inclination towards hegemony as a relevant model in which to understand ideology as a dynamic in social relations.

Gramsci's cultural hegemony is also worth reconsidering as 'it remains grounded in a Marxist framework where class is the primary force that structures social action' (Stoddart, 2007, p.203) and therefore discounts the recent 'fragmentation of lifestyle cultures' including ethnicity and race, gender politics, migration and youth culture.

> The consumption centredness of the working class becomes the medium and instrument of its fragmentation. The choice between values and lifestyles becomes a matter of taste and style rather than being forged by an authentic, cultural authority that could be called hegemonic (Barker & Jane, 2016, p.79).

Foucault opposes both ideology and hegemony in favour of the discourse, described as 'systems of thought, or knowledge claims, which assume an existence independent of a particular speaker…our sense of self – our subjectivity – is constructed through our engagement with a multitude of discourses' (Stoddart, 2007, p.203) and various 'regimes of truth' which is best defined as 'the strategic field within which truth is produced and becomes a tactical element in the functioning of a certain number of power relations' (Lorenzini, 2015, p.3). The main problem with the notion of ideology for Foucault was that 'it (ideology) always stands in virtual opposition to something else which is supposed to count as truth' (Foucault & Rabinow, 1991, p.60). Because Foucault proposes that 'truth is centred on the form of scientific discourse and the institutions which produces it…subject to constant economic and political incitement…the object of immense diffusion and consumption… the issue of a whole political debate and social confrontation' (Foucault & Rabinow, 1991, p.73)

it means that ideology ‘is a notion that cannot be used without circumspection’ (Foucault & Rabinow,1991, p.60). Žižek takes a particular exception to Foucault’s dismissal of ideology, especially in the comparison of Althusser’s Ideological State Apparatus. He argues that Foucault’s disciplinary procedures operate like a ‘micro power’, arguing that he ‘never tires of repeating how power constitutes itself ‘from below’, how it does not emanate from some unique summit’ (Žižek, 2012, p.25) and accusing him of deploying ‘the extremely suspect rhetoric of complexity’ (Žižek, 2012, p.25) to configure notions of power. In contrast Althusser’s ISA ‘always-already presuppose the massive presence of the state, the transferential relationship of the individual towards state power’ (Žižek, 2012, p.26). Nevertheless, Foucault and his advancement of discourse will be central in the analysis of photography and ideology as part of contemporary experience in the next chapter, since its relevance to the coercive aspects of image-based surveillance and the mass social practise of photography establishes photography as a discursive aspect of modern life, and thus complimenting any analysis with a concern for ideology.

2.2 A Brief End of Ideology?

> The driving forces of the old ideologies were social equality, and in the largest sense, freedom, the impulsions of the new ideologies are economic development and national power (Bell, 1960, p.373).

Steering away from leftist considerations of ideology, in the late nineteen fifties American Sociologist Daniel Bell wrote *The End of Ideology*, a work that explored western post-war political terrain and released during the Khrushchev thaw following the death of Stalin. It has been criticised as an ‘ideological’ assault on leftist socialism in America ‘and it was Marxian

socialism, not any other ideology, that his book eulogized' (Summers, 2011). Its conclusion surmises

> that while the old nineteenth-century ideologies intellectual debates have become exhausted, the rising states of Asia and Africa are fashioning new ideologies with a different appeal for their own people. These are the ideologies of industrialization, modernization, Pan-Arabism, colour and nationalism' (Bell, 1960, p.373).

In defending the book Bell remarks that his 'thinking about society has proceeded on the assumption of a disjunction between culture and social structure' whilst in contrast 'a Marxist view sees these two as either integrated, with the value system regulating behaviour, or as a totality, in which the substructure of the material world 'determines' the political, legal, and cultural orders' (Bell,1988, p.134) which Bell considers as a distortion of historical perspectives. It is worth noting Bell's critique of the 'totalising' Marxist view of 'regulating behaviour' as it also exposes a certain inherent cynicism at the lack of agency Marxism perceives in the collective masses.

Francis Fukuyama would state a similar sentiment in his now infamous article 'The End of History?' a triumphalist rhetoric considering the 'unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism' (Fukuyama, 1989, p.3) seemingly anticipating the fall of the Berlin wall and the eventual collapse of the Soviet regime. At the time Fukuyama mulled that with the end of the Cold War that the period potentially marked 'the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government' (Fukuyama, 1989, p.4) and that 'the passing of Marxism-Leninism,

first from China and then the Soviet Union will mean its death as a living ideology of world historical significance' (Fukuyama, 1989, p.18).

Summary

This chapter has identified and explored the fluidity of the ideology as a term and concept as well as its various meanings and key theories, noting branches of thought that are worthy of consideration in the exploration of the thesis question. As such, the chosen examples represent the most pertinent in exploring the synthesis of ideology and photography. This can be attributed via two key threads linking them, one being how consciousness is shaped and the various devices or contexts that are, hypothetically, deployed in shaping consciousness. It can be considered that perspectives and representations, their construction in a social context, is arguably fundamental in directing consciousness in a desired way. Furthermore, representing ideas as naturalised and common sensical, or a part of objective reality, is seemingly a facet of the consent/coercive dynamic of ideology and hegemony. Culture has also been identified as a recurring 'terrain' where ideologies are diffused and grapple with each other. Photography as a tool of signification has been deployed in all aspects of visual media culture, from the news, TV, film, and now the internet and the digital. Psychology also has a recurring role as a practice of ideas in which to both hypothesise and explore the ways in which ideology may function in relation to the deployment of a mimetic art as part of wider communicative strategies and potentially acts as a method in reaching qualitative results. It is possible to begin to attach these varying examples of ideology to materialistic models of the proposed intersection with photographic discourse. A main connection to photographic practice arises with how institutions deploy photography's signifying properties and put it to use to maintain a hegemonic order.

The previous chapter identified examples of association with the RSA with the adoption by the police and judiciary via the Bertillon system and the use of the photograph acting as a piece of evidence in and of itself for the processing and identification of criminality. Another early example detailed was also mentioned via the dissemination of the portrait and its position as a rite of family life, signifying the dynamics of family hierarchy and mirroring again the relation of production that Althusser's positioning of the family as a mode of ISA represented. In surveying contemporary circumstances media arguably acts as a dominant form of ISA, the prevalence of the internet and social media platforms places the photographically centrally in how information is disseminated, and this will be explored further in the next chapter. However, it's possible to chart photography's role as part of historical technological advancements, centrally in cinema and TV, whilst deployed as a part of other discourses such as advertising as identified indirectly by Smythe's formulation of the consciousness industry on behalf on monopoly capitalism.

3.0 Coercion and Consent: Ideological Objectives and the Photographic Apparatus

In proceeding with the thesis question of how photography is underpinned by ideology it is pertinent to survey how this relationship manifests as part of contemporary lived experience. In the former chapter several ideas and theories surrounding the definition of ideology were explored and summarised. A dual dynamic has been identified in that ideology exerts itself inconspicuously through coercive frameworks, utilised photographically through disciplinary and repressive methods such as surveillance and the archive as utilised by law enforcement agencies as an extension of centralised state power. It also has been identified that ideology operates in manufacturing consent through persuasion to support the hegemony of a dominant or ruling class. This can be characterised photographically as something overt such as propaganda or advertising but, proposedly, also might take a more subtle form as a common sense in consideration of Gramsci's thoughts concerning ideology. This chapter will explore these two strands relevant to ideological frameworks, coercion, and consent, and identify how they manifest in the present whilst also considering how these two modalities might overlap one another causing an obfuscation that further benefits power and addresses how photographic practices may have challenged this power. To advance the thesis question this chapter will survey contemporary photographic social practices, identify distinct technological and photographic apparatus deployed by governments and corporations as part of their hegemonic strategies and connect historical precedent, psychanalysis, and critical theory via semiotics, to illuminate a contemporary analysis.

Since its invention and initial dissemination, photography has become increasingly ubiquitous. This condition has been particularly exacerbated recently by technological and telecommunication advances such as the internet and smartphones though 'photography has been allied with technology from the moment it was invented' (Grundberg, 1999, p.222). Relevantly, John Tagg has stated 'a technology has no inherent value outside its mobilisations in specific practices, institutions and relations of power' (Tagg, 1992, p.128) considering perhaps Adorno and Horkheimer's adage, in context of their theory of the culture industry, that

> The basis on which technology acquires power over society is the power of those whose economic hold over society is greatest. A technological rationale is the rationale of domination itself. It is the coercive nature of society alienated from itself (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2016, p.211).

It was introduced in the first chapter how the signifying properties of a photographic image, its epistemic value related to its mimicry of reality, established it as a document that revealed truth, or *a* truth, and utilised into service by institutions, usually state based and possessing a direct or indirect disciplinary dimension. The various elements of a photograph that govern its reading, and by implication associates it with ideology, lies in what semiotician Roland Barthes refers to as the 'rhetoric of the image'(Barthes, 1977, p.32). This is defined by two aspects of a photograph, what an image denotes, or visually describes, and what it connotes: its underlying meaning or potential meanings, though further defined by the context in which an image is situated into an assemblage of other communicatory methods. Together these form a surface constitution that govern a photograph's appearance. For Barthes isolated images are polysemous, 'they imply, underlying their signifiers, a 'floating chain' of

signifieds' (Barthes, 1977, p.39). In observing how 'in every society various techniques are developed intended to fix the floating chain of signifieds' (Bathes, 1977, p.39) Barthes considers how textual information, that usually orbits most images, directs the understanding of the viewer further noting that 'the text has thus a *repressive* value and we can see that it is at this level that the morality and ideology of a society are above all invested' (Barthes, 1977, p.40).

This reliance on photography as a self-evidentiary document, the view that it represents reality and truth, has grown over time into a belief along with its increased ubiquity, even as it has transcended its physicality as an object, as print or other media, to its more prevalent immaterial digital form. In a sense it is this immateriality which now defines the contemporary relationship in the creation, circulation, and consumption of photographs, shifting the experience of photography from something experienced, comparatively passively. Still relevant to ideology these traditional forms of photo production were rooted ritualistically, such as family occasions and holidays, to a contemporary daily activity, acting as a means of communicating immediate experience, perspective, and personal narrative. Cultivating meaning and belief can be regarded as the central objectives that define the plausibility for the concept of ideology, highlighting an overlap or symbiotic relationship with photography as 'belief in images becomes the test case for the social' (Strauss, 2020, p.67). The current social practice of photography materialises in various forms, ranging from the snapshot, meme, gif, and as short videos, as part of a 'feed' or as 'stories' and advanced by platforms such as TikTok and Instagram. These platforms benefit from the portability, interconnectivity and immediacy provided by the contemporary camera apparatus, usually embedded as part of the smartphone device. The platforms that host user interactivity, where vernacular photography dissemination and consumption is mostly concentrated, rely on the

commodification of user profile data, personal information known as ‘behavioural surplus’ extracted by ad targeting, user tracking and prediction models that are bound into the ‘take it or leave it’ terms of service/agreement online contracts as part of a quid pro quo arrangement for access (Zuboff, 2019, p.52).

These practises are required to not only sustain its operations but to produce profit for its shareholders. These platforms are typically connected, directly or indirectly, to the monopolistic big tech firms, representing a new emerging dominant class, a ‘vectoralist’ class which ‘owns the vectors of information’(Wark, 2019, p.55), and one that ‘comes to dominate not just subordinate classes, but other ruling classes as well’ (Wark, 2019, p.55) These companies include Facebook, Microsoft, Apple and Amazon, many of which reported massive profits as a result of increased user activity spurred by the global lockdowns as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic in 2020/2021 (Jolly, 2021). This dynamic exposes a plausible relationship of photography with ideology as part of contemporary experience, particularly as the relevant governments and companies, which dictate certain conditions of interaction, adhere to the dominant western capitalist economic ideology of neoliberalism, exhibiting entangled political and economic interests relative to maintaining their hegemony. This in turn exposes an additional facet to this entangled nature, explicitly the way photography is deployed into the cultural ecology of modern life symbolically, through signifying representations that naturalise and reify the beliefs and values of a ruling ideology, which in turn cultivates consent by negating competing or peripheral perspectives which are increasingly determined algorithmically.

The quick uptake and integration of particular technological capabilities has garnered more coercive methods for the capacity of individual and societal surveillance, contorting even the

most mundane of tasks such as entering a supermarket equipped with facial recognition technology (Big Brother Watch, 2021) into the disciplinary mechanism of Bentham's panopticon model as proposed by Foucault (Foucault, 1991, p.200). The speed, and stealth by which new technologies are introduced into daily life has a coercive dimension, especially in the way in which it bypasses consent in order for its function to be naturalised surreptitiously. As sociologist David Lyon has stated,

> Fast developing technologies combined with new government and commercial strategies mean that new modes of surveillance proliferate, making surveillance expansion hard to follow, let alone analyse or regulate (Lyon, 2009, p.2).

The intermeshing of photography with ICT's (information and communication technologies) also means that a digital photographic image no longer just possesses signifying properties related to the mimicry of reality, but becomes enriched with additional information, GPS information (Global Positioning System), bio data and time/date signatures 'playing an active role in data exchanges' (Hoelzl, 2014, p.1) all of which benefit commercial interests, as well as agencies of control. It can be regarded then that photography is implicit as a part of the 'technologies that instrumentalize information' (Wark, 2019, p.5) providing interested parties with a visual and informational omniscience necessary for centralised surveillance, replicating the central premise of Bentham's panopticon 'seeing without being seen'. In observing the methods deployed to contain an instance of plague in the seventeenth century, Foucault describes the measures taken as a means of surveillance as being 'based on permanent registration' (Foucault, 1991, p.196). A process whereby '…power is exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located…' (Foucault, 1991, p.197). This prefigured his eventual analysis of

Bentham's panopticon, tracing its genealogy as a system which exists as a 'discipline-mechanism'. In further observing the techniques and organization of law enforcement as an extension of the power of the state apparatus, Foucault notes that,

> it has to be given the instrument of permanent, exhaustive, omnipresent surveillance, capable of making all visible as long as it could itself remain invisible. It had to be like a faceless gaze that transformed the whole social body into a field of perception (Foucault, 1991, p.214)

It is easy to see how Foucault's construed metaphor for the centralising of power is pertinent in a world where cameras and photography are omnipresent, whilst the faceless gaze can easily be the screen that accompanies a camera on most contemporary devices. In this sense the recent technological advancements represent a method in procuring 'permanent registration' of a population, which is guised as a voluntary consumer act, but is balanced by subtle coercion whereby it is hard to navigate aspects of modern life, like applying for a job, without a mobile device or access to the internet (Torres, 2019) via a P.C or laptop. As a result of this proliferation, it can be regarded that this technological necessity 'has transformed the whole social body into a field of perception'.

An analysis of the distribution of facial recognition systems may help to stress this point further. The adoption of facial recognition technology has been deployed sporadically by various countries and in various ways internationally, used as a means of identity verification in airports and integrated as a security feature to enable access to devices. Most relevant is how the technology is increasingly being used within the dynamic of law enforcement and much in the same way the mug shot was utilised though now coupled with advanced

immediacy and digital capabilities. This type of artificial intelligence has been linked to racist profiling through inbuilt prejudices at the design level. The disparity in the representation of skin colour reproduction having a history dating back to the production of film stocks 'which were designed originally with a positive bias toward "Caucasian" skin tone because of its high level of reflectivity' (Roth, 2009, p.118). There has been much publicity relating to the low accuracy in African American facial recognition matches, which have been attributed to a deficiency of representation and variation in the algorithmic training databases. This is in addition to the deployment of the technology in specific American neighbourhoods reflecting real life conscious or unconscious biases (Najibi, 2020). China is perhaps the most ardent proponent of facial recognition technology, accused of using it to 'engineer behaviour' linked to its social credit system (Ng, 2019). Facial recognition cameras and networks, mediated by AI software companies such as SenseTime (fig 3), are 'not only used by the police, but have been proudly displayed in commercial settings for years' (Dou, 2021). Perhaps the most explicit use of coercive surveillance technology by the Chinese State has been through its alleged treatment of the Uyghur people, and other minorities, based in the Xinjiang region since 2017 (Daly, 2019, 109) leading to many countries condemning the alleged treatment (Putz, 2019). Facial recognition technology use has been implicated in the systematic internment of Uyghurs in re-education camps 'with the ostensible aim of "de-extremification" and ideological "assimilation" …to a de facto CCP Han Chinese/atheist CCP norm' (Daly, 2019, p.109). It has also been reported that detained Uyghurs are being used as forced labour which has implications for the global supply chain of various goods with up to 'eighty-three foreign and Chinese companies, directly or indirectly benefiting from the use of Uyghur workers' (Xiuzhong Xu et al., 2020) with all five of the big tech companies implicated. Apple was particularly scrutinised amid reports that its suppliers of

components used in its consumer devices as relying ‘on the forced labour of the Uyghurs’ (Canales, 2021).

Ironically some of the implicated tech companies, such as Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Microsoft, have themselves been involved in the development and sale of facial recognition technology to western law informant agencies. The rollout of these proposed sales has since stalled due to the 2020 Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests, with the heads of these companies calling for national laws and regulation of use (Horowitz, 2020). Facebook, with its acquisition of Instagram, has extracted user images to develop a ‘deep learning’ artificial intelligence system called SEER (SElf supERvised) ‘a new billion-parameter self-supervised computer vision model that can learn from any random group of images on the internet’ (Goyal, Caggiano, Joulin and Bojanowski, 2021). Facebooks own press regarding the intended application for this technology is opaque with references to the performance of tasks ranging from ‘automated speech recognition’ and ‘medical imaging’ but there is a repeated mention of ‘computer vision’ and the removal of human agency in decision making in ‘real world settings (Goyal, Caggiano, Joulin and Bojanowski, 2021). There is a visual aesthetic of facial recognition technology that is shared with the smart bomb technology used in aerial warfare, popularised in press conferences during the first gulf war and currently in militarised drones. Filmmaker Harun Farocki has identified this type of imagery as ‘operative images…images that do not represent an object, but rather are part of an operation’ (Farocki, 2004, p.17). The appropriation of ‘behavioural surplus’ in developing this ‘computer vision’ suggests that the vernacular photographs uploaded onto social media is complicit with the means of at least the automation and replacement of human agency in ‘real world settings. Furthermore, with its possible and perhaps inevitable application to militaristic and law

enforcement tasks, the implication is that user interaction is also implemented into types of surveillance which has the potential to act coercively against them.

In considering how consent is fostered culturally through the application of photographic imagery, the insights of Barthes essay 'The Rhetoric of an Image' provide a methodology when considering how photographic images are usually deployed in the service of various discourses. Though as repressive as a text might be in the interpretation of an image a photograph still has the capability to transcend the textual limits imposed by their symbolic nature. For instance, various news platforms might represent differing ideological stances textually but utilise the same kind of imagery which transcends written rhetoric. In his utilising of the denotative / connotative characteristic of visual signs in his work *Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse*, critical theorist Stuart Hall remarks

> The level of connotation of the visual sign, of its contextual reference, of its position in its various associative fields of meanings, is, precisely the point where the denoted sign intersects with the deep semantic structures of a culture, and takes on an ideological dimension (Hall, 2019, p.268).

An example can be presented in how the current UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is repeatedly represented in certain contexts. Particularly whilst delivering a narrative to counter critics or promote government policy, Johnson will be presented wearing a yellow fluorescent jacket and hard hat, common PPE (personal protective equipment), when visiting industrial centres as part of a press conference. This montage of images (fig 4) illustrates some of the multiple times the Prime Minister has appeared in this fashion. The orchestration of this imagery serves to associate with the perceived image of the working class in appealing to

their sensibilities, the image by being circulated visually cements a recurring vision of association that transcends any accompanying text, supplanting it so the image and its association become a central focus regardless of the context or the accompanying text. This strategy can be seen as part of 'a propaganda model', proposed by Edward S Herman and Noam Chomsky in their work *Manufacturing Consent*, whereby 'the mass media serves as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace' (Herman and Chomsky, 1994, p.1). This is evidenced by the organization and access granted to news media by political and economic powers as 'they carefully organize their press conferences and "photo opportunity" sessions' (Herman and Chomsky,1994, p.23) and further emphasised by the existence of centralised news photo agencies such as Getty images and Reuters, which disseminate the images universally. In this manufacturing of consent there is a cultivation of Freud's notion of identification and idealisation with a leader whereby 'the individual, fascinated by this figure, sees that his own personality tends to fade into the background to the point that the ego ideal represented by the group leader takes the place of the ego of each individual' (Quinodoz, 2018, p.72). This identification with an idealised leader, facilitated via choreographed representations and spectacles, proposedly makes it easier to foster support for a cause or view as the reader will see themselves in the image of the leader. This will be explored further, comprising the main focus of the final chapter alongside contemporary variations of ideology.

Photography can be seen to be interchangeable with, as Terry Eagleton has identified, the devices deployed by dominant ideologies, namely 'unification, spurious identification, naturalization, deception, self-deception, universalization and rationalization. But they do not do so universally' (Eagleton, 1991, p.222). When surveying contemporary western consumer societies, it is evident how the photographic apparatus is an ideal tool in advancing proposed

commodity fetishism, which stands for Marx 'the lived ideology of capitalist society' (Baudrillard, 2019, p.75). In tracing the various etymology of the word 'fetish', which is understood as the 'magical potential in the subject, through schemas of projection and capture, alienation and reappropriation' (Baudrillard, 2019, p.79), sociologist Jean Baudrillard suggests its original definitions as relating to 'the aspect of faking, of artificial registering…of a cultural sign labor' (Baudrillard, 2019, p.79) moving on to assert

> …the fetishization of the commodity is the fetishization of a product emptied of its concrete substance of labor and subjected to another type of labor, a labor of signification, that is, of coded abstraction (the production of differences and of sign values) (Baudrillard, 2019, p.81).

Photography, its practice, and dissemination, especially at the vernacular level, has arguably become an instrument akin to Gramscian common sense, which is implicit in the redistribution of ideology, semiotically as signs with representational value, but also at a gestural productive level, which constitutes a 'labour of signification' and a source of commodified information. The act of photography is itself an act of artificial registering and cultural sign labour, derived from the depiction of 'cultural objects', but also because 'the structure of the cultural condition is captured in the act of photography rather than in the object being photographed' (Flusser, 1983, p.33-34). Since photography is extremely ingrained into the daily routine at a mass societal level, hence the array of social media platforms, there is perhaps a soft type of coercion to participate in the reproduction of ideology through the reproduction of images mediated via a fear of exclusion. As Baudrillard notes 'everywhere socialization is measured by the exposure to media messages. Whoever is underexposed to media is desocialized or virtually asocial' (Baudrillard, 1981, p.80). This

reflects a sentiment of Adorno and Horkheimer's regarding the coercing nature of the culture industry that 'not to conform means to be rendered powerless, economically and therefore spiritually…' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2016, p.231). Considering this type of coercion as a fear of exclusion, or alienation, further there is something akin to the interpellation process of the subject by Althusser, the act of 'sharing' and the consumption of photography via social media platforms is a seemingly voluntary and participatory experience where one announces themselves as a subject, 'as subjectivity has become increasingly tied to the construction of a public image' (Burbridge, 2020, p.31). Albeit an idealised version of a subject, a misrecognition as according to Althusser via Lacan, that conforms to the aspirational nature that western capitalist ideologies often cultivate.

> The logic of the social photo organizes our minds in new ways. Life is experienced as increasingly documentable, and perhaps also experienced in the service of its documentation, always with the newly accessible audience in mind (Jurgenson, 2019, p.11).

The body too is a site where both modes of visual ideological representation take hold - the body immersed into coercive disciplinary modes and the body as a fetishized subject which is used symbolically. This disciplinary mode was alluded to in the first chapter via the Bertillon system, and the work of Galton, which set photography in service of state institutions to maintain laws and policies which are implemented to uphold the hegemony of capitalism. The use of facial recognition represents a contemporary strategy in coercion. The body as a fetishized subject, an object of desire, is central in the contemporary vernacular practices of photography and arguably aids in the manufacturing of consent and even peer to peer surveillance. The role of the 'influencer' as a role model is symbolic of these dynamics,

existing as a living, speaking avatar for the promotion of products and consumer goods which, sometimes through spectacle, also produces a homogenous character to conform to and burgeoning career to aspire to. Upon reflecting on the doctor Gustav Le Bon's idea that 'the particular acquirements of individuals become obliterated in a group' (Freud, 1922, p.19) Freud considered that 'what is heterogenous is submerged in what is homogenous' (Freud, 1922, p.20). This can be characterised by the parroting and algorithmic conflation of trends that act as content, produced, and shared via platforms such as TikTok. which rely on constant engagement and interactivity as the basis of their business model whilst tracking and curating the content of its users (Towey, 2021).

The effect of the mass production, and dissemination, of photography can be seen as a means of fostering alienation, whilst simultaneously appearing to alleviate it via the recirculation of cultural signs that redistribute commodity fetishism and thus disguising the relations of production. A way this can be evidenced is how the proliferation of social media interactivity has been linked to an increase in mental health and well-being deficiencies, particularly to younger generations, with use 'being described as equivalent to addiction' (Royal Society for Public Health, 2017). Social media platforms have seemingly constructed an environment, or commons, mediated by images which creates a situation where the 'camera makes everyone a tourist in other people reality and eventually in one's own' (Sontag, 1977, p.57) additionally one where 'the photographer and reader collaborate on the reproduction of ideology' (Hirsch, 2016, p.7).

In their pamphlet titled *Declaration*, philosophers Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri consider the modern condition, produced by the participation and interaction with contemporary media, to one not being of alienation 'separated or divided', but 'mediatized' a type of

‘subjectivity that is paradoxically neither active nor passive but rather constantly absorbed in attention’ (Hardt & Negri, 2012, p.19). This consideration is framed by French philosopher Gilles Deleuze’s view that ‘repressive forces don’t stop people from expressing themselves, but rather force them to express themselves’ (Deleuze, 1995, p.129). This echoes some of the earlier points raised by Adorno and Baudrillard in reinforcing the idea that interactivity is coerced through fear of social exclusion, and that the content produced reinforces a premise of consent. Regarding Deleuze’s view, Hardt and Negri consider that through ‘voluntary communication and expression…and social media practices, people are contributing to instead of contesting repressive forces?’ (Hardt & Negri, 2012, p.18). This can be related to earlier points made in the chapter concerning the forced labour of the Uyghurs. Thus, exposing how user interactivity enables and reinforces a cyclical relationship. Staring from the conditions of materiality, the components produced from the forced labour of the Uyghurs used to build the parts relative to the hardware of the media apparatus, to the user labour which generates content and promotes interactivity and maintains it economically.

These points have so far considered how vernacular photographic practices and interaction with social media platforms acquiesces in maintaining a hegemonic order, but is there a range of contemporary examples in which emerging ideologies have used photographic practices to challenge ruling ideas? A counterpoint can be made that, social media platforms are instrumental in creating connections and networks that can challenge power. Facebook can be considered the most powerful of these platforms with over 3 billion users (Facebook, 2021) with its mission statement stating its aim to ‘give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together’ (Facebook, 2021). Its corporate website is host to images of inclusivity, attached to ethnic and cultural diversity, boasting itself as an educational tool whilst promoting various charitable causes. Facebook echoes the utopian sentiments that

were used to initially promote the digital and web-based infrastructure, presenting itself in the way Marshall McLuhan described especially how '…electronic interdependence, recreates the world in the image of a global village' (McLuhan, 1967 p.67), which now permeates daily western existence. This originates from what has been referred to as the Californian Ideology, an idea which fused the creative ingenuity of the hippy movement with the business savvy of the yuppy, an 'amalgamation of opposites... achieved through a profound faith in the emancipatory potential of the new information technologies' (Barbrook, Cameron, 1996, p.1).

The series of mass protests that erupted in parts of the middle east and north Africa, spurred by low standards of living and a rejection of authoritarianism between 2010 – 2012 (Snowdon, 2020, p.1), and known collectively as 'The Arab Spring', has been used as an example of the emancipatory, even revolutionary, role social media can play with this era of political activity sometimes regarded as the 'Facebook revolutions', 'where "Facebook" stood for all things social on the internet' (Rosen, 2011). Amateur mobile video production, the uploading and sharing of images of participation (fig 5) has been deemed as an integral component, along with other forms of information exchange such as Twitter, in developing internal and external support within the countries involved and for its participants more integrally described as '…part and parcel of their revolutionary action, even as part of their revolutionary duty…' (Snowdon, p.1, 2020). This strategy led to the unprecedented large-scale shutdown of internet and telecommunication services by the incumbent Mubarak government (Richtel, 2011).

A western parallel inspired by the Arab Spring, though much smaller in scale, occurred as the Occupy Wall Street protests in 2011, a protest movement which promoted the 'discourse of

the 99 per cent vs the 1 per cent' (Hardt & Negri, 2012) and defined by the 'loss of financial wellbeing and opportunity for most of the population, as well as the loss of democratic representation by elected officials who are beholden to special interests' (Skinner, 2011, p.4).The movement has produced critical iconographies (fig 6) in confronting and exposing power but has also, like the Arab Spring, served to represent the organisational capacity of social media. The images from the Occupy movement act as a foreshadowing of the culmination in organised and spontaneous mass political demonstrations that are emerging presently and are defined by their incorporation of social media as a means to disseminate political dispositions, rhetorically and via images. The year 2020 has been witness to some of the most intense social upheaval in recent history from the large-scale student demonstrations in Hong Kong in response to Chinese authoritarianism, to the Black Lives Matter protests in America in reaction to the killing of George Floyd, showcasing clashes in ideology and exposing how imagery, and rhetoric, is weaponised to control the narrative to shape public opinion. The role of social media in contemporary life means that it functions 'as both a vector for emancipatory media practices and an instrument of potentially totalitarian control and surveillance' (Snowdon, 2020, p.14)

Summary

This chapter has provided, through the consideration of the proposed dual intentions of coercion and consent, an analysis of how ideology underpins the photographic apparatus as part of contemporary experience. The chapter has explored how the intermeshing of technological and telecommunication advancements has enabled monopolistic companies to benefit via the extraction of the residual behavioural data through user interactivity. The production of which has become sources of data to be extracted with the purpose of

developing artificial intelligence and a computer vision with the application of surveillance capabilities and thus exposing an ideological dimension to its practice. The chapter additionally explored the practice of vernacular photography, and its dissemination through social media platforms, as a part of a cyclical relationship that is implicated with coerced labour. It has also considered how content creation and user interactivity can be attributed as kinds of labour that aid in the redistribution of ideology, via particular cultural signs and signifying properties, thus maintaining a premise of consent to the capitalistic hegemony that governs the cyclical relationship. Finally, the chapter considered examples of how emerging or competing ideologies have used the photographic apparatus to challenge dominant ideologies and power. As social media platforms continue to blur the lines of a traditional compartmentalised array of medias they might begin to be considered in the same way as an ISA as proposed by Althusser.

4.0 Ideology and the Media Spectacle: An Overview of the Trump Administration

The previous chapter analysed the relationship between ideology and photography as part of contemporary life, by exploring the strands of coercion and consent as a strategy to maintain power, via emerging technologies and the function of vernacular photographic practices concentrated around social media platforms. This chapter will continue an analysis of the contemporary relationship of ideology and photography by examining aspects of Donald J Trump's single term as the American Commander in Chief ranging from 2017 -2021.

Trump's election and subsequent time in office has occurred amidst a global emergence of right-wing populism, stemming from a cross section of complex political, economic, and sociological factors that frames the perspective of the chapter. Though the preceding administration of Barack Obama had its own ideological iconographies, the Trump administration might be regarded as the most spectacle laden when considering the current trend in right-leaning governments, from a western Eurocentric standpoint. Proposedly, Trump's rise to popularity can be seen as a product of a media fixated populace and as such offers an opportunity to further analyse the thesis question. The chapter will first establish some of the socio-political factors that have allowed this proposed rise in populism. By analysing, through the utilisation of critical discourse analysis, the way the Trump administration has represented itself and its policies through images and rhetoric this will aid in further demonstrating how ideology is disseminated in the present time with the aid of the photographic practices, particularly how power seeks to legitimise itself through photographic discourse. Analysing how peripheral competing ideologies materialise via photographic media and platforms, and the various reactions produced as a result, will aid in illuminating an overview from different perspectives.

The ongoing rise in global populism, right wing political ideologies and strongman authoritarianism has many causes. The usual explanations arise as a combination of/and from the complexities of the rootlessness and perceived loss of meaning, social class and identity created by the effects of 'hyper globalization' causing immigration, multiculturism and the xenophobic responses which continue to emerge. Additionally, the consequences from the 2008 financial crisis and the resulting bank bailouts coupled with austerity measures have fostered a loss of trust 'in the governing elite' (Mukunda, 2018). Finally, the increased use of the internet in reformatting the dissemination of information, or disinformation, and as a means of political discourse, as well as creating a space, or bubble, whereby one can congregate with like-minded people in virtual communities.

Increasingly social media has become the main territory in which to engage with, disseminate, and influence political discourse. It has been specifically utilised, and consequently weaponised, by many ideological positions with the right proving particularly adept at using it as part of their strategies of disseminating, and contesting, information. Not only is it used to influence, but it has also been sourced for the raw information of its users as part of more targeted and considered campaigns via the use of data mining and census data to target and tailor messaging directed at social media feeds and profiles. This is evidenced by Trump's campaign manager and strategist Stephen Bannon's involvement with Cambridge Analytica and media outlet Breibart News, and with these tactics with Bannon's involvement also being implicated in the Brexit referendum result (Cadwalladr, 2018). This method has been described as 'metapolitics' an approach that 'involves campaigning not through politics, but through culture – through the arts, entertainment, intellectualism, religion and education' (Teitelbaum, 2020, p.61) led by a belief that 'politics is downstream from culture' (Solon quoting Wylie, 2018). This may be considered as an attempt to erect. or re-channel,

something structurally akin to both Adorno's culture industry and Althusser's ISA and is revealing in its explicit intent. Bannon's own ideological disposition has its roots in *traditionalism*, characterised by its anti-science, anti-modernist stance whilst promoting aryanism (Teitelbaum, 2020, p.12). Bannon's position is revealed further by his continuing support to build a wall at the U.S Mexico border which was a particular mantra to the Trump administration and his followers with Bannon being instrumental in 'testing messages such as "drain the swamp" and "build the wall" in 2014, before the Trump campaign existed' (Solon, 2018). Bannon, in his capacities and intents, represents something comparable to the Gramscian 'intellectual' defined 'in a specialized sense as the agents of legitimation of the existing order' (Schwartzmantel, 2015, p.73). Though positing himself as someone who wishes to dismantle the political status and seemingly aligning himself with the interests of the working and middle classes, whilst also believing to have 'turned the Republican party into a working class party' (Smith quoting Bannon, 2019) 'a $1.5tn bill that slashed taxes for corporations and the rich' (Smith, 2019) introduced by Trump has led to a situation where 'for the first time on record, the 400 wealthiest Americans… paid a lower tax rate… than any other income group' (Leonhardt, 2019) contradicting any purported alignment stated rhetorically by the policies implemented.

Maybe not so specific to America, Trump's recent rise to power has largely been attributed to his use of vernacular 'politically incorrect' rhetoric, coupled with his omnipresent public image with both disseminated from the social media platform Twitter directly to followers and further via the mass media. Trump has been characterised as a 'master of the media spectacle' (Kellner, 2017, p.2) with his style of rhetoric frequently aggressively directed against perceived 'elites' aligning with populist sentiments '…to tout himself as outside of the political system…' (Kellner, 2017, p.7). This is so as to appear as an everyman, a

particular tactic of authoritarianism along with his self-promotion of virility, building upon a reputation as a successful businessman and tv personality. This combination deployed by Trump has arguably led to 'an aestheticization of political life' (Benjamin, 1936, p.36). A symptom of fascism observed by Walter Benjamin who also notes that, 'the violation of the masses, which in a leader cult it forces to their knees, corresponds to the violation exercised by a film camera which fascism enlists in the service of producing cultic values' (Benjamin, 1936, p.36). It is a recurring criticism that Trumps supporters, and even the Republican party itself, have built a cult of personality around him and has been compared to other authoritarian regimes that routinely use rhetoric and spectacle to equally amplify and deflect (Haltiwanger, 2021). By his own declared intentions, and enabled by social media platforms, Trump has been determined to bypass 'fake news', a term that has evolved to become deflective of any counter claim or perspective to that of the Trump administration, with his messages usually filtered and sensationalised by an assemblage of media outlets increasingly as he began his electioneering and presidency. The notion of 'fake news' has been related to the Gramscian notion of common sense as a means of hegemony in that the language Trump adopts influences one's subjectivity and relation with culture and that 'when a single individual considers their place in the world, language amplifies this notion, meaning that a person's subjectivity is formed, at least in part, by the discourse surrounding them' (Zompetti,2019, p.145).

The concept, and insinuation, of fake news becomes a platform in which Trump expresses a victimhood at the hands of a conspiratorial force. This is supported and amplified by supportive media networks, such as Fox, which helps legitimise the platform and the naturalising of a message as commons sense. Trump's messaging has been implicated in adopting 'rhetorical versatility' defined 'as the means to which a discourse can be shaped

explicitly and implicitly by multiple rhetors for different audiences through textual winks and polysemy' (Sanchez, 2018, p.49). Furthermore, 'the purpose of winking is so the rhetor can speak implicitly about a discourse and still claim allegiance to a cause without employing overt language' (Sanchez, 2018, p.49). This rhetorical versatility is not only displayed verbally and textually, but also exists as a visual dimension which is exhibited through consciously construed media spectacles, either directly mediated or by managing and distorting the efforts of competing ideologies. It can be regarded that for Trump this use of rhetoric began in relation to his political ambitions with his attacks on Barack Obama and during his presidency. Racial and ethnic divides have long been rooted in American history and contemporary life, and with the previous administration under Barack Obama a situation arose where 'white Americans' opinions of blacks and other minority groups became more entwined with their partisan identities' (Sides, Tesler and Vavreck, 2016, p.4). Trump was active in pushing the 'birther' conspiracy theory, the idea that Obama was not a U.S citizen and therefore ineligible for the presidency, as early as 2011 (Megerian, 2016) and later applying the same sentiment during the 2020 re-election year, and just months after the death of George Floyd and the erupting protests, to then Vice-President nominee, Kamala Harris based on her multiracial ethnicity (Woodward, 2020).

The one phrase synonymous with Trump's campaign and tenure is 'Make America Great Again', (MAGA) 'patented by Trump in 2012' (Teitelbaum, 2020, p.116), and borrowing much from Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential slogan 'Let's Make America Great Again' (Margolin, 2016). The phrase, which 'refers to a moment of unspecified greatness lost in the past and thereby proclaims ours as a time of decline' (Teitelbaum, 2020, p.116) pushes nationalism as a form of patriotism, with the word 'patriot' being used synonymously with this sense of nationalism. MAGA, and its association to this notion of patriotism, is famously

brandished by the wearing of red caps and other merchandise embellished with the slogan, becoming less of 'a statement of policy' and more of a 'declaration of identity' (Givhan, 2019). As the administration and its policies progressed the statement, the cap (fig 7), became to be weaponised and utilised by groups on the *alt right*, 'a catchall for a wide range of actors and ideologies, some of them ideologically irreconcilable' (Teitelbaum, 2021, p.215) but collectively in support of Trump. The cap has been seen worn, often mingling symbolically alongside other emblems of the right such as the Nazi Swastika and the Confederate flag, and on display at rallies such as at the 'Unite the Right' rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017, the first year of Trump presidency.

This particular rally brought white nationalists and neo fascists clashing with counter-protestors over the proposed removal of a statue of Confederate General and slaver Robert E Lee. The gathering was deemed as 'unlawful' by the police (Nelson and Lind, 2017) and culminated in one death when a car ploughed into a crowd of counter protestors. The delayed and ambiguous response from Trump was widely condemned as an attempt to redirect the blame from the event organisers by 'creating a false equivalency between the two groups' (Parker, 2019). This reluctance to condemn the groups, or ideologies, that can be considered allies reveals something about the discourse of Trump and the divisive rhetoric and narratives that are construed as part of the administration's strategy of deflection and textual winking. This has occurred in a concentrated fashion in response to photographs and images that have arisen during the administration that have offered differing or contradictory messages then intended. It reveals an administration concerned with 'optics' (a termed used frequently in a political context in relation to how the public perceives the actions of a leader or party) but also how effectively that perception can be shaped and managed. Where the thesis has previously explored the way power has usually exploited the notion that a photograph does

not lie or acts as a document of truth, Trump marks a contradiction to this thread of enquiry, imploring his followers that ‘what you’re seeing and what you’re reading is not what’s happening’ (Trump, 2018) whilst also simultaneously using images to counter criticism. This statement emphasises what has been coined as ‘post-modern’ conservatism, defined as such ‘because it disdains belief in objective truth and mores, whether offered by science or of social science and locates meaning in a reactionary identity and its values’ (Magnus, 2020, p.25).

Days after the inauguration of Donald Trump’s presidency, a public row erupted over the attendance number of the event, confirmed to be significant less than President Barack Obama’s inauguration day, by photographs analysed and presented comparatively (fig 8) with each other (Lyon, 2017). These images quickly became the site of an ideological tug of war concerning the relevance of truth and facts in the interpretation of reality. The Trump administration’s first press secretary, Sean Spicer, alluded that the images had been intentionally framed in a way to perceptively minimize the numbers of the crowd. Spicer further claimed it was the largest inaugural attendance “period” as if to emphasize the indisputability of that claim (CNN, 2017). In defence of this “provable falsehood” President Trump’s then counsellor, Kellyanne Conway, stated Spicer has simply provided “alternative facts”, a phrase seen as an example of post-truth rhetoric and the denial of objective reality (NBC, 2017). This exchange marked the first of many concurrent efforts by Trump and his administration ‘to the destruction of the meaning of truth in the absolute’ (Ben-Ghiat, 2020, p.117) which aids in subverting narratives that contravene the intended aims of the administration.

On Monday 25th May 2020, George Floyd, an African American resident of Minneapolis, Minnesota was placed under arrest after reportedly using a counterfeit twenty-dollar bill to pay for cigarettes. The procedure of arrest culminated in the restraining technique of placing a knee on the offender's neck. Floyd subsequently died as a result with the entirety of the proceeding captured by security cameras and from several vantage points of bystanders and at various stages of the arrest (Hill et al.,2020). The incident caused an uproar in African American communities and was vehemently condemned widely within the United States and internationally. The mass protests that erupted in response was no doubt instigated by the various footage that had been uploaded and shared across multiple social media platforms. Of course, the footage of the arrest and death by the police cannot account for the resulting reactions alone. Within the African American community there is a strongly held belief that there is a disparity of treatment from the police, and by extension the justice system, between Caucasian and African Americans and the footage of Floyd's killing arguably helps in reinforcing this belief. The resulting effect, consequently, and possibly coupled with additional anxieties deriving from the ongoing COVID- 19 pandemic led to strong emotional responses internationally (Ramsden, 2020). Over the course of the next few days mass protests broke out leading to increasingly physical encounters between protestors, law officials, and counter protestors. The plethora of imagery produced from the period documents a variety of perspectives, again usually shared across social media sites, and selectively disseminated by mainstream media to aid whatever ideological narratives it aligned itself to.

Trump's St. John photo op emerges from the background of these circumstances and as such an analysis is necessary. Firstly, because its production represents aspects of the then incumbent power structure of the Trump administration and may provide further insights into

the mechanisms of that structure. Secondly, because the image seemingly says so little outside of its context, its reading is rendered as ambiguous when removed from its historical circumstance, suggesting how and why images are deployed by those in power. There are various versions of this image, and it seems appropriate to analyse the photograph produced by the official White House press photographer, as this insinuates an orchestration in the production of the image, whilst referencing other images produced at the same time to highlight further context or connect information not retrievable in the official counterpart.

When initially reading the photograph of President Trump stood outside St John's Church, in Washington DC (fig 9) it is hard to distinguish the context and events that factor into it its materialisation on its appearance alone. There are no overt visual elements that reference the BLM protests, literally just out of frame, or the fact that the year of twenty-twenty was a re-election year for the Trump administration, amidst a global pandemic. By utilising strategies informed by critical discourse analysis, and more specifically by surveying the visual semiotic choices of the image, an analysis can begin to reveal what its creation might connote, along with its various meaning potentials in relation to these contexts.

On first appearances the image denotes a man, the US president, stood, with a book in hand, in an exterior setting. Considering the realms of connotation (Pose, Object and Setting) as proposed by Barthes in his essay 'The Rhetoric of The Image' (Barthes, 1977, p.32-51), allow for a further analysis. The man in the picture is President Trump; he is *posed* standing just left off-centre within the composition. He is in focus and positioned within the foreground. His stance is neutral, his stature conforms to his holding of the book, the *object,* and could be read as a pose one might take to market something in an advertising context. Trump's history is as a businessman and tv personality and is proposedly no stranger to

marketing himself. His gaze is fixed towards the camera and confronts the spectator with a seemingly dour expression. The object Trump holds in both hands is centrally aligned with his posture, below his chest. The object is a book, later confirmed to be a bible from the plethora of photographs taken aside from this official image (fig 10); the stance changing to a more salutary gesture. The book is closed and held as if to exhibit to the spectator. The book is in focus and foregrounded along with Trump. The choice of the bible could be thought of as a symbolic or cultural gesture, one that Trump proposes to align with perhaps. Trump wears a blue suit and blue tie, colours usually associated with the Democratic party. The colour blue could refer to 'Blue Lives Matter' an opposing movement and slogan, created to counter the 'Black Lives Matter' movement and slogan, in defence of law enforcement officials. The background, though blurred, hold the details of the photograph's setting. The heading of a board reads St John's Church Parish House, though nothing indicates the city or even country.

As stated previously, there is no way of deriving a singular meaning from an initial reading of the image without context and dissecting the multitude of rhetoric that surrounds it. The production of the image and its possible meanings are informed by the accompanying rhetoric, linguistic choices and parallel actions that should be considered here to expound further in developing a fuller interpretation and meaning potentials.

Firstly, 2020 was an election year whereby the Trump administration and its public image could be considered as being a high priority as part of any re-election campaign agenda. In fact, it was reported that 'members of his re-election campaign team were quick to recirculate the images via twitter home pages' soon after the images were taken' (Baker, Haberman, Rogers, Kanno-Youngs & Benner, 2020). This highlights one motivation to produce the

image. Secondly, President Trump was expected to respond to Floyd's death and the resulting BLM protests. It took exactly a week from Floyd's death to officially respond to the resulting protests, and seemingly doing so only after the protests had caused a lockdown of the White House, with Trump reportedly rushed to an underground bunker by secret service agents, a narrative that would be contested days later (Shears & Rogers, 2020). In his official response from the White House Rose Garden on June 2nd Trump used the speech to seemingly condemn the killing of Floyd, whilst decrying the protestors as 'domestic terrorists' and provided a notification that he was deploying the national guard to 'dominate the streets' (Trump, 2020). Within the speech Trump used the phrase 'Law and Order' which was reiterated from his previous tweets during the early stages of the protests and a clear attempt at associating himself with the previous Republican administrations of Nixon and Reagan, though its use has been 'associated with racism and repression' (Kilgore, 2020). It is following this speech that the St John's image was taken, but not before the forced clearing of protestors from Lafayette Square, situated just outside White House, for Trump and the taking of the image. It is mainly this action that draws accusations of the St John's photo op being straight out of to the authoritarian playbook by several commentators (Haltiwanger, 2020). Alluding to this the filmmaker Errol Morris titled his in-depth analysis of the images depicting Trump's administration personnel (fig 11) prior to the forced clearing of protestors from Lafayette Square, and the subsequent photo-op, as an 'Anatomy of Authoritarianism' (Morris, 2020).

The ability to represent oneself through the photographic apparatus and disseminated en masse through respective discourses, such as the news media, has been implemented by politicians and regimes for over a century. It can be considered that the photo-op, usually an orchestrated and curated act, is a cynical attempt at constructing a projection through

appearances. Its purpose seeks to instil symbolic resonance, such as strength, sympathy or to appear relatable, but is largely intended to manipulate the viewer's perception, sometimes to persuade the uninitiated supporter, or just to legitimise a course of action. Trump, characteristically self-consciously, has even referred to the image as 'very symbolic' (Rascoe, 2020). Especially now, in the current era where images are seemingly omnipotent, it is just as an essential device to disseminate ideology as the rhetoric that it usually illustrates. The analysis of Trump's photo op at St Johns highlights this choice, one that it is deployed consciously and with an intentionality, in this case to act as a rallying symbol to his political base whilst antagonising his detractors. The image is determined to control a narrative, via the gaze, by excluding the events from the frame, and thus focusing on a symbolism of authority, or an ensemble of authorities, moral and political in this case, that acquiesces with the rhetoric of 'Law and Order'. This adaption of the photograph as political discourse constitutes an ideological narrative of 'us vs them', a hallmark of most conservative based ideologies. Support from Trumps base is determined and defined by his derisive nature towards a perceived elite, against an 'unhinged left-wing mob' and 'anarchists' as he referred to the BLM protestors via tweets and interviews (Trump, 2020). The production of the photo intended to maintain this divisiveness, through a display or physical force (clearing of Lafayette) and a display of 'moral authority' (Morris, 2020) implied with the image, whilst also recasting the focus back on to himself.

It can be considered that Trump repeatedly defers from directly condemning any group, ideology or actor perceived to be relevant to the maintenance of his power. The relationship between his base supporters was, and perhaps is, necessary for Trump's ideological domination and creates a relationship based on a 'sense of representation' (Therbon, 1980, p.96). Trump becomes an entity, a signifier and icon which individuals have invested their

identities to, forming communities and groups around this perceived representation. This dynamic is understood by the Trump administration and arguably weaponised culminating in an attack on the Capitol Hill building on January 6th, 2021, following a speech by Trump earlier in the day at a 'Save America' rally in reaction to losing his re-election, acting as an opportunity to echo the idea of a stolen election which had been circulating by Trump and allies since the results. The rally was timed with the certification of the election results at the Capitol where prominent figures from both parties were in attendance. A transcript from the speech reveals Trumps repeatedly emphasising the size of the crowd, associating them with an attack on the media, fake news, and big tech,

> We have hundreds of thousands of people here, and I just want them to be recognized by the fake news media. Turn your cameras please and show what's really happening out here because these people are not going to take it any longer. They're not going to take it any longer. Go ahead. Turn your cameras, please… The media is the biggest problem we have as far as I'm concerned, single biggest problem, the fake news, and the big tech…Big tech is now coming into their own. (Trump, 2021)

Trump used the speech to repeat accusations that the democrats, 'using the pretext of the China virus', had rigged the election, equating it with the generalisation that elections in third-world countries are corrupt and that 'their elections are more honest than what we've been going through in this country' (Trump, 2021). The rest of the speech is scattered with derogatory comments about the Democrats, besmirching the Dominion voting machines as well as individual republicans who were not joining in with the attempt to 'stop the steal' and overturn the 2020 election. As the speech concludes, Trump implores his supporters 'we fight like hell and if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore' (Trump,

2021) before imploring the crowd to march on the Capitol. The resulting images and footage that emerged from the ensuing ‘insurrection’ were mostly created by the participants themselves as they self-documented their activities, sharing on social media. The participants have been described as a mixture of ordinary Trump supporters interspersed more organised groups such as Q-anon followers, the Oath Keepers, and the Proud Boys (*New York Times*, 2021), a group Trump had refused to condemn during the presidential election debates famously stating, ‘stand back and stand by’ (Trump, 2020). Some of the more prominent images to emerge include the cartoonish ‘q-anon shaman’ (fig 12), Jacob Anthony Chansey (BBC, 2021) and Richard Barnett (fig 13) who was captured sitting with his feet up on Nancy Pelosi’s desk (Kilander, 2021) create the illusion of a carnivalesque event. However, these images mask or distract the more purposeful intent to cause harm to individual congress members and halt the certification of Biden’s presidency (Reuters, 2021). One thing to emerge from a visual analysis of the event is the disparity in equipment and force deployed by law enforcement in contrast to the earlier Black Lives Matter protestors and the insurrectionists (*New York Times*, 2021). The sustained use of divisive commentary by Trump in encouraging the riot has initially resulted in what might be a temporary blow to his ability to directly disseminate rhetoric as he remains banned from Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter amongst other social media platforms (Hern, 2021). Despite the abundance of visual evidence, exhibited by the threading and stitching of the participant’s video footage of the day to construct a timeline of events by the *New York Times* and witness testimony from Capitol Hill officers (Cowan, Lynch, 2021), the Capitol Hill riot has quickly, like previous spectacles, been used as an incident to disavow any semblance of objective truth. Members of the Republican party, even a congressman photographed helping to build a barricade as protection and caught up in the throng of the riot, along with Trumps supporters, are downplaying and even denying the event as ‘insurrectionist’ (Colson, 2021). Again, what is

being proposed and repeated by Trump and his defenders is that ‘what you’re seeing and what you’re reading is not what’s happening’ (Trump, 2018).

Summary

This chapter has surveyed a contemporary example of the use of photographic discourses by a structure of power to maintain its hegemony. By analysing certain strategies by the recent Trump presidency such as rhetoric versatility and textual winking, which coincides as part of an assemblage with visual media, it is possible to ascertain particular ideological dispositions and manoeuvrings. By identifying and conducting critical discourse analysis on key images it has been possible to highlight significant and revealing details where images are utilised purposefully and ideologically. This has materialised through varying means with images being used in the dismissal of objective truth and can be established via the distortion and the mis-association of certain images to be a product of ‘fake news’. The use of the photo op has also been revealed as a device to maintain a visibility of power via the direction of the public gaze. The chapter has been able to connect previously explored notions of ideology such as Gramsci’s common sense, used as a method for hegemony. Furthermore, the implementation of metapolitics, as demonstrated by the emerging right and particularly Stephen Bannon in his use of data mining and social media user profile to target specific demographics when campaigning Trump’s presidency, allude to Adorno’s concept of the culture industry and Althusser’s ISA. It has also considered how social media has been adapted by the Trump administration. This has been weaponised to sidestep the mainstream media in controlling and disseminating an ideological narrative. Consequently, this manipulation of his support base has arguably led to the media spectacle exhibited by the Capitol Hill riot and attributable to the cult of personality now associated with the image of Trump and his rhetoric.

Conclusion

In exploring the relationship between photography and ideology the thesis has determined a shared epistemic origin, tracing early practices and associations with power. It has introduced the relevant theories and advancements of ideology to identify relevant concepts which reveal where the apparatus of photography has an instrumental purpose in the dissemination of ideologies. Through an analysis of these concepts the dual strands of coercion and consent has allowed for two lines of enquiry in exploring how the synthesis of photography and ideology materialises in the present time. These strands reveal how photography is currently used coercively, integrated militaristically and culturally as the nature of photography is adapted to surveillance capabilities with an analysis framed by Foucault's metaphorical adoption of Bentham's formation of the panopticon. It was also considered how consent, or an appearance of consent to the legitimacy an ideology, is fostered in the cultural promotion and integration of photography as a mass social practice acting as a Gramscian common sense. Finally, the thesis concludes with an analysis of a contemporary power structure, in the shape of Trump's presidency, and how photographs and visual media become a terrain in which ideologies are contested and promoted and usually coupled with rhetoric as a part of a stream of media spectacles.

The thesis can conclude that ideology has re-emerged as a concern in the present time because of immense changes in socio-political relations. This is largely attributable to technological shifts, particularly the interconnectivity and proliferation of information brought about by the internet. Another factor to consider is the effect of economic shocks such as the 2008 financial crisis with resulting austerity measures implemented is coupled with cultural shifts affected by the representation of immigration. Furthermore, as cameras

and photography has proliferated in tandem, due to its integration into the commercial hardware that supplements the internet, its practices and signifying properties are being weaponised and absorbed by a range of groups and ideological positions creating a grapple for dominant representation.

Photography and ideology possess unique qualities that intersect resulting in a synthesis that enables a language of representation that serves equally power, emerging ideologies and as a means of emancipatory strategies. These qualities can be regarded by how both photography and ideology seek to frame reality and thus consciousness.

It is easy to consider that photographs act in a vehicular way to deliver ideology, or an ideological message. The thesis has outlined how the act of photography, the gesture as a mass ritualised practice, has its own ideological functioning which is just as part of the ideological terrain as the photographic content.

> The domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs. They equate with one another. Wherever a sig is present, ideology is present too. Everything ideological possess semiotic value. (Volosinov, 1973, p.10).

The methods in which photography was first deployed directly by western powers, via state institutions, were relative to the notion of the photograph as emblematic of truth, as evidence and as a source of information and data, helped secure its dominance. Whilst this may continue to be the case, the coercive dimensions which help to maintain a power structure, such as the surveillance capabilities of facial recognition and tracking systems, are becoming more prevalent in the everyday structures of contemporary existence. Furthermore, there is

evidently, thorough examples explored within the thesis, the instrumentalization of divisionary rhetoric, namely by the conservative right wing, which is currently promoting a disavowal of the truth relation to images that threaten its ideological positions. This is also directed against other sources of information which can be seen as part of a wider ideological stratagem which seeks to confuse the notion of objective truth as 'fake news' and instead amplify subjective, localised, and theological perspectives. In parallel to these considerations, the thesis has revealed that photography's commercial potential and signifying properties have continually evolved, shaping a cultural and commodified relationship with images, which has the ability to continually influence a mass audience. Through various analysis the thesis has determined instances where the photographic apparatus is a considered function in the ideological mechanisms for various capitalistic and hegemonic ambitions.

In a continuingly polarised world, and as western hegemony wanes because of exterior threats and internal conflicts, ideology remains a somewhat contentious but necessary frame in which to continue examining the contingent landscape of societal relations. This thesis has only covered a small and selective example of thought and theory concerning the role of ideology in the legitimising and maintenance of power. The role of photography serves as an apparatus central to what is fast becoming the dominant means of communication in the form of social media. This relationship requires continuing monitoring as it remains a relatively new medium which has rapidly become democratised for mass consumerist use, intermeshed with technological developments which continue to evolve, both commercially and militaristically.

> Photography's future will be much like its past. It will largely continue to illustrate, without condemning, how the powerful dominate the less powerful (Cole, 2019).

List of Figures

3 COMPOSITES OF CRIMINALS TAKEN FROM 4, 9 & 5, DIFFERENT PERSONS RESPECTIVELY, AND THE CO-COMPOSITE OF THE WHOLE 18 OF THEM IN THE CENTRE.

Fig 1

Fig 2

SUV
灰色
轿车
黄色
SUV
白色
轿车
非机动车
成人
非机动车
男
上身黑色
下身深蓝色
成人
男
上身黑色
下身黑色
成人
长袖
成人
长袖
白色
轿车
下身灰
长袖
男
上身灰色
下身深粉色
17:30:31
17:30:30
17:30:30

Fig 3

Fig 4

Fig 5

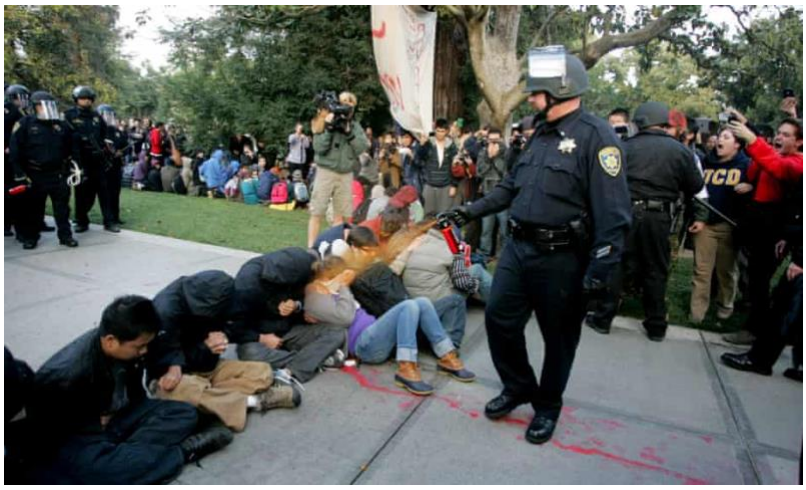

Fig 6

Fig 7

Fig 8

Fig 9

Fig 10

Fig 11

Fig 12

Fig 13

Photo Credits and Source

Fig 1: Composite of Criminals from Generic Images by Francis Galton, originally published 1879. https://galton.org/books/generic-images/index.html

Fig 2: Male Andamanese by Maurice Vidal Portman, 1890's.
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/EA_As-Portman-B29-9

Fig 3: Gilles Sabrie / Bloomberg via Getty Images
A screen shows a demonstration of SenseTime Group's SenseVideo pedestrian and vehicle recognition system at the company's showroom in Beijing.
https://www.cnet.com/news/in-china-facial-recognition-public-shaming-and-control-go-hand-in-hand/

Fig 4: Contact Sheet of UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson in Hard Hat/PPE.
Credits start from left to right and in descending order.

Toby Melville / AFP via Getty Images
https://www.politico.eu/article/boris-johnson-post-coronavirus-future-speech/

Getty Images
https://www.businessinsider.com/brexit-poll-majority-brits-disagree-boris-johnson-eu-trade-deal-2020-10?r=US&IR=T

Stefan Rousseau / Getty Images
https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/conservative-leadership-race-boris-johnson-woos-labour-leave-mps-829lmk30l

PA Images by Owen Humphreys
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/dec/13/boris-johnson-wont-be-able-escape-responsibility-for-a-crash-out-brexit

PA Images
https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/boris-johnson-confronted-father-stanley-25489516

Unknown Source
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Fig 5: Ries à Voir/ Third Films
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Fig 7: MAGA cap by Chip Somodevillia / Getty Images
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Fig 8: Lucas Jackson (Left) and Stelios Varias (Right) / Reuters
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Fig 12: Getty Images
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Fig 13: Getty Images
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