

**HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS**

**LE THI HANG**

**ANTONIO GRAMSCI'S THOUGHTS  
ON IDEOLOGY**

**SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS**

**MAJOR: POLITICAL SCIENCE**

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. The necessity and significance of the research topic

Ideology is one of the most important concepts in political science, sociology, and social theory. It is not merely a collection of ideas or beliefs but also a tool that shapes how people understand and react to the world around them, exerting a profound influence on political, economic, cultural, and social processes. Additionally, it serves as a mechanism for maintaining and reinforcing the power of dominant groups. Through ideology, the values, norms, and beliefs of a class or power group can become dominant elements, widely accepted in society. Moreover, ideology directly affects how people perceive and behave in social domains, providing a reference framework through which individuals judge right and wrong, good and bad, and make actionable decisions.

Human history has proven that ideology is not only a tool of power but also the origin of social change. Many revolutions and social movements have stemmed from challenging the dominant ideology and introducing new ones. Moreover, for each nation, ideology serves as the foundation for formulating and implementing public policies, economic management strategies, resource distribution, and social governance. Ideology is not merely the asset of political leaders or intellectuals but also a vital part of people's daily lives; it exerts a profound influence on individuals' awareness of their rights, responsibilities, and their position and role in society.

Among studies on ideology, it can be affirmed that Antonio Gramsci's research holds significant importance. Gramsci asserted that power does not rely solely on economic or military strength but also

depends on the control of ideology. He argued that ideology is not merely a top-down imposition but also a sophisticated tool used by ruling groups to maintain power through cultural hegemony. Gramsci further pointed out that the values, ideas, and norms of a social group can become the dominant ideology in society without necessarily resorting to direct violence or oppression. His perspectives provide deeper insights into how ideologies can be employed to sustain or alter social order, thereby offering a fresh lens on the relationship between ideology and power.

As a leading communist thinker and a renowned leader of the Italian Communist Party, Gramsci's discussions on ideology hold profound significance and influence in both political theory and social practice. Gramsci expanded the ideas of Marx and Lenin by introducing new approaches to describe and analyze how ideologies operate in modern capitalist societies. He emphasized that seizing power or dismantling a power structure is not solely an economic struggle but also a parallel battle involving ideology and culture. This contributed to the expansion, development, and defense of Marxist theory while revealing the complexity of social transformation and how ideology dominates this process. The internationally recognized achievements of Gramsci's insights into ideology have been regarded as a crucial foundation for many political theories. His perspectives on ideology have laid the groundwork for numerous schools of political theory, modern sociology, and analyses of power and politics in the era of globalization.

From historical, political, and cultural perspectives to the construction and preservation of national identity, ideology plays a central role in shaping the thinking and actions of both the political system and

society as a whole. For countries around the world, including Vietnam, the study of ideology holds immense significance in the context of national development today. Therefore, researching Gramsci's thoughts on ideology is not only theoretically meaningful but also provides tools to better understand the mechanisms of power and ideology in modern society; how media, education systems, and cultural organizations sustain or challenge ideologies; and offers deeper insights into current issues faced by contemporary ideological trends and how modern power regimes build consensus and social cohesion.

Based on the importance of ideology and basic research on ideology, from the meaning and value of Gramsci's political thought in general and his thought on ideology in particular, the doctoral student chose: "*Antonio Gramsci's thought on ideology*" as the topic of his doctoral thesis majoring in Political Science.

## **2. Purpose and research tasks of the dissertation**

### ***2.1. Research purpose***

The thesis studies and clarifies the basic contents of Gramsci's thoughts on ideology. On that basis, the thesis also points out and evaluates the valuable contributions as well as limitations in Gramsci's thoughts on this issue.

### ***2.2. Research tasks***

To achieve the above purpose, the thesis needs to complete the following key tasks:

First, focus on overviewing and analyzing research works related to the subject of the thesis.

Second, clarify the concept of the thesis's tools; analyze the context and premises for the birth of Antonio Gramsci's ideology; on that basis, summarize Gramsci's life, career, works and main political ideas.

Third, analyze the basic contents of Gramsci's ideology on ideology, specifically clarify Gramsci's concept of ideology; the role, function, characteristics, ways of building and consolidating ideology and the relationship between ideology and other categories as well as its importance in his overall political ideology system.

Fourth, give assessments of the valuable contributions and limitations of Gramsci's ideology on the issue of ideology.

### **3. Subject and scope of the thesis**

#### ***3.1. Subject of the thesis***

The thesis studies Antonio Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

#### ***3.2. Scope of the thesis***

The thesis studies Antonio Gramsci's thoughts on ideology through some of Gramsci's main published works such as: Prison Notebooks, Selections from Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci and Letters from Prison.

### **4. Theoretical basis and research method**

***4.1. Theoretical basis:*** The thesis is conducted based on the methodology of Marxism - Leninism and political theories, theories in the field of modern social sciences on ideology.

***4.2. Regarding research methods:*** including logical and historical methods, analysis and synthesis, comparison, and historical methods.

The logical method combined with the historical method is used to clarify the process of formation, inheritance, and development of Antonio Gramsci's political thought on the issue of ideology through historical

periods, thereby systematizing the contents and drawing out values, evaluating the limitations of those thoughts.

The analytical method and the synthetic method are used to clarify the specific contents as well as the basic premises that form Gramsci's political thought on the issue of ideology. At the same time, these methods also help to better understand the impact of the contemporary social context, the theoretical premises on the formation of political thought on the issue of ideology in Gramsci.

The comparative method is used in combination with the above methods to clarify the similarities and differences between political thoughts before, during and after Gramsci on the issue of ideology, thereby showing the inheritance, development and supplementation of this issue in his political thought.

The method of document analysis, synthesis, and exploitation of documents with existing bases in previous research works to serve the completion of the research tasks of this thesis.

### **5. New scientific contributions of the thesis**

First: The thesis has systematically summarized the outstanding research works related to Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

Second: The thesis outlines the general perception of the concept of ideology before clarifying the context and premises for the birth of Gramsci's political thoughts on ideology. In addition, the thesis's research also contributes to systematizing the main features of Gramsci's life, career, works and presenting a brief outline of Gramsci's important political thoughts.

Third: The thesis has comprehensively described and analyzed the

basic contents of Gramsci's thoughts on ideology. At the same time, it explains the importance of the ideological issue in Gramsci's political thoughts.

Fourth: The thesis also contributes to making assessments of the values and limitations of Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

## **6. Theoretical and practical significance of the thesis**

### ***6.1. Theoretical***

The thesis contributes to supplementing and enriching the theory of ideology in general and contributes to clarifying the basic contents and values, limitations in Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

### ***6.2. Practical***

The thesis can be used as a reference for researchers interested in political ideology, neo-Marxism and political ideology.

The thesis can be used in research and teaching in the fields of Political Science and Political Philosophy.

## **7. Structure of the thesis**

In addition to the introduction, conclusion, list of published works of the author related to the thesis and list of references, the thesis consists of 4 chapters, 12 sections.



## **Chapter 1**

### **OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH SITUATION RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC**

#### **1.1. RESEARCH WORKS IN THE WORLD**

##### **1.1.1. Research works on ideology in the world**

It can be said that research works on ideology in the world have developed strongly, especially since the appearance of Marx's initial views on ideology in relation to class, economy and political power, then expanded to the analysis of ideology in the fields of culture, literature and art, discourse, knowledge and even psychology of unconscious punishment mechanisms. Theorists such as Althusser, Žižek... have put forward new perspectives, arguments and approaches, which not only help to deepen the understanding of the concept but also clarify the role and different aspects of ideology in maintaining political power, in the fields of culture, society and daily life. Through the above works, it shows that researchers have expanded both the scope and depth of the concept of ideology, creating important analytical tools to understand how power is maintained and challenged in modern society. From there, it shows that ideology is not only a political tool but also an inseparable part of social life, culture and individual perception.

##### **1.1.2. Research on Antonio Gramsci's Thought in the World**

The works have represented rich and diverse studies in approaching Antonio Gramsci's thought. Gramsci's thought is not only limited to the field of political theory but also has a profound influence on cultural, social and post-colonial theory studies. These works have contributed significantly to the construction and clarification of the complexity and depth of Gramsci's thought, while opening up new research directions in

the field of social sciences. Through these studies, researchers can clearly see the flexibility and importance of Gramsci's thought in analyzing modern social, political and economic issues. The overview also shows that Gramsci's legacy continues to be a source of inspiration for many studies and social movements around the world.

## **1.2. RESEARCH WORKS IN VIETNAM**

### **1.2.1. Research works on ideology in Vietnam**

### **1.2.2. Research works on Antonio Gramsci's thought in Vietnam**

## **1.3. SOME COMMENTS FROM THE RESULTS OF OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH WORKS RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC**

First, in terms of academic value, research works in the world and in Vietnam have mentioned and systematically and deeply analyzed many basic contents of Gramsci's political thought.

Second, those systematic and continuous studies have affirmed the importance of Gramsci's thought in contemporary research.

Third, the studies demonstrate the diversity of content and approach to Gramsci's thought.

Fourth, the studies also demonstrate the wide applicability of Gramsci's thought.

Fifth, in the research community, there are both support, development and debates and criticisms of Gramsci's thought.

## **1.4. CONTENTS OF THE THESIS THAT NEED TO FOCUS ON RESEARCH**

To contribute to filling the gap in the research field of A.Gramsci's ideology on ideology, the thesis needs to focus on expanding and deepening the following issues:

First, the context and premise of Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

Second, the main contents of Gramsci's political thoughts.

Third, the basic contents of Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

Fourth, the value and limitations of Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

## **Summary of Chapter 1**

Through an overview of documents related to the research topic, the researcher found that some of these works have generally mentioned the history of the formation of the concept of ideology and provided definitions and concepts of ideology, mentioned the classification and factors affecting ideology; made efforts to explore the relationships between ideology and the social system, pointed out the role of ideology in society and political life. Some other studies delved into the introduction of Gramsci's life, career and contributions to the development of ideology in general in the fields of philosophy, religion, politics and culture. In addition, most notably, there are many in-depth research and analysis works by researchers from famous universities and research institutes around the world discussing the political thoughts of Antonio Gramsci and issues surrounding his concept of ideology. But up to now, in Vietnam, there has not been any research that focuses, directly and pays much attention to the comprehensive analysis, evaluation and systematization of Antonio Gramsci's ideology on ideology, especially from the perspective of Political Science.

## **Chapter 2**

### **GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF IDEOLOGY AND CONTEXT, PREMISES FOR THE EMERGENCE OF THE MAIN POLITICAL IDEAS OF ANTONIO GRAMSCI**

#### **2.1. GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF IDEOLOGY**

There are many different ways of understanding and using the concept of ideology. However, the common point is that the above concepts all aim to find and clarify the meaning of existence and nature of ideology, among which the most notable are the arguments discussing the nature and function

of ideology in the fields and social processes of Marxism - Leninism. With such an approach, the viewpoint of Marxism - Leninism is considered the approach that lays the foundation for considering the content of concepts and nature; The role and function of ideology in forming world views, guiding human actions and social connections.

## **2.2. CONTEXT AND PREMISES FOR THE BIRTH OF ANTONIO GRAMSCI'S THOUGHT**

### **2.2.1. The European and Italian context in the late 19th and early 20th centuries for the birth of Antonio Gramsci's political thought**

#### *2.2.1.1. European context*

#### *2.2.1.2. Italian context*

Through the above two contents, it can be seen that Gramsci's thoughts arose from the context of the industrial revolution and urbanization; class conflict and the rise of the socialist movement; the rise of nationalism and the imperialist race; the birth of new ideological movements; the development of communism... in Europe and Italy.

### **2.2.2. Premises for the birth of Antonio Gramsci's thought**

Antonio Gramsci's thought was formed from a series of historical, social and philosophical premises in the context of Italy and Europe in the early 20th century. These factors not only deeply influenced his view of society and politics, but also shaped his unique thoughts on power, culture and ideology and are expressed through two contents:

#### *2.2.2.1. Practical premises for the birth of Antonio Gramsci's thought*

#### *2.2.2.2. Theoretical premises for the birth of Antonio Gramsci's thought*

## **2.3. ANTONIO GRAMSCI'S LIFE, CAREER AND WORKS**

Antonio Gramsci (1891 - 1937) is an important figure in the history of world political thought in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. His life

and career not only reflected the social and political upheavals of the time but also demonstrated his dedication to revolutionary theory and practice. During the 1930s, Gramsci wrote "Prison Notebooks", which is considered Gramsci's most important work. These contents are presented in the following subsections:

**2.3.1. Antonio Gramsci's Life**

**2.3.2. Antonio Gramsci's Career**

**2.3.3. Antonio Gramsci's Works**

**2.4. OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN POLITICAL IDEAS OF ANTONIO GRAMSCI**

Antonio Gramsci's political thought contains many unique and groundbreaking concepts, which have greatly influenced social, cultural, and political theory through the following issues:

**2.4.1. Hegemony**

**2.4.2. Ideology**

**2.4.3. Organic Intellectuals**

**2.4.4. Civil Society**

**2.4.5. War of Position and War of Mobilization**

**2.4.6. Historical Block**

**Summary of Chapter 2**

In this chapter, the researcher has clarified the contents of the context and premises of Antonio Gramsci's ideology on ideology, the main points in his life, career and important works are also mentioned. From these analyses, it can be seen that ideology in Gramsci's perspective is an ideological product that arose in the context of European and Italian history in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is not only a continuation, inheritance and development of the ideological premises of

Marx, Hegel, Labriola... but also a reflection of Gramsci's practical observations and political activities in that context. The generalization of Antonio's entire political thought shows that the main ideas in his research career contain many new, complex and scientifically significant viewpoints and concepts such as hegemony, ideology, organic intellectuals, civil society, war of position and war of movement, historical bloc. Among the issues that Gramsci was interested in as above, ideology was an area that he devoted much time and energy to discussing. From that, it can be seen that the focus of Gramsci's political thought revolved around the argument that social control is carried out through ideology created by the ruling class. Thanks to that, the ruling class not only controls the people by force, but can also control them ideologically. And he called this complex process "hegemony" which is carried out through "the war of position" with the support of the "organic intellectual" class at all levels of the "historical bloc" and the terrain of "civil society" or simply put, it is a means of class domination through convincing people that the ideas of the ruling class are just common sense and natural. Gramsci argued that the ruling class faces constant challenges in capitalist societies due to the economic system itself and the superstructure of society. With Gramsci's concept of "ideology", we can understand the true nature of the capitalist crisis and the strategy of proletarian revolution as well as the conditions that the proletariat needs to overcome to win the trust and support of other social classes in the context of advanced capitalism. The concept of ideology, Gramsci contributed to creating a new approach to Marxist ideological theory, helping the theoretical foundations of Marxism to be more consistent and more suitable to the reality of contemporary capitalism.

## **Chapter 3**

### **BASIC CONTENTS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE IDEOLOGY PROBLEM IN THE THOUGHT OF ANTONIO GRAMSCI**

#### **3.1. BASIC CONTENTS IN THE THOUGHT OF ANTONIO GRAMSCI ON IDEOLOGY**

##### **3.1.1. Antonio Gramsci's concept of ideology**

Ideology for Gramsci is not simply a worldview or a means of coercion by the subject of power, but it is also a sophisticated way for the ruling class to gain consensus and acceptance from other classes. Ideology, according to him, here includes the values, norms and beliefs transmitted through social institutions such as family, religion, education, and media to establish and maintain the cultural hegemony of the ruling class: “Ideology is a specific “system of ideas”, or “a conception of the world”. (...) But ideology is not just a conception of the world or a system of ideas; it also involves the ability to inspire specific attitudes and provide certain directions for action. (...). Ideology is thus considered the unity of a worldview and its corresponding rules of conduct”.

From this, it can be seen that Gramsci's conception of ideology also includes an emphasis on the role of organic intellectuals - the factor responsible for the formation and dissemination of organic ideologies, which are social agents with a form of loyalty to a hegemonic class (in a "balanced" hegemonic system) or to a class aspiring to hegemony (in a hegemonic system in crisis) and the ultimate state power.

##### **3.1.2. Antonio Gramsci's conception of the role and function of ideology**

Gramsci considered ideology to be the core foundation of hegemony and a key factor in maintaining the power of the ruling class through social

consensus. Therefore, he emphasized the principled issue of a class moving towards hegemony is the need to build an ideological system that can act as a glue to unite and unify the social forces to maintain consensus and promote the development of good consciousness and organize revolutionary struggle. And more specifically, he considered the role and function of ideology in terms of superstructure to clarify the superiority of the ideological superstructure in relation to the economic structure and power, from which he affirmed a certain independence, which cannot be secondary to the influence of economic factors and power, mechanically and simply deciding on the change of ideology. Gramsci's ideas about the role and function of ideology are therefore specifically expressed through the following main points:

***3.1.2.1. Ideology has the role of “glue” to bind and unify social forces***

*a. Ideology has the role of organizing and helping people achieve their goals.*

*b. Ideology has the role of “glue”, must have its historical attachment, and must bind people to their historical circumstances.*

According to Gramsci, the ideology that performs the role of “glue” to bind and unify social forces is the ideologies that take the form of organic ideologies - that is, ideologies that provide ideological correspondence with the development of the current economic structure (Marxism is one of them) can be used to organize the masses and lead them to bring about a social revolution. These ideologies will have a positive meaning of a good ideology - having the role of social glue. But at the same time, he also emphasized that even good ideologies need agents to bring those ideas to the masses. It was this thought that led Gramsci to



acknowledge the role of intellectuals as agents of extremely important importance in the ideological struggle on the ideological level.

### ***3.1.2.2. Ideology as a function of cognition and ideological struggle***

According to Gramsci, the purpose or goal of ideological struggle can be understood in two ways. The first is to maintain the current unity for those who already hold power in an organization. The second is to destroy the current unity of a power system and establish a new unity.

Gramsci believes that for ideology to perform its cognitive and ideological struggle functions, it requires the important roles of organic intellectuals to be brought into play in using a “hegemonic bloc” or “ideological bloc” to prepare the awareness of the working masses and support the ruling class to overthrow the current ruling system while absorbing the organic intellectual class of the ruling class.

### ***3.1.2.3. Ideology has the role and function of an ideological superstructure and is relatively independent.***

“The development of power, the struggle for power and the struggle to protect power create superstructures that determine the formation of a “special material structure” for the diffusion of... all the elements in that superstructure”. Therefore, for Gramsci, the struggle at the level of the economic structure is not enough, the struggle must be fought at two levels, the infrastructure and the superstructure - that is, both the economic level, the class level, the state power and the ideological apparatus of the state power.

### **3.1.3. Antonio Gramsci's conception of the characteristics of ideology**

Gramsci describes ideology with complex characteristics that are expressed in their materiality, continuity and scientificity:

- Materiality of ideology
- Scientificity
- Continuity in ideology
- Stability and flexibility, self-adjustment of ideology
- Implicit imposition through civil society

### **3.1.4. Antonio Gramsci's conception of the relationship between ideology and some other categories and issues in political thought**

- a. The relationship between ideology and hegemony*
- b. The relationship between ideology and civil society*
- c. The relationship between ideology and historical bloc*
- d. The relationship between ideology and ideological struggle*
- e. The relationship between ideology and revolutionary struggle*

### **3.1.5. Antonio Gramsci's view on how to build and consolidate ideology**

- a. Building ideology through hegemony (ideological domination)*
- b. Civil society and the role of cultural institutions in building ideology*
- c. Developing organic intellectuals and their role in spreading ideology*
- d. Building oppositional ideology through the process of "positional war"*

## **3.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE IDEOLOGY ISSUE IN ANTONIO GRAMSCI'S POLITICAL THOUGHT**

In Antonio Gramsci's political ideology, ideology not only plays the role of a set of views, values and beliefs of a class in society, but also an important tool of power to maintain and protect the domination of the ruling class. Gramsci expanded and developed the concept of ideology further than the traditional Marxist view, seeing it as a central element in

explaining and implementing hegemony and power relations in society. Ideology in Gramsci's thought has a prominent place in both the theory of hegemony, civil society and historical blocs.

The issue of ideology is very important in Antonio Gramsci's thought and in sociological political theory because it is fundamental to understanding and explaining how a class or social group can maintain or gain power without relying entirely on violence or coercion. There are several main reasons why ideology is important to Gramsci:

**3.2.1. Ideology as a tool for building and maintaining hegemony**

**3.2.2. Ideology helps shape social perception and consensus**

**3.2.3. Ideology as a battleground for class struggles**

**3.2.4. Ideology as a basis for social change**

**3.2.5. Ideology as a tool for social change**

### **Summary of Chapter 3**

The ideological content of A.Gramsci is basically expressed in his research legacy through the main works Prison Notebooks; Selections from Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci and a few in Letters from Prison.

From practical observations and experiencing the extreme ups and downs in his life of activities, leading political and social movements, through objective criticism of the process of operating and consolidating the ideology of contemporary society; A.Gramsci has put forward concepts, pointed out new characteristics, relationships between and the importance of ideology in different fields, in shaping awareness, creating preparation of values and paths, ways to change and develop society; On that basis, he analyzed, argued and tested its roles and functions for different organizations and forces in specific political and

social life contexts. The main contents of A.Gramsci's political thought on ideology are built mainly on his arguments about the roles and functions of ideology with the aim of realizing the theory of hegemony that he built. Ideology, according to Gramsci, plays a "binding" role and performs cognitive functions and ideological struggles when they are used to create solidarity in political organizations and make people aware of social and class contradictions; however, according to him, ideology can also be used by the ruling class or the ruled class. The positive role and cognitive function of ideology for him does not lie in the ideology itself but in the class in which the ideology is used. Therefore, for Gramsci, if ideology has the function of making the masses aware of their situation, then this proves that ideology is clearly positive and desirable from the perspective of the new social revolution - which is clearly demonstrated in the social revolution in Russia at that time. However, if the ruling class creates or modifies its ideology (distorts) and attracts back the intellectuals of the ruled class and receives the support of the masses, then this ideology is negative and undesirable from the future of the next social revolution - for example, the authoritarian ideologies built and expanded to suit the political situation in Italy at the time of Gramsci.

A.Gramsci's political thought on ideology therefore contains many profound suggestions and has great value in solving problems of building and developing ideology in the political life of countries and for academic research trends.

## Chapter 4

### VALUES AND LIMITATIONS IN ANTONIO GRAMSCI'S THOUGHT ON IDEOLOGY

#### 4.1. VALUES IN ANTONIO GRAMSCI'S THOUGHT ON IDEOLOGY

##### 4.1.1. Values for socio-political studies and the development of Western Marxism

###### *4.1.1.1. Values for socio-political studies*

The values and quintessence of Gramsci's concept of ideology for socio-political studies come from his following contributions:

*a. Gramsci expanded the concept of ideology, clarified the role and importance of ideology in political life*

*b. Gramsci provided a multidimensional view of ideology*

*c. Gramsci made the relationship between ideology and other categories clearer and deeper*

###### *4.1.1.2. Value for the development of Western Marxism*

##### 4.1.2. Value for social movements

Gramsci's thought expanded the Marxist theory of ideology, especially in the cultural revolution. His conception did not stop at material struggle but also focused on cultural, educational and cognitive change. Researchers Christopher Harris; Mark McNally and John Schwarzmantel; Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe as well as Peter Thomas have pointed out that modern social movements, from environmental movements to human rights movements, often apply Gramsci's thought in building protest ideologies.

###### *4.1.2.1. Connecting with Modern Movements*

###### *4.1.2.2. Cultural Counter-movements*

###### *4.1.2.3. Transforming Ideology and Mass Consciousness*

## 4.2. SOME LIMITATIONS IN ANTONIO GRAMSCI'S THOUGHT ON IDEOLOGY

Like the thoughts of his predecessors or contemporaries, Gramsci's view on ideology also has controversial aspects and difficulties in application.

*a. Gramsci lacked a specific analysis of the role of economics and class struggle when arguing about the function and characteristics of ideology*

*b. Gramsci's concept of organic intellectuals in relation to ideology can create a separation between intellectuals and workers in ideological and political struggles*

*c. Gramsci's entire thought also does not take into account the influence of globalization factors, the development of communication technology and historical, cultural and belief factors on the consolidation or change of ideology*

*d. There are limitations in explaining the nature and characteristics of ideology*

*e. Difficulty in developing alternative institutions and lack of analysis of the role of state institutions in reinforcing ideology*

*f. Difficulty in applying to non-Western societies*

### Summary of Chapter 4

A. Gramsci's thoughts on ideology originate and develop in connection with the historical context and specific preconditions, therefore, we need to have objective and thorough assessments and comments.

His contributions to important aspects of ideological theory are reflected in opening up a new and valuable approach to the concept and characteristics of ideology, especially his fundamental views on the role,

function as well as the way to build and consolidate ideology as well as analyze the relationship between it and other areas of practical life to the spiritual life of society are clear and convincing.

Limitations of different conditions and knowledge levels of the times, A.Gramsci's thoughts also have limitations when he encountered difficulties in explaining the changes in the form and nature, characteristics of ideology before the change and determination of economic factors; or Gramsci could not fully calculate the effects of future social factors such as globalization, the development of communication technology... on the dissemination and consolidation of an ideology; or his ideas have aspects that are difficult to apply to non-Western societies.

Overcoming these limitations, Gramsci's basic views on ideology still bring important values to modern political and social research. These limitations not only point out challenges but also open up opportunities for adjustment and development of new theories. Reviewing and adjusting Gramsci's ideas on ideology can help create a deeper insight into the dynamics of power and ideology in contemporary society, which is also the basic content of this chapter.

## **CONCLUSION**

As a prominent Italian thinker and political activist, Antonio Gramsci is not only widely known but also praised for making the issue of ideology prominent and playing an important role in the fields of political, class, and cultural studies with a new approach in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Gramsci's works have attracted a great deal of special attention and have had a great influence on many schools and disciplines of contemporary social theory, one of which, perhaps the most notable, is the

writings written during his imprisonment and published posthumously as *Prison Notebooks*.

When studying ideology, Gramsci revolved around basic contents such as concepts, characteristics and focused most on the role, function as well as the relationship between ideology and other categories and issues in political life.

From the profound contents of his thoughts on ideology, it can be seen that, in the socio-economic context in Europe and Italy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the inheritance of objective critical reception of the theoretical premises of previous thinkers and his own practical and intellectual experience, Gramsci overcame passive, mechanical understandings and simplified views on the role and function of ideology, through which he clearly affirmed the importance of ideology, as it is but is often vaguely mentioned or forgotten. His views, therefore, are not only a tool for understanding the complex changes of capitalist society in Europe and the fascist regime in contemporary Italy, but also a theoretical source for research in politics, culture, sociology, etc.

As analyzed, Gramsci's most important intellectual contribution to Marxist theory in the field of ideology research is his argument for the social function of ideology and its relationship to politics and the economic system to become deeper and more extensive. Because, while Marx only briefly discussed these issues, Gramsci relied on Marx's theoretical foundation to recreate the important role of political strategy in challenging the dominant relations of society through ideology and at the same time exposed the role of the bourgeois state in regulating and maintaining the necessary conditions for capitalism to exist. Therefore, he focused on understanding how ideology and the ideological apparatus of the state can inhibit or promote revolutionary change, that is, he focused



on the political factors and the power of ideology and domination in addition to the combination with economic factors. Gramsci viewed the state as an instrument of domination that represents the interests of capital and the ruling class. He developed a theory of cultural hegemony that considered the role and function of ideology as central to hegemony. His aim was to explain how the state could exercise such domination and Gramsci argued that the state exercised domination largely because it relied on a dominant ideology expressed through social institutions to gain people's consent to the rule of the state. It was this belief in ideology that undermined critical thinking and thus acted as a barrier to social change and even revolution among the ruled class.

Gramsci considered social institutions and their organizations as one of the fundamental factors for the propagation, construction and consolidation of ideology in modern Western society and explained this in detail in his discussion of organic intellectuals, civil society. Although deeply influenced by Marxist ideas, Gramsci showed a tendency to support a more multifaceted revolution. He advocated the cultivation of revolutionary intellectuals from all walks of life and saw them as having a role in understanding and reflecting the worldview of many people - that is, as good agents in the consolidation of ideology. In contrast, Gramsci criticized the role of "traditional intellectuals" who reflected the worldview of the ruling class. Besides, he also advocated a war of position in which oppressed people would unite to break the hegemonic forces in the political and ideological fields, and at the same time overthrow the outdated system of power of the ruling class through a campaign war.

Therefore, within the framework of this thesis, the researcher tries to clarify some of the main contents in Antonio Gramsci's thoughts on ideology as follows:

Firstly, it provides an overview of the outstanding studies on Gramsci's life, career, works and contributions to the development of ideology in general in the political field. Notably, it has pointed out many important contents in the research works and in-depth analysis of Gramsci's main political thoughts, especially highlighting the context and premises leading to the birth of Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

Secondly, the results of the research on Gramsci's main thoughts on ideology have created the basis for the thesis to highlight Gramsci's novel approach to the issue of ideology compared to traditional and contemporary thinkers; the inheritance in Gramsci's thoughts on the issue of ideology from Marx's views; objectively and in detail describing the outstanding views of Gramsci's conception of ideology; on the role, function, and characteristics of ideology, along with his views on how to build and strengthen ideology; the relationship between ideology and the categories of hegemony, civil society, historical bloc; ... in his overall thoughts on ideology.

Third, on the basis of studying Gramsci's main views on ideology, the thesis also points out its values for socio-political studies and the development of Western Marxism. The thesis also assesses the limitations in Gramsci's thoughts on ideology.

With such valuable contributions, Gramsci's concepts on ideology need to be expanded and further applied. However, the application of these thoughts cannot avoid difficulties and barriers in terms of cultural and historical conditions, ... especially for non-Western countries. From this research, the author of the thesis hopes that the thesis will make a small contribution to providing arguments, scientific basis, and suggestions for Vietnam in developing, consolidating, and spreading the Party's ideology in social life.

## **LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS OF THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE THESIS**

1. Le Thi Hang (2021), “Several basic opinions of Antonio Gramsci on ideology” (English version), Research and Exchange section, Science Journal - Hanoi Open University, (80), pp.43-46.
2. Le Thi Hang (2024), “Manifestations of the threat to the fundamental ideology of the Communist Party of Vietnam in the new context”, Journal of Political Theory and Communication, Special Issue No. 2, pp.20-24.
3. Le Thi Hang (2024), *V.I.Lenin's viewpoint on the pioneering role of political theory of the Communist Party, the press in the ideological struggle and its application in protecting the ideological foundation of the Party today*, at the page, <https://lyluanchinhtri.vn/quan-diem-cua-v-i-lenin-ve-vai-tro-tien-phong-ly-luan-chinh-tri-cua-dang-cong-san-phuong-tien-bao-chi-trong-dau-tranh-tu-tuong-va-van-dung-trong-bao-ve-nen-tang-tu-tuong-cua-dang-hien-nay-6469.html>.
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