INTRODUCTION

The present thesis is an in-depth analysis of the history of philosophy and its relation to culture and vice versa. In the context of post-modern developments culture has become the centre of attraction unlike the earlier periods in written history. When we consider the situation, a new approach towards philosophy and culture seem to be relevant. Essentially this is a new approach in philosophical discourse, shifting from traditional understanding of philosophical enquiry. The attempt is to prepare a cognitive mapping with regard to the relation between philosophy and culture. Simultaneously the ideological influence of postmodernism in culture, society and socio-political life gets revealed as part of the endeavour. In this thesis, the concept of postmodernism is being used as a philosophical tool to analyze and criticize the mainstream understanding of culture. The approach towards culture and ideology in the postmodern context is important to map the relevance and scope of philosophy in the world of globalization. Most of the philosophers whose contribution seems to be relevant from ancient to postmodern have been analyzed in this study.

This thesis is a critical and analytical exploration of the postmodern concept of culture and ideology, their interdependence and mutual determinations. The concept of philosophy deals with three major concepts,
namely truth, justice and beauty. From time immemorial the debates in the broad field of philosophy have been around the three issues, truth, beauty and justice. The formation of Social life is always within the influential atmosphere of philosophical investigations and understandings. Different philosophers have contributed in the area of the intellectual growth and philosophical emancipation. The world outlook and novel innovation in the field of philosophy and knowledge have been helping to reconstruct the social condition and life-worlds of human beings. The writings of philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle show the ancient way of putting forth philosophical arguments in order to arrive at a better understanding of both nature and culture. They raised and persuaded the people to question the prevalent view of man about the society and the world. Socrates inaugurated the philosophical intervention in culture which perturbed the state leading to the extermination of his own life. Throughout the history philosophers and philosophy have been sowing the seed of dissent, criticism and new concepts enriching the cultural life of society.

Philosophy as a genre requires analysis since it has paved way for change unlike the accepted belief. Whatever is written and discussed as philosophy paved way for analyzing our own belief system and approaches. Descartes brought forth the modern epistemological approach while Bacon put forth new organ for empirical analysis. As Herbert Spencer mentioned philosophy begins from where science ends. The epistemological and
ontological enquiries really yield far reaching consequences in human understanding. The traditional way of seeing philosophy as love of wisdom remains relevant since the human quest for knowledge determines the growth of philosophy. Kant has brought forth a Copernican revolution and its impact in culture is irrefutable. It is taken for granted that Newton and Einstein changed the approaches in science. Similarly Descartes and Kant have changed the cultural sphere of human life. However the effect of philosophy in culture is seldom recognized.

The term culture is usually used in a loose and vague sense. Man began his/her social life when he/she started cultivation and settled life. In this way culture has its origin from agriculture. Social life required communication and related sign system. Similarly social coherence required certain way of behaviour. In this way man created language, dwelling places, dress, family, totems, taboos, etc. There are numerous cultural variation and distinction in the existing world by its living condition. However the cultures are not static. The cultural sphere changes in each society depending on the social production. In the same way the thought or philosophy also changes human ways of life. Invention of printing enabled man to read and write widely. Likewise the thoughts of Rousseau changed the attitude of man. Social perspectives develop from philosophy. Marx, Foucault and Derrida have produced new way of seeing things.
The new era in production created a new socio-political culture. Jameson called it as ‘cultural logic of late capitalism’. As part of this, there evolved philosophies of Lyotard, Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze. Their thoughts became new philosophical movement and tool to analyze the text, society and all other things. It became the key to analyze the contemporary concept of culture and its ideological interdependence. The philosophy of postmodern period not only becomes a tool to understand cultures but also itself.

**Problem Analysis/Literature Review**

All available texts related to philosophical investigation of culture have been analyzed.

**Objectives**

a) To analyze the emergence and development of philosophical ideas such as truth’ justice and beauty and the rise of renaissance thought and the influence of philosophy.

b) Problematising the interdependence of culture and philosophy and the changes in philosophical understandings.

c) Examines social and historical aspects of ideology and hegemony.

d) Explore the mutual determinations and interconnections between culture and ideology.
e) Analysis of the postmodern turn in philosophy.

f) Enquire the dialectical relation between Culture and philosophy in the postmodern context.

Area/Scope of the Study

This thesis examines the areas of ancient, modern and contemporary western philosophical thought, and the Indian Philosophical systems. This study focuses upon the philosophical concepts; such as truth, justice and beauty and identifies them as the base of this intellectual tradition. The broad area of ‘culture’, its growth, development, different field of enquiry are coming into the study. ‘Ideology’ is analyzed as a philosophical movement and various thinkers in this area are identified using postmodernism as a tool to examine and explaining the recent philosophical shifts from the traditional understandings.

Methodology and Methods

The Thesis is a textual analysis of the philosophy, culture, ideology and deconstructive turn in thinking. The important characteristic of the methodology employed in this study is analytical and critical. Descriptive method also is used wherever essential according to the necessity of the argument of the study. Specifications and explanations are given to support the arguments specified below. So, textual, critical and descriptive methods are adopted in this study.
This thesis consists of five chapters and an introduction and conclusion. The First Chapter “PHILOSOPHY: AN ENQUIRY AND INTERVENTION IN HISTORY” deals with the emergence of the analytical and critical thinking both in western and Indian philosophy. In the history of human thought the thinker who was considered as philosopher had to exhibit freedom to interpret the nature and culture without fear and prejudice. The enthusiastic intellectuals enquired about the essential problems of existence and sought to find out the answers for the human race at various stages of civilization. Such initiations helped men to understand their own and other times. It spread light on ethical, religious, political, legal and economic conceptions of the past and present by enlightening the fundamental principles on which they are based. Philosophy is not only significant to question of ‘how we should conduct our lives’ but also ‘why human beings are thinking creatures’ and they have the capacity to revisit the knowledge, for which pure understanding is an end in itself.

Philosophy, as Aristotle said more than two thousand years ago, began with wonder at the marvels and mysteries of the world. It begins in wonder, in the pursuit of truth and wisdom, and ends in life lived in passionate moral and intellectual integrity. The fundamental questions of philosophy from antiquity onwards focused on truth, beauty and justice.
Almost all the question under the sun belongs to these three fundamental principles. This chapter tries to explore and problematise these three principles.

The Second Chapter “CULTURE – A HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL PHENOMENON” covers broad area of culture and civilization and it development and progress both in historical and social condition. Culture is historically created system of explicit and implicit design for living, which tends to be shared by all or especially designated members of a group at a specific point in time. Or it has been described as the prescribed set of expectation as man’s adjective mechanisms to life conditions. Culture defines the reality, influencing one’s perception of the world and explaining the supernatural. Each culture has their values and norms, standards of behaviour; some societal norms are enforced equally upon all individual. Culture stress the behaviour channelling nature of culture, as transmitted and created content and patterns of value, ideas and others symbolic-meaningful system as factors in the shaping of human behaviour and the ratified produce through behaviour. Culture provides a means of social control. Not all cultures have complicated legal machinery, but all impose sanctions against those who defy their most sacred customs. Sometimes these sanctions are merely ridicule and ostracism but these can be powerful force to control in small, self-contained groups.
The Third Chapter “IDEOLOGICAL IMPLICATION IN CULTURE” deals with the ‘ideology’ as a philosophical speculation and crucial area of discussion. Ideologies map the political and social worlds. Nothing is done without ideology because individuals cannot act without making sense of the world he inhabits. Making sense let it to be said, does not always mean making well or right sense. But ideologies will often contain a lot of common sense. General definitions about ideology examine here and step in to different concepts and approaches towards ideology are discussed in the third chapter. In the Marxist concept of ideology the views of Marx and Engels about ideology are included. They maintained that ‘in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-downs as in a camera obscure’. By using the metaphor they projected that ideology was an inverted mirror-image of the material world. The fact is that the material world itself subject to dehumanizing social relations with the contradictions. The illusory world created by the ideology itself making them appear as necessary, normal and congruous. In Marxist theory of ideology, they depend on the important difference between true consciousness and distorted or false beliefs. As the superstructure the inverted consciousness also became a metaphor which produced tremendous involvement of thinkers.

Karl Mannheim was to extent from the Marxist approach, in his views; ideology was a reflection of all historical and social environments.

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Marx identified the social conditions under capitalism as the source of ideological illusion, while Mannheim realized that it was a feature of any social environment to influence the thought processes of human beings and, moreover, that knowledge was ‘a co-operative process of group life’. In those acute senses, ideology was not a passing fantasy. Antonio Gramsci further modified the Marxist understanding of the term ‘ideology’ active within a broadly Marxist tradition. He defined the concept of ideology through his concept of hegemony. In his opinion the ideological hegemony could be exercised by a dominant class, the bourgeoisie, not only through using state force but through various cultural means and actions. Later Louis Althusser developed a critical theory of ideology acknowledging that ideology was a ‘new reality’ rather than the obscuring of reality. He linked the ideological superstructure to the top story of a three-storied house. It was superimposed on the economic and productive base - the ground floor - and on the middle floor, the political and legal institutions. These were also part of the superstructure, but one that intervened directly in the base. Although the upper floor was held up by the base, they exercised ‘relative autonomy’. These are major arguments in this chapter.

The Fourth Chapter “THE POSTMODERN TURN IN PHILOSOPHY” explores discussions and taking stand against the conventional way or understanding of philosophy and also new areas and debates in contemporary philosophy. Postmodernism pursues to define a
new socio-cultural formation and economic dispensation that, according to a number of theorists, has the capacity to redefine modernity, at least in the western world. Postmodernism represents efforts to integrate a number of diverse; in them ambiguous themes. Irrespective of the particular usage of the terms, postmodernism is often understood as something that not just comes after the ‘modern’, but is based on a negation of the ‘modern’, a perceived abandonment, a break with or shift away from what characterizes the modern. Occasionally the postmodernism seemed as a dimension within modernism. There are authors who describe postmodernism in terms of changes in the realm of economy. Postmodern debates begin with Lyotard and his famous book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* published in 1979. With his new theory of ‘Deconstruction’ Derrida influenced the intellectual tradition and introduced a way of a looking text. Foucault’s concept about history, Jameson with his logic of late capitalism and Deleuze’s psycho analytic study of capitalism have put the new way in to its heights. At this time postmodernism and its cognates have a slew of meanings. Postmodernism is relatively a new development, which has its roots in the social and cultural changes of the present world. Different opinions and discussions and critical analysis of postmodernism is included in this chapter.

The Fifth and final Chapter “CULTURE AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE CONTEXT OF POSTMODERNISM” discusses the new approach
both in philosophy and culture in the present context. Postmodernism proposes a free attitude, breaking down disciplinary boundaries, challenging conventional wisdom and giving voice to viewpoints and perspectives hitherto silenced. It is also the stage of industrialization, liberation and the expansion of capitalism and the market development and corresponding social and cultural changes. So the understanding of culture and philosophy is necessary to connect and make clear the doubts and debates in the new context. Technological development, mass production and mass distribution, decrease human values and ethics, emergence of new understanding about beauty and aesthetic sense, societal and political formation of ideology and the philosophical understanding of this context are problematising here.

The last part of this study is included with concluding remarks followed by a Selected Bibliography.