

THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES:
MAX WEBER AND THE MARXIST RESPONSE

by

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of Political Science.

It is my purpose in writing this thesis to explore the writings, especially the methodological works, of Max Weber. My intention is not only to reconstruct some of the central concerns of Weber's sociology, epistemology, and methodology, but also to shed light on the status and character of certain aspects of social theorizing and of the self-understanding and self-comprehension of theorists. I will, in particular, be concerned with the presence in Weber's work, of certain claimed dualisms--the often-perceived cleavages between fact and value, description and evaluation, subject and object, science and criticism, and the claimed separation of theory and practice that follows in their wake. It is my hope, finally, to examine and explore some of the writings of those who have consistently refused to accept that these dualisms are valid. In this context we discuss some of the works of George Lukacs, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse. These issues are claimed to be of significance to social science, theory, and social scientific practice. It is, furthermore, contended that they are by no means only "abstract philosophical" questions of limited academic import. They also have immanent implications and consequences for the practice of political and social life.

The thesis is divided into two parts. In the first, I attempt to explore the relation between Weber's sociology, epistemology, and methodology. It is a discussion which I hope highlights a number of tensions in his thought which find inadequate attention and little chance of resolution within the terms of reference that are set. In the second part, some of the works of Lukacs, Horkheimer, and Marcuse are examined and discussed. It is in their work, it is argued, that many of the weaknesses of Weber's epistemology and methodology are overcome. However, we also find in this overcoming a further series of questions and issues which have yet to receive the attention they require.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 4

INTRODUCTION 5

PART I. MAX WEBER

I. THE EMPIRICAL BASIS OF WEBER'S
EPISTEMOLOGICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS 13

II. SCIENCE IN THE LIGHT OF DISENCHANTMENT:
THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE; WEBER'S
DOCTRINE OF VALUE-FREEDOM, "OBJEC-
TIVITY," AND THE ROLE OF METHOD. . . . 27

III. WEBER'S CONCEPTION OF CAUSALITY
AND METHOD 89

PART II. THE MARXIST RESPONSE

IV. ON THE UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE:
THE REFORMULATION OF THE NOTION OF
THEORETICAL TRUTH IN LUKACS,
HORKHEIMER, AND MARCUSE 158

V.	THE THEORY OF LABOR AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE	195
	CONCLUDING REMARKS	234
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	239

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It is all too customary at the beginning of any piece of work--book, thesis, or otherwise--for a long and lengthy acknowledgment of all those who have helped to create and make possible the project that proceeds it. Often such acknowledgments make endless fine distinctions between those to whom the author is "endlessly," or "enormously," or "very greatly," or "greatly," or "less than greatly" indebted. In the case of this work, my degree of debt is so high to all those that have, in one way or another, affected me and it, that such distinctions cannot be made. My thanks to Hayward Alker, Dovianna Barrens, Paul Breines, Margaret Cerullo, Josh Cohen, Jeff and Lena Coulter, the Helds, Jeff Herf, Russel Jacoby, Tom Kelley, Dave Knights, Joel Kreiger, Tom McCarthy, Lorenzo Morris, and Joseph Prabhu.

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The content, I alone, obviously, am responsible for.

INTRODUCTION

It is my purpose in writing this thesis to explore the writings, especially the methodological works, of Max Weber.¹ My intention is not only to reconstruct some of the central concerns of Weber's sociology, epistemology, and methodology, but also to shed light on the status and character of certain aspects of social theorizing and of the self-understanding and self-comprehension of theorists. I will, in particular, be concerned with the presence in Weber's work, of certain claimed dualisms: the often perceived cleavages between fact and value, description and evaluation, subject and object, science and criticism, and the claimed separation of theory and practice that follows in their wake. It is my hope, finally, to examine and explore some of the writings of those who have consistently refused to accept that these dualisms are valid. In this context we discuss some of the works of Georg Lukacs, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse. These issues are claimed to be of significance to social science, theory, and social scientific practice. It is, furthermore, contended that they are by no means only "abstract philosophical" questions of limited academic import. They also have immanent implications and consequences for the practice of political and social life.

The recent concern in Anglo-American social science with

the state and status of theory and with epistemological questions has certain parallels with the beginnings of a Methodenstreit, that engulfed many German thinkers at the turn of the century² and which appears equally alive and intensive on the Continent today. The debate cannot be simply understood as a scholastic, academic concern or as has been frequently charged by some members of the Left (concerned with radical "intellectuals'" involvement in theory only, etc.) to be for those who suffer the singular inability to generate a practical imperative which, in turn, is argued to reflect the dominant class's and institution's capacity for incorporation.³ Nor should the debate be seen, as has been charged by some of those who rest "comfortably" in certain philosophical camps, as Sir Karl Popper put it, reflecting on the Frankfurt School's contribution, "mumbo-jumbo . . . opium for the intellectuals."⁴ Rather, it is argued here, that the debate crucially reflects its historical and social setting and the continual struggle not only to define the qualitative nature and interrelation of truth and goodness, theory and practice, i. e., a sound conception of the "good life," but also the struggle for the actualization of that thought.

I am here less concerned with the issues as expressed and manifest in the most contemporary of debates, but rather more concerned with the classical works of Weber, Lukacs, and certain members of the Frankfurt School. I chose these works for the center of

this thesis partially because Weber's work has been and continues to be of central importance to the shaping of contemporary social science, and partially because in his work we find detailed and important statements that explicitly place the dualisms, we mentioned above, at the heart of sociology, epistemology, and methodology. The Marxists I have chosen to discuss take, of course, fundamentally opposing views to those of Weber. This opposition is frequently expressed explicitly. It is our contention that this latter group of writers provide more systematic and greater insight into the questions we explore, but by no means leave behind them theoretical clarity and a body of "validity claims" and "truths," etc. that can be simply assumed and accepted.

The necessity to inquire into the relation between theory and practice, within the Marxist tradition, also finds refreshed motivation in light of the "course of twentieth century history." For these decades have seen the degeneration of the Russian Revolution into Stalinism, the critique of political economy into Diamat with its ideological mystification and justification of centralized party politics, technocratic social management and worse. Likewise, the (to date) failure of revolution in the West; the absence of mass revolutionary class consciousness; and a Marxist theory which was and is frequently either a deterministic, objectivistic science

(consequentially legitimating the diremption of "revolutionary practice" from the formation of class consciousness),⁵ or a pessimistic cultural critique (which did less to integrate Marxist political economy and socio-cultural, psychological dimensions than replace the former with the latter),⁶ have all added to the urgency to re-examine the relationship between theory and practice. Above all, capitalist society has not remained in equilibrium. State intervention grows; the market is supported and replaced; attempts are made increasingly to "organize" capitalism; and instrumental reason and bureaucracy seemingly ever expand and depoliticize the "public sphere."

In light of these developments it might be noted that Weber's sociological insights seem all the more remarkable. In an extraordinary passage he wrote:

Joined to the dead machine, [bureaucratic organization] is at work to erect the shell of that future bondage to which one day men will perhaps be forced to submit in impotence, as once the fellahs in the ancient Egyptian state--if a purely, technically good, that is, rational bureaucratic administration and maintenance is the last and only value which is to decide on the manner in which their affairs are directed.⁷

Weber's works and interpretations of modern times are also as great a challenge today, to the Marxist tradition, as they ever were.

* * * * *

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We begin with an introduction to the nature of our concern with Weber's work.

NOTES

¹The works of most immediate concern are: (1) Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. and ed. E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch (New York: The Free Press, 1949) (which will be referred to below as M. S. S.); (2) Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. and ed. T. Parsons (New York: The Free Press, 1969) (which will be referred to below as T. S. E. O.); (3) Max Weber, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, trans. and ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972) (to be referred to below as From Max Weber); (4) Max Weber, Economy and Society, 3 vols., ed., revised, and partially trans. G. Roth and C. Wittich (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968).

²The Methodenstreit which engaged many German thinkers at the turn of the century is briefly discussed in chap. 3.

³See, for example, Göran Therborn, "Habermas: A New Eclectic," New Left Review 67 (May/June 1971).

⁴The remarks are from a British Broadcasting Corporation discussion on the Frankfurt School, transmission (27 January 1974), 17.35-18.25.

⁵This may take a variety of forms from the polar opposites of vanguard activism to quietism.

⁶For a developed example of this view and criticism, see P. Mattick, "The Limits of Integration," in The Critical Spirit: Essays in Honor of Herbert Marcuse, ed. K. Wolff and B. Moore (Boston: Beacon, 1968).

⁷Max Weber, Gesammelte Politische Schriften, p. 151, quoted in H. Marcuse, Negations, trans. J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon, 1969), p. 223.

PART I

MAX WEBER

CHAPTER I

THE EMPIRICAL BASIS OF WEBER'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS

Introduction

A full study and critique of Weber's work would have to explore the interrelation of his intellectual and political writings and the dependence of many of his ideas on the epoch in which he lived. Ideally such a study would embrace Satre's "progressive-regressive"¹ method to uncover the interconnections between Weber's work, life, family, class, and general historical context. Such a study would serve to highlight at length the relationship of epistemology and methodology to social life, the relationship between theory and practice. In this work we attempt to explore some of these interconnections.

We particularly hope to draw out the immanent connections between Weber's methodological writings and his general interpretation of the social tendencies of his times, and a particular set of values, rationality, and practice that underpins his theory. We would also like to suggest the relationships of that which his work subsumes to the social life of an epoch and practice of a particular

class. The latter task is, unfortunately, mainly left to suggestion. It is here a secondary task. To fulfill it, would require a massive study that obviously cannot be carried through within the boundaries of this thesis. In one of the best studies of Weber's life in Germany at the turn of the century, R. Mitzman has attempted to do this. In The Iron Cage, Mitzman persuasively argues that:

- a. . . . generational conflict, aggravated both by the special tensions of his family and the suffocating character of bourgeois society in Imperial Germany did, indeed, underlie Weber's scholarly and political perceptions;
- b. that his formulation of liberal-imperialist ideology reflects a stage both in his personal evolution and in the psycho-social development of the German bourgeois; and
- c. that the "heroic pessimism" of the late Weber was in large measure a result of his shattering conflict with his father . . . which . . . reveals in contours the underlying conflict . . . in fin de siècle Germany and that a similar hopelessness as to any conceivable alteration of the merciless course of rationalization and bureaucratization [was] the source of a great deal of the estrangement and voluntarist irrationalism of the age.²

However, Mitzman's work has certain fundamental weaknesses, the most important of which is his option for the methodology of Psycho-History.³

In this study we hope to take up a number of the issues suggested by our second task. But we will only have time to note a few critical points and establish a direction for further investigation.

We begin this study with an exploration of the empirical basis of Weber's epistemological presuppositions.

It will be seen that we cannot separate an interpretation of Weber's methodology from his general interpretation of the social tendencies in development during his life and times.⁴ As Löwith has emphasized, Weber's methodological standpoint can only be comprehended adequately in close analysis and appreciation of his other works, and more particularly, his general interpretation of the rise of modern capitalism.⁵ In fact, the perceived hopelessness of the course of rationalization, with its resulting "disenchantment," may be conceived, as J. Cohen has argued, to be "the foundation for his epistemological presuppositions."⁶ It is worth, for a moment, exploring the concept of rationalization.

In Economy and Society Weber attempts to recount the history of rationalization in the formal theory of rationality and domination, the two central themes. Through them the concept of industrial capitalism becomes concretized. Economy and Society is in large part a major effort to determine the connections between rationality, domination, and capitalism. Marcuse has summarized the connection in its most general form:

. . . the specifically Western idea of reason realizes itself in a system of material and intellectual culture (economy, technology, "conduct of life," science, art) that develops to the full in industrial capitalism,

and this system tends toward a specific type of domination which becomes the fate of the contemporary period: total bureaucracy.⁷

The essential concept is Western Rationality.

In The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber sets out to discuss and account for the emergent instrumentalism (the Spirit) of capitalism and examine the part which religious ideas of ascetic Protestantism played in accounting for an ethos, he believed, to be peculiar to the West. Weber points to the existence of capitalist economic and commercial organizations before the Reformation in order to refute any theory that attempted to hold that the political-economic institutions of capitalism "were a result of the Reformation." He dismisses such a view as a "foolish and doctrinaire thesis."⁸ He argues instead that he regards "the influence of economic development on the fate of religious ideas to be very important"⁹ and declares that any further study of The Protestant Ethic would demonstrate "how Protestant asceticism was in turn influenced in its development and character by the totality of social conditions, especially economic."¹⁰ The thesis has to be seen in context of his other works.

Weber discusses a number of areas of social and economic life in which elements of rationalization had advanced prior to the outgrowth of modern capitalism. These early developments (e. g., the

emergence and formation of "rational jurisprudence" in Roman Law) are seen as having created an increasing capacity for, and having a facilitating role in, the rise of capitalism. "The importance of Calvinism and other branches of ascetic Protestantism, as Weber makes clear in The Protestant Ethic," is, as A. Giddens has pointed out, "not that it was a 'cause' of the rise of modern capitalism, but that it provided an irrational impetus to the disciplined pursuit of monetary gain in a specified 'calling--and thereby' laid the way open to the further spread of distractive types of rationalization of activity stimulated by the vicarious expansion of capitalism."^{11, 12} The ascetic religious ethic sanctioned hard work, resignation to one's "lot in life"; the division of labor, etc.; integral components of liberal and organized capitalism. What were the elements of rationalization?

The term is a complex one and is used to refer to a number of sets of related phenomena. (1) There is a growth in mathematization, as Marcuse pointed out, of "experience and knowledge"; the shaping of all scientific practice according to the model of the natural sciences and the extension of (scientific) rationality to "the conduct of life itself." This in turn must be seen as part of a specific feature of the secularization of the modern world which Weber often terms the intellectualization (i. e., demystification and demagification) and/or as the disenchantment of the world. (The respective

characterizations reflect Weber's ambivalence to the program of the Western, modern "spirit.") (2) There is "the growth of rationality in the sense of 'the methodological attainment of attainment of a definitely given and practical end by the use of an increasingly precise calculation of adequate means'."¹³ The expansion of capitalism presides over the final transformation of social relationship to the form which approximates to the ideal-type of Zweck-rationalität, in which a person rationally calculates the consequences that follow from the choice (from a range) of means to accomplish a given end.¹⁴ (3) There is "the growth of rationality in the sense of the formation of 'ethics that are systematically and unambiguously oriented to fixed goals'."¹⁵

The rationalization of mythical, religious, or metaphysical interpretations of reality takes numerous different forms. Weber shows in his studies of China and India that the rationalization of ancient and medieval world views may follow one or a combination of the three elements above and may extend to a varying degree through modes of social relationships and the orientation of social conduct; modes of legitimacy, domination, and authority; classes and status groups and the respective institutionalized universes of symbolic meaning. Weber, furthermore, sought to demonstrate that each of these three aspects of rationalization was promoted

much further by capitalism. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss and trace the history of rationalization in all these forms.¹⁶ It is, however, an important task of this work to show how this complex concept provides an empirical basis and justification for his epistemological presuppositions. But before we can discuss this relationship and indeed explicate what these epistemological presuppositions are, a number of additional points need to be noted.

In Parsons' highly influential discussion of Weber the suggestion is made that the process of rationalization can best be described as a law and, in fact, Parsons goes on to compare the process with the second Law of Thermodynamics.¹⁷ The process is not best understood in this light. For Weber, rationalization, as the extension of formal rationality, is not a unilinear law of all-embracing proportion. Rather, the extension of formal rationality is seen to be dependent on the outcome of conflicts with substantive rationality (which "cannot be measured in terms of formal calculation alone, but also involves a relation to the absolute values or to the content of the particular ends to which it is oriented. . . . In principle, there is an indefinite number of possible standards of value which are 'rational' in this sense").¹⁸ Often an advance of formal rationality is itself an unintended consequence of action oriented to substantive values. The extension of formal rationality results also, it is argued,

in the generation of unintended irrationalities of a formal and substantive kind. "In short," as J. Cohen puts it, "the process of rationalization can be seen as a dynamic between formal and substantive rationality."¹⁹

Formal rationality is the organization and orientation of action to formal laws, rules, and norms; it was the expression of contemporary reason, both the result and impetus to an impersonal, bureaucratic order, an order of precise calculation, of objective scientific rationality. But with the increasingly impartial, "fair," and modern world we continually risk the "dialectic of the enlightenment."²⁰ The extension of formal rationality to "the conduct of life" becomes a concern for Weber also as a "form of domination"; means becoming ends, social rules becoming reified objectifications commanding directions, the market becoming a key mechanism in the orientation of conduct and planning. Rationalization expressed as formal rationality spins off its own dynamic and depersonalizes both history and social structure. The very products of human activity are seen as having a strong tendency to be apprehended "as if they were something other than human products--such as facts of nature, results of cosmic law . . ."²¹ Impersonal forces threaten the role of subjectivity. "It is precisely here," J. Cohen has suggested, "that substantive rationality or action oriented to the

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particular, qualitative needs of man as the ultimate value, intervenes and presents tensions and limits to the process of rationalization."²² In Cohen's view, "as formal rationality advances, it evokes counterforces all along the way."²³ This, indeed, seems to a large extent to be Weber's position. But there is an important point that has not yet been made that should be stressed. Weber was increasingly pessimistic and doubtful that action oriented to substantive issues could limit the process of formal rationalization in the modern era.²⁴ If such substantively oriented action was absent or of insufficient strength to provide such a limit, Weber thought this should not be the case and a limit to formal rationality rigorously defended (as the theme of Politics as a Vocation suggests).²⁵ How he sought to protect a realm of values we take up later.

Weber's ambivalence to this process and the historical extension of formal rationality has already been mentioned briefly. It is crucial, nonetheless, according to him, to realize that the resultant "disenchantment" acts as a critique of traditional world views (e. g., Christianity). This means:

. . . principally [that] there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play, but rather that one can, in principle, master all things by calculation. This means that the world is disenchanted. One need no longer have recourse to magical means in order to master or implore the spirits, as did the savage for whom such mysterious powers existed. Technical

means and calculations perform the service.
 This is ^{above} all what intellectualization
 means.²⁶

The basis for the attribution of ultimate meaning and value-universalism by world views is undermined. In the modern, rational, disenchanted world there is no simple reconciliation for "ultimately possible attitudes towards life . . . their 'struggle' can never be brought to a final conclusion."²⁷

The rationale of action under capitalism, given the pervasiveness of Zweckrationalität, can only be based on value-judgments and preferences, on individually chosen values, based in turn on an "ethic of responsibility." The only account that we can give of our ultimate values is through a description of the processes whereby we choose them; the only justification of our values lies in the coherence and clarity of our choice. The coherence of our substantive rationality, our values and upheld goals was open, in Weber's view, to critical tests in discourse. An ethic of responsibility was based on the rational, scientific consideration and calculation of possible consequences and necessary means in the pursuit of an end, goal, or action.²⁸ But, the choice between values, in the last instance, was the unique prerogative of the individual. "It is the responsibility of each person to judge and decide." There is no ultimate justification, but the calculated choice of an individual to "which of the warring

gods we should serve."²⁹ The struggle to choose amongst gods is, ultimately, an irrational one.

Or speaking directly, the ultimately possible attitudes toward life are irreconcilable, and hence their struggle can never be brought to a final conclusion. Thus it is necessary to make a decisive choice."³⁰

Our decision is, in the last analysis, based on faith: "only on the assumption of belief in the validity of our values is the attempt to espouse value-judgements meaningful. However, to judge the validity of such values is a matter of faith."³¹ This is, as Weber put it, "the fate of an epoch which has eaten of the tree of knowledge. . . ." An account of ultimate meaning can no longer be grounded. There are no longer world-views which can have any ultimate basis to command intersubjective agreement.

Weber never "distanced" himself from this position. It is a position commensurate with the unfolding of Western Rationality. It is a position, as we shall see, that also subsumed and sanctioned this rationality and an individualistic, atomistic ontology.

NOTES

¹Cf. J. P. Satre, Search for a Method (New York: Vintage Books, 1967). We note a few details of this method in note 3 below.

²R. Mitzman, The Iron Cage (New York: Grosset and Dunlop, 1971), p. 12.

³Mitzman's work is ill balanced. For Satre, in Search for a Method, comprehension of any social phenomenon entails a double movement and consists in clarifying the more profound structures by means of the originality of the established fact in order to be able in turn to determine this originality by the fundamental structures. In understanding Madame Bovary, for example, Satre demands that an analysis both steps back through more and more abstract planes of signification, through an analysis of Flaubert's life, family, and class. The first movement seeks to locate the topic of study, the second to reconstruct and explain Flaubert's praxis--why in particular he chose to write Madame Bovary. Mitzman's work is particularly weak in its understanding of fundamental structures. Much of the relevant material lies undeveloped in the text but if recast within, for example, the framework above, its explicitly psycho-historical bias might usefully be corrected. For a theoretically balanced view of the use and insights psychotheory can provide in historical works, see W. Reich, Sexpol (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), pp. 59-74.

⁴For a useful restatement and elaboration of this theme, see A. Giddens, Politics and Sociology in the Thought of Max Weber (London: Macmillan, 1972).

⁵K. Löwith, "Max Weber und Karl Marx," Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Socialpolitik 67 (1932).

⁶J. Cohen, "Max Weber and the Dynamics of Domination," Telos (Winter 1972), p. 66.

⁷H. Marcuse, "Industrialization and Capitalism in Max Weber," in Negations, trans. J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 203.

⁸Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (London: Unwin University Books, 1971), p. 91.

⁹ Ibid., p. 277.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 183.

¹¹ Giddens, Politics and Sociology, p. 45.

¹² For an excellent discussion of Weber's views on the relationship between Protestantism and Capitalism, see J. Eldridge, Max Weber (London: Nelson, 1972), pp. 33-53.

¹³ Giddens, Politics and Sociology, p. 44, and quoting Weber, in From Max Weber, pp. 293-94 (amended translation).

¹⁴ We discuss the concept of Zweckrationalität, and the consequences of such rationality, in greater detail in the following chapter.

¹⁵ Giddens, Politics and Sociology, p. 44.

¹⁶ Eldridge, Max Weber, pp. 53-70.

¹⁷ T. Parsons, Structure of Action (New York: Free Press, 1937).

¹⁸ Weber, T.S.E.O., pp. 185-86.

¹⁹ Cohen, "Max Weber and the Dynamics of Domination," p. 66.

²⁰ See M. Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, Dialectics of the Enlightenment, trans. J. Cumming (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

²¹ P. Berger and T. Luckman, The Social Construction of Reality (New York: Doubleday, 1966), p. 106.

²² Cohen, "Max Weber and the Dynamics of Domination," p. 66.

²³ Ibid., p. 65.

²⁴ For a summary of his views, cf. A. Giddens, Capitalism and the Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim, and Max Weber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), chap. 12. Also note Weber's critique of socialism. See, for example, Weber, Economy and Society, vol. 1, pp. 85-88, 100-7, 110-11; 224-26, and "Politics as a Vocation, in Weber, From Max Weber, pp. 100, 121.

²⁵Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," From Max Weber, pp. 77-129.

²⁶Weber, "Science as a Vocation," From Max Weber, p. 139.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 152.

²⁸The status of Weber's reflections on ethics will be considered at length in the following chapter.

²⁹Weber, "Science as a Vocation," From Max Weber, pp. 152-53.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 152.

³¹Weber, "Objectivity in the Social Sciences," M. S. S., p. 55. I am indebted to L. Simon for pointing out this quotation to me.

CHAPTER II

SCIENCE IN THE LIGHT OF DISENCHANTMENT: THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE; WEBER'S DOCTRINE OF VALUE-FREEDOM, OBJECTIVITY, AND THE ROLE OF METHOD

The process of rationalization is then, an agent in the demystification of the social world. With and because of disenchantment, the undermining of the legitimatizing efficacy of cultural traditions, the central questions of men's collective existence and of individual life history no longer found or could find an all-embracing world-view with systematic answers, providing a coherent and cohesive social identity. "Now," and as a result, Weber argued, "as soon as we attempt to reflect about the way in which life confronts us in immediate concrete situations, it presents an infinite multiplicity of successively and coexisently emerging and disappearing events, both 'within' and 'outside' ourselves."¹ To those who have eaten of the tree of knowledge, reality no longer appears with the cohesion of one constituted by myth, religion, and metaphysical world-views, but as a totality "in bewegung"--a "heterogeneous flux."

For Weber, the consequences of disenchantment were, as we shall see, multifarious. Of these and of primary importance, was

that historical reality became conceived in identical terms to those which Kant had conceptualized natural reality. For Weber, history was, then, a cultural manifold of infinite richness; for Kant, natural reality was a sensuous manifold.² The "absolute infinitude" of this reality, this multiplicity, "is to remain undiminished," for Weber, "even when our attention is focused on a single 'object,' for instance, a concrete act of exchange, as soon as we seriously attempt an exhaustive description of all the individual components of this 'individual phenomenon' to say nothing of explaining it causally."³ Causal analysis evinces the same character; "an exhaustive causal investigation of any concrete phenomenon in its full reality is not only practically impossible--it is simply nonsense."⁴ How then can social science embrace reality?

Since reality is unknowable in its infinity, the "object" of investigation is delineated and constituted by the scientific investigator. For Weber, all knowledge is a result of constitution; all cognition and rationality are to be located on the side of the knower. The scientific investigator proceeds according to his or her own individual "values" and cognitive interests. The knowledge generated by scientific practice is in consequence seen to be partial and one-sided. But having said this, Weber, nevertheless, claims "objectivity" for the social sciences and scientific "truths"/"proofs" as value-

free. What is the nature of his argument? How can we conceptualize Weber's position?

The core of Weber's discussion of the nature of "objectivity" consists in the attempt to clarify the "logical relationships" between scientific and value judgments. The discussion revolves around their incompatibility and differences. For Weber, this most definitely does not imply an attitude of "moral indifference"; such an attitude "has no connections with scientific 'objectivity'."⁵ (The authority of science, in Weber's view, as we shall see, rests on an explicit commitment.) It does, however, imply a complex attitude that pivots on what he calls "value-orientations" and rational method (that guarantees the "objectivity" of scientific results). The underpinning assumptions of this view, and the view itself, need careful explication and analysis.

According to Weber, "The type of social science in which we are interested is an empirical science of concrete reality [Wirklichkeitswissenschaft]"⁶ and our aim is to:

- a. . . . understand the characteristic uniqueness of social reality, the relationships and the cultural significance of individual events [and phenomena; and
- b. . . . to understand the causes of these events] being historically so and not otherwise.⁷

Since social and cultural reality is infinite, the question arises: how can we know and conceptualize a part of this reality?

The number and type of causes which have influenced any given event are always infinite and there is nothing in the things themselves to set some of them apart as alone meriting attention. A chaos of "existential judgements" about countless individual events would be the only result of a serious attempt to analyze reality "without presuppositions." And even this result is only seemingly possible, since every single perception discloses on closer examination an infinite number of constituent perceptions which can never be exhaustively expressed in a judgement. Order is brought into this chaos only on the condition that in every case only a part of concrete reality is interesting and significant to us, because only it is related to the cultural values with which we approach reality. Only certain sides of the infinitely complex concrete phenomenon, namely those to which we attribute a general cultural significance--are therefore worthwhile knowing.^{8*} (Emphasis added in last sentence.)

*Weber's discussion of the "cultural significance" criterion for problem selection (cf. M.S.S., pp. 74-774) is ambiguous. Parsons argues that Weber insisted on the very great importance of the cultural significance of a problem for the values of the time in determining the directions of the interest of the investigator. M. Morgan, on the other hand, has pointed out that a careful reading of the texts reveals several inconsistencies in Weber's usage of the terms. It is unclear by whose estimation a problem is to be regarded as "culturally significant": the investigator's, or the society's being studied, or people's in different groups in a given society or which culture's "significance" is to be used (even given that all "cultures" take the phenomenon to be "significant" in some way or another)? Broadly, Weber's remarks on the interest of the investigator indicate the social scientists' sense of "significance" is central, and his remarks on Verstehen, which we discuss at length in the following chapter, indicate the subject's sense of "significance" is the most important.

Given the nature of reality we cannot, Weber argues, give an exhaustive description or causal explanation. Weber assumed that a true picture of concrete reality was impossible and that no individual or collective scientific enterprise could furnish an "absolutely 'objective',"⁹ or authentic "copy of reality." Saloman, reflecting on such statements, has correctly observed that for Weber "the utmost that can be accomplished by such sciences, either in the historical or the social disciplines, is, through reasoned thought, to bring order into the world of reality, which is in a state of ceaseless flux. The principles of classification by which this order is to be achieved, . . . must be imposed by the scientist himself."¹⁰

Weber's methodological standpoint consequentially hinges upon the establishment of certain dichotomies; between reality as infinite and science as finite; between subjectivity in science and objectivity in science; and between "rationality" and "irrationality."

The objective validity of all empirical knowledge rests exclusively upon the ordering of the given reality according to categories which are subjective in a specific sense, namely, in that they present the presuppositions of our knowledge and are based on the presupposition of the value of those truths which empirical knowledge alone is able to give us. . . . But these data can never become the foundation for the empirically impossible proof of the validity of the evaluative ideas. The belief which we all have in some form or other, in the meta-empirical validity of ultimate and final values, in which the meaning of our existence is rooted, is not incompatible with the incessant changefulness of the concrete viewpoints,

from which empirical reality gets its significance. Both these views are, on the contrary, in harmony with each other. Life with its irrational reality and its store of possible meanings is inexhaustible."¹¹

We need to ask more about how these dichotomies were established.

Central to any attempt to explore the polarities Weber established is an understanding of the distinction between value-judgments and value-orientations.* It is important to emphasize that Weber's notion of value-freedom was concerned explicitly with the relationship of science to value-judgments. As distinct from a value-orientation, a value-judgment is used to evaluate an object, to express preference, approval, or dislike, etc. Such judgments are not in any way part of science.

"By 'value-judgements' are to be understood, where nothing else is implied or expressly stated, practical evaluations of the unsatisfactory or satisfactory character of phenomena subject to our influence."¹² And, as Weber states: "The social sciences, which are strictly empirical sciences, are the least fitted to presume to save the individual the difficulty of making a choice, and they

*It should be noted that Weber rarely, if ever, made (detailed) arguments for the positions we are attempting to summarize in his name. Rather, for example, The Methodology of the Social Sciences reads like a series of position statements.

should not create the impression that they can do so."¹³ In fact, the position that he seeks to sustain in "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality'"¹⁴ and elsewhere, is that if scientific methodologies, theories, and validity claims neither embrace nor imply value-judgments, they are then value-free.

Weber's position on value-freedom, it can be argued,¹⁵ arose as a response to two factors. Firstly, he sought to protect science from "the present political situation." "Everyone knows . . . that . . . vital questions which are of decisive political significance are permanently banned from university discussion," and in view of that fact " . . . it seems to me to be only in accord with the dignity of a representative of science to be silent as well about such value-problems as he is allowed to treat."¹⁶ Secondly, he sought to protect "the realm of values" from the increasing encroachment of rationalization. Hence his views on the state,¹⁷ his critique of those that viewed the state as a value in itself¹⁸ and his famous stress on charismatic leadership and "politics as a vocation,"¹⁹ With such distinctions Weber attempted to establish an enclave for science and an enclave for value-judgments. Such an attempt reflects Weber's anxiety to provide a limit to the rationalization of everyday life and yet to preserve the benefits of "the fruit of the tree of knowledge."

The discussion of value-freedom, Weber makes clear, presupposes the crucial questions about the nature of "objectivity" itself.

When we distinguished in principle between "value-judgments: and "empirical knowledge," we presupposed the existence of an unconditionally valid type of knowledge in the social sciences, i. e., the analytical ordering of empirical social reality. This presupposition now becomes our problem in the sense that we must discuss the meaning of objectively "valid" truth in the social sciences. The genuineness of the problem is apparent to anyone who is aware of the conflict about methods, "fundamental concepts" and presuppositions, the incessant shift of "viewpoints," and the continuous redefinition of "concepts" and who sees that the theoretical and historical modes of analysis are still separated by an apparently unbridgeable gap."²⁰

Weber's famous claim that social scientific knowledge is constituted with reference to value has already been noted.²¹ At a preliminary level the influence of values or presuppositions ("value-orientations") is not only not denied but seen as the very principle that makes "objectivity" possible in the first place (and prevents "a chaos . . . of judgements"). As with the Heidelberg school of Neo-Kantians, the "theoretical relation to values," as Rickert puts it, "rather than interfering with the acquisition of objective knowledge, becomes the active subjective precondition which allows us to acquire objective historical knowledge. It allows us to detach from historical reality . . . (an infinite richness) . . . , a definite object."²²

This is a key part of Weber's position. If historical and social reality is best characterized as "nothing more" than an infinitely detailed manifold there can be (a) not only no objective analysis of it but also (b) no most profitable starting point from which we might best begin an examination and investigation of social phenomena.

There is no absolutely "objective analysis of culture . . . of social phenomena independent of special and "one-sided" viewpoints according to which--expressly or tacitly, consciously or unconsciously--they are selected, analyzed and organized for expository purposes.²³

As J. Cohen observed, "Rationalization and disenchantment result in the fragmentation of the knower into a one-sided specialist and in the fragmentation of knowledge into separate partial systems constituted according to one-sided viewpoints."²⁴

Thus the study of social phenomena presupposes value-orientations and the work of the social and/or historical investigator cannot be conceived independent of them. Indeed, the very naming of a phenomenal object as a cultural or socio-economic object or event, reveals the interplay of values which cannot be taken as a given. "The quality of an event as a 'socio-economic' event is not something which it possesses 'objectively'." It is rather conditioned by the orientation of our cognitive interest, as it arises from the

specific cultural significance which we attribute to the particular event in a given case."²⁵ The concept of culture is then, for example, a "value-concept."²⁶ Therefore, the facts we select for study depend also on "a small portion of existing concrete reality . . . coloured by our value-conditioned interest and it alone is significant to us."²⁷ Likewise, ". . . the extent or depth to which . . . the . . . investigation attempts to penetrate into the infinite causal web . . . is . . . determined by the evaluative ideas which dominate the investigator and his age."²⁸ For Weber, the explication of value-orientations serves to locate--individually, socially, and historically--the human sciences. It is a thesis that attempts to take seriously the relativity of the investigator's "pre-supposition"; the recognition that detachment of an "object" for investigation (from the "cultural manifold") speaks of the investigator, not of the object in-itself; the recognition that "the stream of immeasurable events" that "flows unendingly toward eternity"²⁹ freezes science in its youth;³⁰ the recognition that "every science, every single descriptive history, operates with the conceptual stock in trade of its time."³¹ For Weber, there was a potentially inexhaustible number of alternative ways to describe, analyze, and account for social reality. The result is an expectation and tolerance of a relativism in regard to theory (which is grounded in his

relativism in regard to value--the "result" of a rationalized and disenchanted world).

* * * * *

Weber's view of value-relativism, it should be noted, does not imply that "social phenomena" or "cultural objects" are appraised according to some schema of values. The history of art, he states, must be distinguished from an aesthetically evaluative approach.³² Rather, it can be argued, the thesis of value-relativism attempts to distinguish the appraisal of objects by value schema from their characterization³³ according to their "significance" or "meaning" within the structure of cultural values of the investigator himself.

This view is not without its tensions. For, firstly, "while reference to value makes possible objective knowledge of a cultural or historical object," as Goddard put it, Weber also wants to hold, as we have seen, that "knowledge is condemned to remain incomplete. The criterion of the real ultimately renders the real unknowable as to its intrinsic or true nature or structure, or its objective meaning."³⁴ Secondly, the implicit distinction between appraising and characterizing establishes a false dichotomy. Weber's attempt to

simply characterize an object implies or takes for granted a further schema of values that restricts social scientific practice, "by a meta-theoretical assertion," to the "production" of knowledge which "must have an exclusively descriptive [i. e., a nonevaluative, nonjudgmental--D. H.] content."³⁵ However, this assertion hides an evaluation, a commitment to a particular form of rationality and, as we shall see, a certain type of practice. These points need further careful explication.

Weber's position is clarified and better understood in light of the previous discussion of the empirical basis of Weber's epistemological presuppositions. With rationalization came "disenchantment" and the "intellectualization" of the world, the perception of the world as infinitely complex. This process Weber saw as undermining the possibility of attaining value-consensus in the constitution of the world and, consequently, destroying the foundation for a collectively attained subjectivity. The end result of this process, for the context of our discussion, was a multitude of competing value-claims, value-relativism, no value of which could have a privileged status. There was, in Weber's view, no ultimate justification for any value. As a result, which we previously noted, Weber sought to keep value-judgments outside the realm of science.

Weber's view of the human sciences rests "on an interpretation

of developments in the whole of society, on interpretations which," if it is to have validity, as Habermas has pointed out, "presupposes a more pretentious concept of sociology,"³⁶ i. e., a sociology that is able to grasp the totality of the social world, of the dominant trends in it and make fundamental claims about them.³⁷ Indeed, as we shall see, Weber's conception of social science is constituted by his conception of the essence of the modern era, his pessimism and resignation to what he considered the "fate of our time"--rationalization, etc. ("the inescapable condition of our historical situation").

Weber claims scientific practice to be free of the value-judgments of the social or historical scientist. But this claim hinges on a belief in the value of scientific truth and its having synonymy with "objectivity." A value-judgment is concealed: "The capitulation to, and acceptance of, the rationalized world as it appears. The method of formal rationality (use of nonevaluative concepts) is an expression of Weber's evaluation of the meaning of the rationalized, meaningless world, of his acceptance and resignation to this rationalization."³⁸ In arguing for scientific truth as objectivity, he presupposes the rationality of this society. The fate of the modern world is the unalterable foundation of "science." Several more points need to be made.

The rigid demarcation Weber draws between value-judgments and scientific practice has parallels to one of the central tenets of positivism: that facts and values are separable and that value-judgments have no cognitive basis. In the positivistically oriented social sciences, this presupposition has consequences not only on the epistemological level of self-misunderstanding of science, but more importantly on the level of social theory and social practice, e. g., social policy planning. To believe in the dichotomy of "objective" knowledge (facts) and values is in effect to attempt to divorce theory from practice. Despite Weber's concern with the interplay of value-orientations and, as we shall see, his views about the role of scientific practice, he, nevertheless, ultimately reestablishes this dichotomy as a fundamental tenet of his view of the sciences. Weber's position amounts, in effect, to separating theoretical reason from practical reason and restricting claims to objective, true knowledge to the sphere of the former. This dichotomy, as we emphasize later, supports a technocratic consciousness and leads into a decisionistic ethics;³⁹ ideological factors central to the organization of contemporary capitalism. (These factors are held to be ideological because their very claimed status is an inadequate conceptualization of the nature of their own status.)

Under the guise of a value-free science, Habermas has

attempted to demonstrate that positivist social science masks its true nature as a proponent of a quite specific form of rationality and practice.⁴⁰ This much, we contend, Weber has in common with positivism.⁴¹ There are strong parallels between our claims about Weber's own self-misunderstanding and miscomprehension of the status of his own claims, and those of the positivists. The details of Habermas' argument against positivism cannot be made here but the points of immediate relevance to our discussion of Weber should be drawn out.⁴²

In the name of his own view of science and rationality, Weber felt that he was able to launch a critique of ideology aimed at rooting out competing theories which are supposedly value-laden and, therefore, illegitimately claiming scientific status.⁴³ But, as we have just pointed out, this critique is laden with a schema of values, an evaluation which Weber overlooks. Although not recognized as such, an interest in technically useful knowledge (i. e. , knowledge which can aid decisions on substantive questions by providing, for example, knowledge of the choice and effectiveness of means, regularities, etc.)⁴⁴ and the rationality which embodies it, are values assumed by this (and the positivist) conception of science. They are not recognized as values because of a persuasive definition of (scientific) rationality which makes such rationality coincide with purposive,

rational, scientific procedures. Thus the rationality concept underlying Weberian science is that of a formal rationality, a means-ends rationality:

. . . simply, efficiency of means to given ends. These values are accorded a privileged status since they are implied in "rational" procedure itself . . . in the name of value-freedom--this criticism of ideologies dictates the value system for all realm [sic] of human life, viz., its own.⁴⁵

Theoretical objective knowledge is made coextensive with a particular form of method, rationality, and scientific practice. Questions of practical reason are ruled out of the range of science and beyond rational investigation (although, as we shall see, Weber's views of the role of science do specify that science can be critical of the coherence and "practicality" of ends). Not being open to rational solution, practical questions become the province of the private individual and, in the final instance, can be justified only by reference to a decision; ethics becomes decisionism and not open to cognitive mediation.

Thus the belief in the fact-value, theory-practice dichotomies leads to contradictory results. In the name of value-freedom (i. e., freedom from "value-judgments"), a certain schema of values is championed to the exclusion of all others. (On this conception, Weber's understanding of the role of values [value-orientations], is singularly inadequate. For his conception of the interplay of

science and value-orientations implies orientations with more extensive commitments.) Furthermore, in the name of a private, decisionistic ethics, a particular form of practice is sanctioned. Weber's seemingly passive contemplative scientific reason masks an underlying level of committed reason.

In the name of value-freedom, Weber smuggles in a value-laden concept of rationality and implicitly sanctions that which he most feared: the spread of formal rationality. Substantive rationality is suppressed in the "innocent partisanship for formal rationality."⁴⁶ The effect on social theory of this hidden value-orientation is a conceptualization of "science," "scientific problems," "social problems," and "alternative solutions" which encourage the spread of formal rationality. Substantive rationality, i. e., the rationality of ultimate ends, was held to be independent of science. But because of the fact-value dichotomy, substantive rationality could not itself be rationally justified and could not be used to ultimately ground value choices. Thus there was no way to rationally combat the spread of formal, means-end rationality as a value, i. e., the process of rationalization which enthroned science and the technical values of economy and efficiency as ultimate values. Weber saw no historical alternative to the "fate of our time" although he sought to protect an enclave for values and justify a limit to the process

of rationalization. But while not endorsing Zweckrationalität and its threat to monopolize reason, Weber, nevertheless, succumbed in the end to its logic--by grounding science in it. As Habermas wrote,

It is ironical, however, that, as we have seen, this recommendation of a restrictive concept of science rests on an interpretation of developments in the whole of society: . . . In his own work Max Weber did not keep within the limits set by positivism: he was, however, in agreement with the Neo-Kantians, positivistic enough not to allow himself to reflect upon the connection between his methodological perspective and rules, and the results of his social analysis."⁴⁷

These connections need further explication. Much more can and must be said. These themes will be further illustrated in our discussion of how Weber approached Causality and Method and what he himself thought science could tell us. These topics must be temporarily put aside, but will be taken up later. It is necessary, firstly, to explore in greater detail Weber's relationship to Kant and the neo-Kantians.

* * * * *

The theoretical positions Weber adopts overlap in many important respects with that of Kant and the neo-Kantians of his day. The elaboration of this theme provides further insight into his discussion of "objectivity" and the claim that there exists "an unconditionally valid type of knowledge in the social sciences, i. e., the analytical ordering of empirical social reality," the full nature of which we have yet to elaborate. The discussion serves further to highlight the tension between value-relativism and "objectivity" and the tension between Weber's methodological position and what we have hitherto referred to as his subsumed and more "pretentious concept of sociology."

In the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant argued that "nature" is scientifically known to the human consciousness through the operations of the Understanding. We cannot know "things-in-themselves" (the noumenal character of phenomena are inaccessible to the understanding). We can claim to know only what is mediated by the transcendental principles, rules, and representations of human consciousness (the phenomenal world).⁴⁸ n. b. It is precisely with this context in mind that D. Goddard has noted that:

Weber follows Kant fully here, since he argues that the "meaning" of history [i. e., Objective meaning, in the sense, for example, of history embodying an objective teleology--D.H.] is inaccessible and that the actual, empirical objectivity of phenomena is only possible through the synthetic operations of consciousness."⁴⁹

Goddard further argues that a formal analogy with Kant's critique of reason may be advanced. Firstly, it may be noted that

Kant . . . took as given that the perceptual world was atomistic in character. Perceptions are distinct and separate from each other. . . . The sensuous manifold presents itself as . . . a mosaic of impressions which . . . could only be unified through the spontaneous operation of the understanding. Sense data are given as subject to unification. Here is the first parallel with Weber.

For Weber reality is

. . . "an infinitude of details," "an infinite richness," "a finite segment of the meaningless infinity of the world process." It has no meaning or significance, nor any internal bond or connection, except that which is conferred on it by the operations of a meaning-endowing consciousness. In other words, the historical process also presents itself as a mosaic of confused events and actions, the total investigation of the detail of which must always lead to an infinite regress resulting in a "chaos of existential judgements." 50

Secondly, noting the influence of the neo-Kantians (and particularly Rickert), we saw that

. . . segments of that manifold only become cultural constellations or objects, having a certain unity of meaning, by reference to value or meaning, or, as it might be put, under the form of meaning. In the same way we find in Kant that temporality and spatiality are the conditions under which sense-data are received. Sense-data present themselves as stable objectivities (phenomena) under these forms alone. Nothing in the external world can be considered phenomenal, that is, be anything more than a vague and confused impression, unless it satisfies these conditions.

However, thirdly,

. . . phenomena remain distinct and separate unless connection is imposed on them by the pure understanding. They are subject to ratification. Thus a temporal sequence A-B-C-D may have no connection unless the temporal relationship is ratified under the law of causality, the principal category of the understanding in which Kant was interested.⁵¹

There is, of course, an extraordinary conjunction and complementarity between Weber's Kantianism and his sociological investigations. Whereas the theme of rationalization can be seen as the empirical basis (or concretization) of his epistemological presuppositions, it is clear that his epistemological presuppositions themselves were in part Kantian. But in discussing the category of causality (which was crucial for Weber), we will see that he develops the Kantian epistemological viewpoint as he both extends the category's significance for the human sciences and locates its role within a complex methodology.

For Weber, the particular concepts we develop cannot represent reality. The elaboration of concepts serves to "clarify a singular event or phenomenon, and facilitates the construction of a systematic or rational picture of a segment of culture in order to establish its internal meaning and to discover its adequate causation."⁵² Yet the concepts themselves accentuate already selected aspects of reality; for instance, an ideal-type "is formed by the one-sided

accentuation of one or more points of view . . . which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct (Gedankenbild)."⁵³ An ideal-type is constructed by the abstraction and combination of a number of elements which, although given in reality, are stressed and constituted from the point of view we are interested in.* As Goddard has correctly observed, "the ideal-type endows features of cultural experience, which otherwise would remain indistinct, with a clear and precise meaning."⁵⁴ The result is that the concepts generated permit us to make a precise analysis of it from the value-orientation we took toward it.

The question remains, however, what is the status of this analysis, given Weber's claim that it can be "objective," if our topic of investigation is constituted by value and if our concepts are both value and empirically relative?

The answer lies with Weber's emphasis on rational method. On this claim rests Weber's attempt to have separated "science from faith."

*Ideal-types are not formed purely through the gropings of conceptual thought. Rather, they are modified and sharpened through empirical analysis and in turn further aid the exactness of that analysis. (Cf. M. Weber, M.S.S., pp. 32-47 and 90-98.) The role of ideal-types will be discussed further in the next chapter.

In "Science as a Vocation" and "Objectivity in the Social Sciences," Weber states that all scientific work presupposes two things: (1) ". . . that the rules of logic and method are valid," i. e., a "rational method,"⁵⁵ and (2) that "what is yielded by scientific work is important in the sense that it is "worth being known."⁵⁶ The former presupposition is crucial for the claims to objectivity, for it is argued that "rational method" in the social sciences ". . . if it is to achieve its purpose . . ." must generate "systematically correct scientific proofs" that must be "acknowledged as correct even by a Chinese--or--more precisely stated--it must constantly strive to attain this goal, which perhaps may not be completely attainable due to faulty data. Furthermore, the successful logical analysis of the content of an ideal and ultimate axiom and the discovery of the consequences which arise from pursuing it, logically and practically, must also be valid for the Chinese."⁵⁷ That is to say, despite the interplay of values, rational method is claimed to be the basis on which truths/proofs are produced having cross-cultural inter-subjective validity.

This does not imply that validity claims generated by "rational methods" (or the "ideal" mentioned above) will be accepted or rejected across cultures. In the second presupposition, as Weber put it, "are contained all our problems";⁵⁸

. . . for this presupposition cannot be proved by scientific means. It can only be interpreted with reference to its ultimate meaning, which we must respect or accept according to our ultimate position towards life."⁵⁹

In fact, Weber states that our evaluation of the importance and status of science and/or scientific proofs is itself historical (a product of the "rationalization" of everyday life). What, then, does Weber mean by "valid proofs," etc. ? It appears that Weber might have two views on this issue.

It seems, firstly, that Weber wants to argue that "the Chinese" would accept the validity (despite supposedly distanced cultural norms) of rational methods (e. g., rules for logical inference, rational thought, i.e., an appropriate methodology), but might well reject the interpretive framework, the explanation, the explanation of a Western advanced, industrial, and scientific culture. "The Chinese" might prefer and argue instead for accounts and explanations of the (social) world underpinned by, for example, moral or religious standpoints. In other words, "the Chinese" might accept the validity claims generated by an established and intersubjectively recognized procedure but not necessarily the explanation. (We will call this "position one.")

But a question arises: why would the Chinese accept the methods of inquiry? Why are such methods exempted, in Weber's view, in their acceptance or rejection from the process of

rationalization. They clearly are not trans-historical and inter-subjectively recognized across cultures.⁶⁰ Weber offers no elaboration of this point and, as with so many of his positions, they are simply stated and assumed. Elsewhere he states that:

The means available to our science offer nothing to those persons to whom this truth is of no value. It should be remembered that the belief in the value of scientific truth is the product of certain cultures and is not a product of man's original nature.⁶¹

If by "means" he implies rational methods of inquiry, the position we have just established, viz., the Chinese, is contradicted, making the acceptance of scientific procedures itself also historically and culturally relative. (We call this "position two.")

Both views, it should be noted, also suggest that given at least some cultural heterogeneity within a supposedly, predominantly, scientific culture, there is no ultimate justification for (a) in position one, scientific explanations qua explanations, and (b) in position two, for scientific methods and explanations.

Each position has its difficulties and its tensions. In the first (position) scientific procedures are assumed to be inter-subjectively recognized as valid and in use, productive of truths and proofs that are said to be valid cross-culturally. Yet, it is also suggested that the explanations of these "proofs," etc., need not entail inter-subjective agreement. What then is the status of the proofs? What

can they be said to be proofs of? Furthermore, in what sense can Weber now maintain that science is a rational and systematic means to acquire truths about empirical reality? On this conception of science we risk a relativism, a science that is capable of producing a multitude of competing explanations, all generated by rational methods and all at some level claiming the status of truths. The tensions and issues that are raised here need further explication. But before doing so, let us look briefly at position two.

In the second position Weber argues more generally that one cannot justify the "strange intoxication" with science and scientific practice within its own terms of reference. There is a form of "irrationality," the motivation base, behind those that utilize the "rational method." In this context we can see why Weber quotes Tolstoi with appreciation and approval:

Science is meaningless because it gives no answer to our question, the only question important to us: "What shall we do and how shall we live?"⁶²

Thus here, acceptance of the authority of science to establish truth claims is dependent on prescientific value choices and dependent for acceptance or rejection on, ultimately, individually chosen values. Science, then, rests its authority on individual decision and, like all value choices, such a decision is, in the last analysis, based on faith. This position, it might be noted, is very close to that of the

thoroughly anarchistic views of the philosopher of science, Paul Feyerabend.⁶³

Yet Weber also wants to say (if we take him to be holding position two) and given we accept the role of science, that science is uniquely constituted by a rational method productive of valid, objective claims! Such a view would not be accepted by Feyerabend, who would note that the logic of position two cannot generate a single justification for science. Science, on this account can have no more claims to be offering an "objective" analysis of the social (or natural) world than other methods and accounting schema that subsume alternative rationalities.

So the authority of science is (in position one), on the one hand, legitimated by rational method, its products are independent of value-judgments, but on the other hand, explanations are culturally and historically relative and might well differ. In position two, science's authority rests on a decision and is dependent (wholly) on values. But given a decisionistic commitment to science, valid and objective claims are (said to be) generated. Scientific claims are partial and one-sided because in position one, different explanations are legitimate for a given and established social phenomenon, and in position two, because both scientific practice and explanatory claims have no privileged status unless accepted individually and thereby legitimated.

Of the positions, position one finds stronger support throughout the texts and appears to be Weber's essential argument for demarcating science from faith. This view is (very importantly) consistent with Weber's arguments, viz., the dichotomy between value-judgments and objective knowledge (facts). It is also consistent with our arguments that Weber subsumes a particular form of rationality and practice in his view of science. In fact, his very emphasis on and taking-for-granted of the centrality of method might well be explained by his implicit evaluation and subsumption of formal rationality in science. If he held to position two, he would be risking a view of complete and utter relativism and would not be able to defend science, as he clearly did, as a special area of human endeavor productive of "objective" knowledge (i. e., knowledge free of value-judgments). (It should be noted that position two does not necessarily imply a general critique of the notion of objectivity. Rather, that several methods, e. g., of a scientific, moral, critical, or religious kind, might be defended as equally productive of objective knowledge [e. g., each subsuming a different form of rationality].) The issues raised by position two (which can be used as a basis for a critique of position one) will be taken up again later in the text.

As we previously suggested, textual readings provide evidence that Weber most wanted to hold to position one. It is this

position that we will assume and further explore for the remainder of this chapter. As Weber put it in "Objectivity in the Social Sciences,"

The objective validity of all empirical knowledge rests exclusively upon the ordering of the given reality according to categories which are subjective in a specific sense, namely, in that they present the presuppositions of our knowledge and are based on the presupposition of the value of those truths which empirical knowledge alone is able to give us. ⁶⁴

"The criterion of scientific knowledge," Weber declares, "is to be found in the 'objective' validity of its results."⁶⁵ A delicate balance is struck? Weber deliberately opposes the minimizing of the role of "subjectivity," and deliberately attempts to take into account and emphasize that which is scientifically undemonstrable. Here Weber is "fundamentally attacking . . . the belief of science in objective norms in general and their scientific demonstrability in particular."⁶⁶ The argument (developed above as position one and suggested in the quote above), however, seeks to balance "subjectivity" with a value which no longer refers to "value-orientation" but to the universal value of scientific method. The argument for "objectivity" rests, in the last analysis, on the capacity of certain procedures to generate "valid" proofs, i. e., on Method.

The position is a logically necessary one for Weber. For once it is admitted that subjective value-orientations constitute the

"object of investigation" and the social facts explored; and that there exists no alternative grounding for our knowledge, then, if the conclusion that social science can only produce competitive explanations of the social world to those of the laymen and holders of other procedures and rationalities, is to be avoided--the argument necessarily tends to a strong emphasis in epistemology on methodology.⁶⁷

Weber's position in respect to method can also be clarified with reference to the Heidelberg neo-Kantians of his time.^{68, 69} In his highly influential rectoral address, Gesichte und Naturwissenschaft,⁷⁰ W. Windelband rejected the distinction between Natur/Geisteswissenschaften as a distinction that can be made on the basis of two different objects of inquiry.⁷¹ Rather, he argued, that any such division must be based on a purely formal or logical statement.⁷² The address, in part, centers on a discussion of the status of psychology and in the ensuing analysis and comparison of psychology and the natural sciences, he concludes that a "reconstruction of their logical similarity . . . must rest on a formal or methodological distinction with the historical sciences."

The principle of division is the formal character of their ends of knowledge (Erkenntnisziele). The one seeks general laws, the other particular historical facts: expressing this in language of formal

logic, the end of one is general, apodictic judgments (the end) of the other is singular assertoric sentences.⁷³

The distinction is between nomothetic and ideographic sciences, a distinction that classifies only the "methodological treatment . . . not the content of the knowledge itself."⁷⁴

In the closing sections of the speech Windelband calls for logicians to recognize that there are other logics than that of the natural sciences and asks them to begin an inquiry into ideographic analyses, specifically the work of historians, to uncover all that is involved. "Of no less importance," Windelband says (bearing the natural sciences in mind) "is an understanding of historical evolution." His argument about logics and methods rests finally on the granting of equal status to the different ends, interests, and goals that guide the two (potential) major scientific enterprises. He saw both of these as necessary for the bildung (cultivation, education) of man and German society.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to show how Heinrich Rickert's position (in his important Kulturwissenschaften und Naturwissenschaften)⁷⁵ developed from and differed with Windelband, but one or two points--which offer insight into Weber's own work--may be noted. Rather than speaking of nomothetic and ideographic sciences, Rickert stressed the fact that there are generalizing and

individualizing tendencies within all sciences, and saw these tendencies as determined by the goals toward which the sciences aim.⁷⁶ Maintaining Windelband's stress on the nature of the distinction, he argued that it was purely logical and "in no way concerned . . . the content peculiar to the various branches of the natural or cultural sciences."⁷⁷ The theme can be illustrated well by his discussion of the concerns of the Kulturwissenschaften;⁷⁸ which he argued were and should be concerned with "the interpretation and transmission of an historical acquisition," i.e., Kultur, and thus are compelled to employ the historical or individualizing method because of the ends they seek. The distinction between the natural and social sciences is not, however, for Rickert, an absolute one.

It is in this light that we can further understand Weber's stress on method--a stress typical in certain philosophical circles of his time. It was unnecessary for him to locate his early methodological essays: the discussion of method per se. The location was, of course, taken for granted. His methodological writings can be seen as an excursion into historiography and the social sciences; a response to the call for an investigation made by the neo-Kantians.

Weber's methodological preoccupations follow, then, from Kantian and neo-Kantian and epistemological presuppositions. They provide the framework in which his work is to be

understood. Our discussion of Weber's epistemology and methodology can now also be seen to be a discussion that extends into this framework.

However, in many respects, Weber's claims about the role of the human sciences went beyond that envisaged by Windelband and Rickert. Weber's claims about what social science could tell us extended the logic of a discipline offering an account of Kultur, an interpretation of past traditions, an historical hermeneutics. In order to explicate these claims we must firstly make one further set of distinctions: namely those that, in Weber's view, separate the natural from the human sciences. It is only by reference to Windelband and Rickert's positions that we can gain insight into Weber's own.

As it was unnecessary for him to "locate" his stress on method, he likewise essentially presupposed the neo-Kantian position here as well. But there were certain differences and one major change. The neo-Kantian account of the natural sciences was subsumed, but he both extended and altered the neo-Kantian view of the human sciences.

At the turn of the century in German universities there were extensive debates about the status and differences between the natural and cultural sciences--the famous Methodenstreit.⁷⁹ Many joined

the debate, including economists (Schmöller, Menger), psychologists (e.g. Wundt), historians (E. Meyer, Lamprecht), philosophers (Dilthey, Windelband, Rickert), and many others.⁸⁰ The center of controversy was the cultural sciences. Should they, as the positivists agreed, be assimilated into the natural sciences, employing the same methodologies? This position was rejected completely by the neo-Kantians. Dilthey held that there was an ontological disjunction between the natural and social sciences. There was a fundamental difference in the respective objects of each science, "a classification . . . being drawn between the kingdom of nature and that of the human mind."⁸¹ Windelband and Rickert, as we have seen, rejected this ontological claim. For Rickert, the infinite flux of reality could be broken down according to the different goals of the respective sciences, which forced on those sciences particular methodologies.

Rickert (also) argued that the distinction between the natural and social sciences was not an absolute one. For Weber, following Rickert, the distinction was also not a "distinction in principle." But Weber's remarks on the differences between the natural and cultural sciences were, as we shall see, all too brief.

In his critique of Roscher and Kneis, the first of his methodological essays, he suggests that "the supposed distinction

between natural and social sciences may be used to support a "spurious intuitionism."^{82, 83} The writings of Roscher, Weber argues, hold the view that the universe of human action is not one in which natural scientific methods apply. According to Weber, the Roscher distinction of natural and social sciences "introduce an overriding component of semi-mystic idealism into the . . . analysis . . . and consequently . . . inexact intuitive procedures. . . . The human world is thus an 'irrational' one, which is epitomised by the Volksgeist or Volksselle. . . . It is impossible, Weber points out, to reconcile the use of such notions as this with the claim, which is advanced by this same author, that vigorous historical research is an end which should be striven for."⁸⁴ Weber argues that the social sciences are necessarily concerned with "spiritual" or "ideal" phenomena and that there is a qualitative difference between the subject matter of the natural and social sciences, but argues--in this paper--that this does not imply or involve the sacrifice of objectivity nor the substitution of replicable causal analysis by intuitionism.⁸⁵

In "Objectivity in the Social Sciences," Weber maintains that "whereas in astronomy, the heavenly bodies are of interest to us only in their quantative and exact aspects, the qualitative aspect of phenomena concerns us in the social sciences.

To this should be added that in the social sciences we are concerned with psychological and intellectual (geistig) phenomena the empathic understanding of which is naturally a problem of a specifically different type from those which the schemes of the exact natural sciences in general can or seek to solve. Despite that, this distinction in itself is not a distinction in principle, as it seems at first glance. Aside from pure mechanics, even the exact natural sciences do not proceed without qualitative categories.⁸⁶ (Emphasis added.)

If it is not a distinction in principle, one may well ask what kind of qualitative distinction is being made? A precise answer is not easily found in Weber's writings.

Weber recognizes, of course, as the remarks and quotations above suggest, that there is a qualitative difference between the subject matter of the natural and social sciences. There are two points that can be noted here. Firstly, there is a sense in which Weber differentiates the natural from the social sciences which refer back to our previous comments on Weber's conception of value-orientations. The object domain of all sciences was seen to be the result, for Weber, of a process of constitution. In the case of the social sciences he felt that there was a multiplicity of possible value-orientations that could determine the objects of investigation (This was because of, amongst other reasons, (a) the different interests of historians, economists, and psychologists, etc., in the social world; and (b) because the objects these people would

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regard as culturally significant and consequently worthy of study, changes over time with historical developments and as a result of enhanced knowledge.) The complex and changing nature of the social scientist's value-orientations is held to be in marked contrast to much less varied value-orientations found amongst investigators of the natural world. In a very strong statement of this point, Weber wrote:

This way of being conditioned by "subjective values" is, however, entirely alien in any case to those natural sciences which take mechanics as a model, and it constitutes, indeed, the contrast between the historical and natural sciences.⁸⁷

It appears to be Weber's view that there is (complete?) consensus in the natural sciences informing the natural scientist's value-orientations. (This point, as Weber has developed it is not very substantial. For it can be argued that the differences between, e. g., the physicist and the chemist create fundamentally different interests in the natural world, with the same status as in point (a) above. It can also be argued that the history of these sciences changes and complicates the scientist's value-orientations in the same way as in point (b) above.)^{88, 89}

The second point Weber makes, which is much stronger and more fundamental, is that whereas the natural and cultural scientist is concerned with objects as constituted purely from the standpoint

of his value-orientations, the cultural scientist has in addition to be concerned with "objects" that have a self-understanding. In other words, the cultural scientist has to be able to understand his object domain, which are social and historical subjects who themselves constitute the world in varying contexts. He cannot offer a scientifically adequate account of this world without taking into consideration these acts of constitution. (This point and its consequences will be further developed in the next chapter.) This is a dimension of scientific investigation which rarely, if ever, exists for the natural scientist.⁹⁰

However, Weber offers no argument that dwells on the difference between the natural and social sciences being essentially one of subject matter. It seems that he saw in this distinction primarily methodological considerations.

With Rickert he rejects the attempt to rigidly classify the sciences. He accepts and recognizes the distinction between generalizing and individualizing methods, the "'abstract'-theoretical method" and "empirical historical" techniques of research.⁹¹ The natural sciences are seen to be characterized by the former, but not restricted to this methodological stance (e. g., some natural sciences might use different methods to explain unique occurrences). With the social sciences it was significantly different. For Weber

establishes a major "generalizing and individualizing" tendency within the human sciences. Sociology and even history are seen to to employ and utilize causal explanations and generalizing laws. There is a complex interplay, between the respective methods, that develops in Weber's writings. How he establishes this position we explicate at length in the following chapter. All that need be noted here is that in making these fundamental changes in the neo-Kantian position he takes the cultural (or human) sciences beyond the logic or goals of those envisaged for these sciences by Windelband and Rickert. For Rickert, for example, the study of history through culture was thoroughly hermeneutic in intent: it was to be an analysis and interpretation of tradition that would yield and enhance our understanding of the socio-cultural life-world. Weber's position was and is not simply hermeneutic in implication. As the human sciences embodied a generalizing and individualizing tendency, so they also embodied more complex goals. As we have previously noted and as we shall see in more detail, Weber's extended conception of the human sciences and their roles implies an alternative conception of their logic that both extends and changes the neo-Kantian position we have discussed here.

Weber was much more explicit in his views about what the sciences could tell us, then about the nature of the distinction

between them. However, as we point out below, there is more to his view than he, in fact, even here makes explicit.

"In the natural sciences, the practical evaluative attitude," Weber thought, "toward what was immediately and technically useful was closely associated from the very first with the hope . . . of attaining a purely 'objective' . . . monistic knowledge of the totality of reality in a conceptual system of metaphysical validity and mathematical form."⁹² Those natural sciences which became closely bound to evaluative attitudes (Weber names clinical medicine and "what is conventionally called 'technology'"), lose, for him, their scientific status--becoming "purely practical 'arts'."⁹³

Natural science cannot tell us whether we ought to master life technically or whether such a pursuit is "meaningful." Natural science can only gather knowledge of reality and tell us how to master life technically. It cannot tell us whether to "master life technically" nor what ends to pursue to achieve technical mastery.

The social sciences, Weber points out, "first arose in connection with practical considerations."⁹⁴ Tracing its origins to state economic policy, he goes on to say that as such:

. . . It was a "technique" in the same sense as, for instance, the clinical disciplines in the medical sciences are. It has now become known how this situation was gradually modified. This modification was not, however, accompanied by a formulation of the logical (prinzipielle) distinction between

"existential knowledge," i. e., knowledge of what "is," and "normative knowledge," i. e., knowledge of what "should be."⁹⁵

Such a distinction is "absolutely" necessary for, as we have already seen, despite the partiality, one-sidedness of knowledge, knowledge is "objective" and, Weber states countlessly, it is logically impossible for an empirical discipline to establish, scientifically, ideals which define what "ought to be," i. e., which (and to what purpose) an end should be pursued. What then can social sciences tell us?

Weber argues that while value-judgments concerning what "ought to be" cannot be validated by science, "the question of the appropriateness of means for achieving a given end is undoubtedly accessible to scientific analysis."⁹⁶ Scientific analysis can allow us to determine the applicability and suitability of a given range of means, by examining the chances attached to each "means" for the realization of an end. Furthermore, the social scientist can examine the full range of consequences, advantages, "costs," entailed by the selection of a particular means to a given end.⁹⁷ The costs analyzed can be of two sorts: (1) the partial rather than the complete realization of a chosen end, or (2) the bringing about of additional consequences which might have negative effects on other ends held by the individual. In this way it is also possible, Weber

claims, that we can "indirectly criticize the setting of the end itself as practically meaningful (on the basis of the existing historical situation) or as meaningless with reference to existing conditions."^{98, 99}

"The contribution of science does not reach its limits with this . . .¹⁰⁰ if we are competent in our pursuit (which must be presupposed here), we can force the individual or at least we can help him, to give an account of the ultimate meaning of his own conduct."¹⁰¹ Science is also, therefore, able to assess the internal and external consistency of conduct, to make frequently presupposed ideals explicit and, in other words, to be "in the service of self-clarification and knowledge of interrelated facts."¹⁰² Weber sees scientific activity as an important agent in the demystification of the world, not an end itself. Yet again, it can be said, his views are not without difficulties and tensions.

Science, on Weber's account, can be critical of the suitability, coherence, completeness, etc., of an end or ideal. Science can evaluate means, suggest which are most appropriate to a given end, and also ("indirectly") assess the "practicality" of ends with reference to existing historical conditions. In fact, on Weber's view, science is able to establish "means" in a hierarchy of "costs," practicality, etc., and, therefore, specify accomplishable ends. Science on this account, despite Weber's claims, is evaluative and

judgmental. The practical consequences of Weber's view of science become more explicit here and bring many of our previous themes to a head. These points are worthy of further consideration.

The assessment of means etc., according to the criteria of practicality is to appraise these empirical possibilities with a value that is, in Weber's works, ambiguous and much in need of absent elaboration. For the question arises: From whose standpoint do we judge practicality? The businessman's, the revolutionary's, the social scientist's? Weber's view also establishes a dichotomy that is, at best, weak. The relationship between means and ends is not a rigid and distinct relation. After all, what are means? They can easily be regarded as short-run ends. And ends? Are they not long-run means? The relationship, as Hegel would argue, is an identity of identity and difference, i. e., a dialectical unity, a differentiated interacting unity.¹⁰³ To evaluate ends even "indirectly" according to the "practicality" etc. of means (albeit in an historical context), is to beg the question as to whether or not means are ends and vice-versa and for whom our criteria of assessment are valid.

Given Weber's views on value-orientations, he might well have responded to these questions by saying that since the disenchanted world can find no ultimate justifications for deciding between competing irreducible ideals, then, what we mean by practicality or, for

example, an end, will of course differ. And this is how it should be. So long as the adherents to different conceptions of practicality etc. utilize the rational method, then we have no means available, in the last analysis, to choose between them other than personal decision. Just as science has the capacity to produce "objective" competing explanations of the social world, so the role of science can produce a plethora of different accounts of the practicality of ends, each having equal claim to validity.

The tensions entailed in this view were pointed to in our earlier discussion of Weber's position (cf. pp. 50-53 above, the discussion of position one). They can be further elaborated. Weber's account of science and "objectivity" admits, we have suggested, of the possibility of a multitude of competing explanations of the social world all claiming validity. Given different value-orientations and adherence to the norms of rational method, it would seem possible for there to be mutually incompatible, perhaps contradictory, knowledge claims. If this is the case, then science is open, incomplete, and necessarily relative to the point of being potentially constitutive of incompatible validity claims that find no possible resolution within scientific practice. Weber's conception of science embodies incompleteness and openness in the sense that:

- a. true statements and claims about reality are inexhaustible,

- b. all knowledge is held to be potentially falsifiable, and
- c. scientific progress is seen to be cumulative.¹⁰⁴

But although it admits of incompatible knowledge claims, it does not lead to contradiction. L. Simon has pointed out that it does not lead to contradiction because there

. . . is a form of incommensurability inherent in Weber's position. All scientific truths are partial and relative to their value-orientations. Truths have to be understood in terms of this relativity. Seemingly incompatible claims cannot be juxtaposed to produce a contradiction because, in the final analysis, they are not talking about the same identical objects or events. Each is true of a particular portion of the flux of reality as illuminated or abstracted according to a particular criterion of significance. Since they are not strictly talking about the same identical thing, they are not technically contradictory.¹⁰⁵

Instead, they are best conceived as truths of reality which are illuminating of it, but inherently partial and never, by definition, in strict correspondence to it. The Chinese or Western social scientist can claim objectivity and validity for an analysis of Q, even though the former might explain it by A and the latter by B. If Q is constituted from different value-orientations, there is no contradiction between the respective accounts. In Weber's conception one can only have contradictory claims if a given analysis of Q is constituted from the same value-orientations, uses the same intersubjectively recognized methods of inquiry and then produces incompatible statements.

Scientific practice, therefore, can result in a multitude of competing explanations of the social world, all illuminating reality, all adding to our stock of knowledge. There may not be contradiction but there is an inherent relativism. For, in the last analysis, there are no criteria to judge between competing explanations other than those based on individual value-orientations. This same argument obviously applies to Weber's conception of science's capacity to address "means," "ends," and "ideals."

Having said this, however, it is crucially important to realize that in Weber's account of the role of science, the tolerance of relativism as regards to value and consequently theory and validity, is-- to use Macuse's famous phrase--a "repressive tolerance."¹⁰⁶ For although we might have competing explanations all justly claiming validity, they are in competition within a fixed framework, a specific form of rationality, a specific schema of values that consequently sanction a particular form of practice. They are differentiated views, but differentiated within the same fundamental framework. As our previous discussion of these issues pointed out, it is a framework delineated by formal, means-ends rationality, a decisionistic ethics and practice. It is in this framework that Weber grounded his science. Although not recognized as such, an interest in technically useful knowledge and the rationality which embodies it are values assumed

by this conception of science, for science, on this account, has an inherent potential and subsumed interest in providing technically useful information. Science lends itself to technical recommendations and has an in-built potential for becoming little more than a technical critique. As we noted earlier, in the name of value-freedom (i. e., freedom from value-judgments), Weber smuggles in a value-laden, evaluative, concept of rationality and as such sanctions what he hoped to challenge: the spread of formal rationality. Weber takes for granted that which he most sought to limit.

The "logic" and "goals" of the human sciences are no longer, as they were for Windelband and Rickert, "simply" hermeneutic in intent. Weber's concept of science is deeply embedded in a technical, instrumental interest. This does not mean to say that Weber's exposition of the human sciences does not embody a hermeneutic dimension. As we shall see in the following chapter, his conception of history approximates the intentions of Rickert, but his conception of the human sciences extends the "goals" of both historical hermeneutics and, as we have just seen, a partiality for the goals of technically useful knowledge.

Interestingly enough, it might be noted, that what we called Weber's second position¹⁰⁷ (i. e., the view that the authority of science's explanations and rational procedures rests on individual

decision) is the basis of a strong argument to undermine the first position, which we have taken in this thesis to be the position Weber attempted to uphold. As we know, Weber takes for granted formal rationality as the foundation of science. His claims are essentially unmotivated, they are with (elaborate) justification: they are, for the best part, assumed. But given his own view that value-judgments, evaluations, practical recommendations, etc., are all, ultimately, based on faith, there can, within his own terms of reference, be no justification for the formal rationality of science as a privileged, unevaluative, absolute ground for "objective" knowledge. The commitment to formal rationality involves a substantive choice, i. e., a value-judgment. The option for formal rationality requires a justified practical reason. Since Weber has closed off value-judgments from cognitive resolution, and rules out of consideration the possibility that practical questions admit of truth, he cannot rationally justify his own position. It too, within Weber's own terms of reference, rests on a decision which is, "in the end," based on faith. For there is, in Weber's view, no ultimate justification on which science can be grounded. We are, firmly, in the established relativism of position two. But the question now is: can we avoid this position? Is it the only option and direction we have? In asking these questions we discover another position that Weber implicitly shuts off.

Although Weber, of course, allows (in position one) for the possibility of describing the genesis of our values (e. g. , The Protestant Ethic), he does not comprehend the possibility of a critically reflexive understanding of this genesis. Such an understanding of the innerconnectedness of values to their social situatedness, e. g. , class structuration,¹⁰⁸ might reveal that certain value-orientations and judgments blind those that hold them to an adequate conceptualization of the social world, i. e. , might be ideological. It would be ideological in the sense that and insofar as the values project onto the social world a view which is limited, one-sided, distorted, and false, and prevents an adequate confrontation with the nature of its own limited, one-sided, distorted, and false status.

Weber can justify his view with reference to the empirical basis of his epistemological presuppositions. There can be no ultimate arbitration between value-judgments and value-claims; they only admit of individual choice in a "disenchanted" world. The position reflects, as we noted earlier, an individualistic, atomistic ontology.¹⁰⁹ In holding this position, Weber also, therefore, must uncritically accept a multitude of possible competing explanations and accounts about the world as long as they adhere to the canons of rational scientific method. As such he closes off the possibility of a critical theory that might explicate the ideological basis of certain

accounts of the social world.

Weber's views, as we shall see, are in sharp contradistinction to certain members of the Marxist tradition, whose writings we explore in the next part of this thesis. It is with the possibility of a critical reflexive understanding that we can avoid the inevitable relativism of Weber's second position. In order to establish such a critical understanding, the task, which Weber cannot conceive, is to explicate the possibility of a Critical Science which is grounded and which recognizes that practical questions admit of truth. This we will begin to do at the close of the following chapter and through the Marxist tradition in Part II.

* * * * *

The issues and critique we have developed so far can be further illustrated in Weber's account of the human sciences, in his approaches to sociology and historiography in particular and in his treatment of their respective methods and approaches to causality. This we attempt to do in the following chapter. But before turning to these further questions, an additional note might be added.

The neo-Kantians did not foresee that in the mid-twentieth century the interest in certainty, prediction and control, the logic

they associated with the natural sciences, would become the general logic and program for most of the social sciences. Weber might be thought of as having anticipated this development in his preoccupation with the process of rationalization and the spreading of instrumental reason. It is paradoxical, however, that given his enormous insights into economy and society that when compared to Rickert's conception of the human sciences, Weber's own contribution can be seen to have added to and confirmed the very social processes he wanted to limit. The "fate of the modern world" did indeed show a cunning that he himself was blind to. Weber's conception of science, given all his insights, is also ideological.¹¹⁰ The question must be asked why Weber remained satisfied with the view of science he expounded.

Any attempt to provide an adequate answer to this question would require an analysis of the stature of L. Goldman's study of Kant.¹¹¹ It would require a study in the sociology of knowledge that was not just concerned with Weber's life and work, but the epoch from whence he emerged. It is obviously an unthinkable task in the bounds of this thesis. We can only note a few brief points.

It is clear that Weber took for granted the philosophical context of his methodological writings and, consequently, epistemology did not directly preoccupy him as it did others of his time. Other clues can be found in Mitzman's work that we earlier referred to.¹¹²

Still others, in his acquiescence and capitulation to the rationalized world as it appeared. For ultimately this was a world in which formal rationality also made possible a development of social institutions strongly tending toward law and justice that would free the arbitration of civil society from collective and individual substantive interests. A world of universal, technically trained officials and organizations that becomes the "absolutely inescapable condition of our existence." It is in this context that we may note the force of Marcuse's comment that:

Weber's concept of fate . . . generalizes the blindness of a society which reproduces itself behind the back of individuals, of a society in which the law of domination appears as objective technological law.¹¹³

The very concept of rationalization is also ideological. For it glosses social processes, reifies social life, and consequently depersonalizes and depoliticizes history. But for Weber, we must remember, this process also brings in its wake an intellectualization of the social world, a new freedom for thought and inquiry. Its institutions offered a new impartiality and individuals enhanced choice. It was a world in which each person was, in the end, best able to be the master or the mistress of his or her life. The emphasis, as we have seen, in Weber's discussion of values is on individual freedom and choice and on the capacity of individuals to choose. In a disenchanting world man finds a new freedom from dependence on unreflected Weltanschauung,

PART I

MAX WEBER

and a new freedom to will his life his own.

For Weber, the modern democracy is a means to an end.¹¹⁴ His political writings are deeply intertwined with the values of European liberalism¹¹⁵ and its ultimate value: the individual's autonomy. The classical tenets of bourgeois, liberal individualism and its vision of freedom are constantly upheld. These values, Weber argued, could only be defended and furthered by the development of the German nation-state. But the State is always a means for Weber, for he saw modern bourgeois democracies as the "only modes," as A. Giddens put it, "of partially releasing modern man from the 'iron cage' of the bureaucratized division of labour."¹¹⁶

Weber also saw the need and the possibility to supplement the new democratic order with the value creative properties of charismatic political leadership. Weber sought decisionistic self-assertion in the midst of a rationalized world. In politics he favored, as J. Habermas wrote, "scope for a leader, strong-willed and with an instinct for power,"¹¹⁷ who could accommodate and use the expert civil servant. Weber's political vision was thoroughly intertwined with the bourgeois vision of the freedoms of possessive individualism.¹¹⁸

There are further consequences which should not and cannot be overlooked. If we may quote Habermas once again:

At the time of the First World War he [Weber, D. H.]
outlined a sketch of Caesar-like leader-democracy

on the contemporary basis of a national-state imperialism. This militant latter-day liberalism had consequences in the Weimar period which we, and not Weber, must answer for. If we are to judge Weber here and now, we cannot overlook the fact that Carl Schmitt was a "legitimate pupil" of Weber's. Viewed in the light of the history of influences, the decisionist element in Weber's sociology did not break the spell of ideology, but strengthened it. ¹¹⁹

The same can be said of Weber's conception of science. It subsumes and capitulates to the bourgeois vision of Rationality, Freedom, and Democracy. There is little self-consciousness of this in Weber's methodological writings.

NOTES

- ¹Weber, M. S. S., p. 72
- ²D. Goddard, "Max Weber and the Objectivity of the Social Sciences," in History and Theory (1973), pp. 2-4.
- ³Weber, M. S. S., p. 72. (First emphasis mine.)
- ⁴Weber, M. S. S., p. 78.
- ⁵Weber, M. S. S., p. 60.
- ⁶Weber, M. S. S., p. 72.
- ⁷Ibid.
- ⁸Weber, M. S. S., p. 78.
- ⁹Weber, M. S. S., p. 72.
- ¹⁰A. Saloman, "Max Weber's Methodology," Social Research 1 (1934): 157; quoted in Eldridge, Max Weber, p. 12.
- ¹¹Weber, M. S. S., pp. 110-11.
- ¹²Weber, M. S. S., p. 1. (My emphasis.)
- ¹³Weber, M. S. S., p. 19.
- ¹⁴Weber, M. S. S., pp. 1-50.
- ¹⁵See especially Weber, M. S. S., pp. 1-47.
- ¹⁶Weber, M. S. S., p. 8.
- ¹⁷Cf. Mitzman, The Iron Cage, chaps. 3-9. Also, Giddens, Politics and Sociology.

¹⁸Weber, M.S.S., pp. 46-47. More will be said about Weber's conception of the State and politics at the end of this chapter.

¹⁹Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in From Max Weber, pp. 77-128.

²⁰Weber, M.S.S., p. 63.

²¹See p. 28.

²²Goddard, "Max Weber and the Objectivity of the Social Sciences," p. 2.

²³Weber, M.S.S., p. 72.

²⁴Cohen, "Max Weber and the Dynamics of Domination," p. 67.

²⁵Weber, M.S.S., p. 64.

²⁶Weber, M.S.S., p. 76.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Weber, M.S.S., p. 84.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Weber, M.S.S., pp. 105-6.

³¹Ibid.

³²Weber, M.S.S., pp. 32-33.

³³For an elaboration of the proposed distinction, see E. Nagel, The Structure of Science (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961), pp. 485-502.

³⁴Goddard, "Max Weber and the Objectivity of the Social Sciences," p. 14. The nature of this tension is discussed at greater length in the following chapter.

³⁵J. Habermas commenting on a paper by T. Parsons on Weber in Max Weber and Sociology Today, ed. O. Stammer (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 65.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ The concept of totality in Weber is discussed on pp. 121-23.

³⁸ Cohen, "Max Weber and the Dynamics of Domination," p. 69.

³⁹ The doctrine of decisionism in ethics is here taken to imply that choice between ethical standpoints belongs solely to the individual. It is the responsibility of each person to decide, and the decision rests, ultimately, on faith. For an elaboration of this viewpoint cf. my exegesis of Weber's position in the closing two pages of the previous chapter.

⁴⁰ Cf. J. Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), pt. 2. Also J. Habermas, Theory and Practice, trans. J. Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971).

⁴¹ It is recognized that positivism, as a label for a particular form of knowing and self-understanding, has been much abused. For a useful introduction to the concept cf. A. Giddens, ed., Positivism and Sociology (London: Heineman, 1975), Introduction.

⁴² The following remarks follow a part of a jointly written paper by L. Simon and myself, in which we discuss the work of J. Habermas.

⁴³ Cf., for example, his critique of Roscher and Knies: "Subjectivity and Determinism," in Positivism and Sociology, ed. Giddens.

⁴⁴ I discuss Weber's explicit views on the role of science towards the end of this chapter.

⁴⁵ G. Radnitzky, Contemporary Schools of Metascience (Chicago: Henry Pegnery, 1970), p. 325.

⁴⁶ Habermas, Theory and Practice, p. 272.

⁴⁷ Habermas, in Max Weber and Sociology Today, ed. Stammer.

⁴⁸ It should be noted that my knowledge of Kant rests too heavily on secondary sources. Important for the views that are expressed above were Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests; Goddard, "Max Weber and the Objectivity of the Social Sciences,"; R. P. Wolff, ed.,

Kant: A Collection of Critical Essays (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968); L. Goldman, Immanuel Kant (London: New Left Books, 1971).

⁴⁹Goddard, "Max Weber and the Objectivity in the Social Sciences," p. 12.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 14. (My emphasis.)

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 14-15. (My emphasis.)

⁵²Ibid., p. 15.

⁵³Weber, M.S.S., p. 90.

⁵⁴Goddard, "Max Weber and the Objectivity in the Social Sciences," p. 15.

⁵⁵Weber, "Science as a Vocation," From Max Weber, p. 143.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Weber, M.S.S., p. 58. (My emphasis.)

⁵⁸Weber, "Science as a Vocation," From Max Weber, p. 143.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Cf. C. Levi-Strauss, The Savage Mind (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), pp. 15-17.

⁶¹Weber, M.S.S., p. 110.

⁶²Weber, "Science as a Vocation," From Max Weber, p. 163.

⁶³P. Feyerabend, Against Method (London: New Left Books, 1975).

⁶⁴Weber, M.S.S., p. 110. (Second, fifth, and sixth emphases are mine.)

⁶⁵Weber, M.S.S., p. 51.

⁶⁶ K. Löwith, "Rationalization and Freedom," in Max Weber, ed. D. Wrong (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 106.

⁶⁷ For an elaboration of this theme, cf. Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, pp. 67-186. We explore this theme further in the following pages.

⁶⁸ The Heidelberg school was only of seven general tendencies within neo-Kantianism. See T. K. Oesterreich, Die Deutsche Philosophie des XIX Jahrhunderts und der Gegenwart, vol. 4 of Friedrich Überwegs Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie (Berlin: E. S. Miller, 1923), pp. 416-70.

⁶⁹ The two Heidelberg philosophers, W. Windelband and (especially) H. Rickert, were central figures in the shaping of Weber's work. See A. Arato, "The Neo-Idealist Defense of Subjectivity," Telos (Fall 1974); and H. Stuart Hughes, Consciousness and Society (St. Albans: Paladin Frogmore, 1974), pp. 287-96.

(The following nine references were brought to my attention by J. Schmidt, in an unpublished paper, "The Tragic Vision in Neo-Kantian Philosophy and Sociology." The translations are his unless otherwise stated.)

⁷⁰ W. Windelband, Gesichte und Naturwissenschaft (1894), 3rd unaltered ed. (Strassburg: J. H. Ed. Heitz, 1904).

⁷¹ Windelband was speaking essentially to the early work of Dilthey.

⁷² Windelband, Gesichte und Naturwissenschaft, pp. 9-10.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 11.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 12.

⁷⁵ H. Rickert, Kulturwissenschaften und Naturwissenschaften (Science and History) ed. A. Goddard, trans. George Reisman (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1962).

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. xii.

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 1-2.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 15.

⁷⁹ Cf. J. Freund, The Sociology of Max Weber, trans. M. Ilford (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968), pp. 37-41.

⁸⁰ For a brief overview of the debate cf. Freund, The Sociology of Max Weber.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 38.

⁸² Giddens, Capitalism and Social Theory, p. 134, and quoting from Max Weber, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre (Tübingen, 1968), p. 9ff. (My emphasis.)

⁸³ At the time of writing the immediately above passages, I had not read this essay and relied entirely on Giddens, Capitalism and Social Theory, p. 134, for a summary. Since then this important essay has been translated. Cf. Weber, "Subjectivity and Determinism," in Positivism and Sociology, ed. Giddens.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 134.

⁸⁵ Weber's methodological writings attempt, of course, to show how this is possible. The following chapter is concerned to show how Weber proposed we proceed and what kind of detailed methodological apparatus he recommended.

⁸⁶ Weber, M.S.S., p. 74. (My emphasis.)

⁸⁷ Weber, M.S.S., p. 160.

⁸⁸ Cf. the work and debates between Popper, Lakatos, Kuhn, and Feyerabend. For an interesting and important attempt to elaborate the nature of the respective sciences' value-orientations cf. Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests.

⁸⁹ I owe the above point about Weber's differentiation between the natural and social sciences on the line of value-orientations, and its critique to L. Simon (from an unpublished paper entitled "A Discussion of Some Issues in Max Weber's Methodological Writings").

⁹⁰ It might exist in zoology and biology, in attempts to comprehend, for example, advanced primates. But, obviously, to sustain

this point we need a very broad conception of Language and Communication that transcends ordinary language.

⁹¹Weber, M.S.S., p. 87.

⁹²Weber, M.S.S., p. 85.

⁹³Ibid., p. 85.

⁹⁴Weber, M.S.S., p. 51.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 51. (First emphasis mine.)

⁹⁶Weber, M.S.S., p. 52.

⁹⁷Giddens, Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, p. 135.

⁹⁸Weber, M.S.S., p. 53.

⁹⁹For an illustration of these points see Weber's discussion of Socialism, Economy and Society, vol. 1, pp. 65-68, 100-7, or Weber, M.S.S., p. 8, for a discussion of Anarchism.

¹⁰⁰Weber, From Max Weber, p. 151.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 152.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Cf. J. N. Findlay, The Philosophy of Hegel (New York: CollierBooks, 1966), pp. 70, 251-54; and S. Rosen, G. W. F. Hegel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), chap. 3, for a discussion of the concept of "an indentity of identity and difference."

¹⁰⁴Weber, "Science as a Vocation," From Max Weber, p. 138 ff.

¹⁰⁵L. Simon, "A Discussion of Some Issues in Max Weber's Methodological Writings," pp. 17-18.

¹⁰⁶H. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," in R. P. Wolff, B. Moore, Jr., H. Marcuse, A Critique of Pure Tolerance (Boston: Beacon, 1970).

¹⁰⁷ See pp. 52-53.

¹⁰⁸ For a discussion of the concept of class structuration cf. A. Giddens, The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies (London: Hutchinson, 1973).

¹⁰⁹ The relationship between Weber's empirical assessment of the disenchanted world and his atomistic ontology is explored at considerably greater length in the closing half of the following chapter.

¹¹⁰ I am using the same definition of ideology as on p. 75.

¹¹¹ Goldman, Immanuel Kant

¹¹² Cf. p. 14.

¹¹³ Cf. H. Marcuse, "Industrialization and Capitalism in Max Weber," Negations (London: Allen Lane, 1968), p. 215.

¹¹⁴ For an elaboration of this theme, Giddens, Politics and Sociology.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 56.

¹¹⁷ Habermas, in Max Weber and Sociology Today, ed. Stammer, p. 64.

¹¹⁸ Cf. C. B. Macpherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), chap. 6, for an excellent discussion of the tenets of possessive individualism.

¹¹⁹ Habermas, in Max Weber and Sociology Today, ed. Stammer, p. 66. Habermas later modified his statement by saying that Carl Schmitt was the "natural son" of Weber rather than "legitimate pupil."

CHAPTER III

WEBER'S CONCEPTION OF CAUSALITY AND METHOD

Having located the roles of value and method in Weber's work, we are brought to Weber's analysis of causation and method. In attempting to unravel these often misunderstood areas, we can pursue the themes of the last pages to the inner mechanisms of Weber's conception of the human sciences.

We have seen that it was Weber's view that the analysis of "infinite reality" which the "finite mind" can conduct rests on the assumption that only a finite portion of this reality can be constituted as the object of scientific investigation, and only it, once delineated by the social scientist's value-orientations and considerations of cultural significance, can be "objectively" known. Weber did not believe, however, that this segment of "reality" should be selected without aid and consideration of existing empirical studies and a variety of empirical sources. In "Objectivity in the Social Sciences" and Economy and Society, he points to criteria for selection. These include the results of functional analysis, the usage of laws, psychological insights, and statistical facts.

The specific reference to organicist sociology--a "classical example". Weber cites as "Schäffle's brilliant work Bau und Leben des Socialen Körpers"¹--reveals that he considered it as a means of "practical illustration and for provisional orientation, . . . not only useful but indispensable."² "But," and in contradistinction to one of his most well-known interpreters,³ Weber immediately adds:

. . . at the same time if its cognitive value is overestimated and its concept illegitimately "reified" it can be highly dangerous. . . . In the case of social collectivities precisely as distinguished from organisms we are in a position to go beyond merely demonstrating functional relationships and uniformities. We can accomplish something which is never attainable in the natural sciences, namely the subjective understanding of the action of component individuals. . . . We do not "understand" the behaviour of cells, but can only observe the relevant functional relationships and generalize on the basis of these observations. This additional achievement of explanation by interpretive understanding, as distinguished from external observation, is of course obtained only at a price--the more hypothetical and fragmentary character of its results. Nevertheless, subjective understanding is the specific characterization of sociological knowledge.⁴

Weber differs strongly with Schäffle in his estimation of the logical status of functional/holistic concepts. These, he argued, could easily engulf sociologists into the hypostatization of concepts. It was a "spectre of collective conceptions" which he sought "to exorcise."⁵ None of this, of course, implies that Weber thought it unnecessary and undesirable to use collective concepts, e. g., the "State," but he

always reminds one, in his methodological treatise, that it must not be forgotten that these collectives are "solely the resultants and modes of organization of the specific acts of individual men, since these alone are for us the agents who carry out subjectively understandable action."^{6*}

For Parsons it is given in the possibility of analytic science (natural or social), the capacity to generate laws (statements that formulate constant and empirically regular relationships between the values of at least two variables). Parsons also believes, therefore, that "Weber should have gone all the way to the view that in a purely logical aspect there is no difference whatsoever [i. e. , between natural and social sciences],"⁷ and adds critically that "Weber does not even consider the possibility of formulating laws of the latter type, essentially because he does not develop social theory explicitly in the direction of setting up a system of independent variables, but confines it to the ideal type level."⁸

Weber did not, indeed, consider the possibility of formulating laws for the social world which were logically akin to those of the natural world; but this was by no means an oversight. He was deeply

*The point is made by Weber with considerable force. It might also be noted in this context with some irony given the "implicit" status of such concepts as "formal rationality," the "fate" of the modern world, etc.

critical of all such enterprises:

It has often been thought that the decisive criterion in the cultural sciences, too, was in the last analysis, the "regular" recurrence of certain casual relationships. The "laws" which we are able to perceive in the infinitely manifold stream of events must-- according to this conception--contain the scientifically "essential" aspect of reality. . . . Accordingly, even among the followers of the Historical School we continually find the attitude which declares that the ideal which all the sciences, including the cultural sciences, serve and towards which they should strive even in the remote future is a system of propositions from which reality can be "deduced."⁹

The goal of these cultural scientists was, Weber argued, ". . . however far it might be from realization . . . to construct a closed system of concepts, in which reality is synthesized in some sort of permanently and universally valid classification and from which it can again be deduced."¹⁰ Weber rejected such a goal and frequently attacked this view. J. Eldridge has assessed succinctly Weber's view on this issue: "This position identified by Weber as the naturalistic viewpoint (or prejudice!) is rejected by him fundamentally because he does not accept that the cultural scientists can have a direct awareness of the structure of human actions in all their reality."¹¹ The point is well illustrated by Weber's consistent critique of those that made the "fantastic claim" for "economic theories--e.g. abstract theories of price, interest, rent, etc.--that they can, by ostensibly following the analogy of the physical science propositions, be validly applied

to the derivation of quantitatively stated conclusions from given real premises, since given the ends, economic behaviour with respect to means is unambiguously 'determined'.¹²

This does not mean, Weber asserts, that nomothetic propositions are inapplicable or impossible in the human sciences: "a valid imputation of any individual effect without the application of 'nomological knowledge,' --i.e., the knowledge of recurrent causal sequences-- would in general be impossible."¹³ In fact, Weber maintains:

Wherever the causal explanation of a "cultural phenomenon--an "historical individual" is under consideration, the knowledge of causal laws is not the end of the investigation but only a means. It facilitates and renders possible the causal imputation to their concrete causes of those components of a phenomenon the individuality of which is culturally significant. So far and only so far as it achieves this, is it valuable for our knowledge of concrete relationships. And the more "general," i. e., the more abstract the laws, the less they can contribute to the causal imputation of individual phenomena and, more indirectly, to the understanding of the significance of cultural events.¹⁴

The extent to which a cultural scientist can reach a valid causal imputation with either the aid of "concretely established generalisations" and/or "with his imagination sharpened by personal experience and trained in analytic methods" always depends for Weber, as A. Giddens has written, "upon the particular case in question. But it is always true that the more precise and certain our knowledge of relevant general principles, the more certain the causal imputation we can make."¹⁵

At an opposite pole, Weber also maintains, that the practitioners of psychology may offer the social scientist insights.¹⁶ He deals swiftly, however, with those that propagate a simple psychological reductionism. As an analytic tool, the analysis of psychological factors would, he suggests, "be as useful as a textbook of organic chemical combinations would be for our knowledge of the biogenetic aspect of the animal and plant world. . . . Concrete reality cannot be deduced from 'such' factors."¹⁷ Weber's view of the role of psychology is worth quoting at length, especially in light of the growing status and popularity of psychology and the stress some schools of social science have placed on micro-sociology, etc.

. . . the partly brilliant attempts which have been made hitherto to interpret economic phenomena psychologically, show in any case that the procedure does not begin with the analysis of psychological qualities, moving then to the analysis of social institutions, but that, on the contrary, insight into the psychological preconditions and consequences of institutions presupposes a precise knowledge of the latter and the scientific analysis of their structure. In concrete cases, psychological analysis can contribute then an extremely valuable deepening of the knowledge of the historical cultural conditioning and cultural significance of institutions. The interesting aspect of the psychic attitude of a person in a social situation is specifically particularized in each case, according to the special cultural significance of the situation in question. It is a question of an extremely heterogeneous and highly concrete structure of psychic motives and influences. Social-psychological research involves the study of various very disparate individual types of cultural elements with reference to their interpretability by our empathic understanding. Through

social-psychological research, with the knowledge of individual institutions as a point of departure, we will learn increasingly how to understand institutions in a psychological way. We will not however deduce the institutions from psychological laws or explain them by elementary psychological phenomena. ¹⁸

The social scientist can also glean a great deal from "statistics," "statistical uniformities," "facts," e. g., death rates, suicide rates, immigration patterns, life chances, etc. ¹⁹ These are data to be "taken into account." But however important, Weber clearly distinguishes the techniques of data collection from the construction of analytic, sociological types (which we have hitherto referred to as ideal-types). The collection of statistics are "treated by a different method from the other; they become conditions, stimuli, furthering or hindering circumstances of action." ²⁰ J. Rex has made a similar point when he observed, "research into what Weber called the 'life chances' of human beings strictly speaking forms no part of sociology. True it poses a problem for the sociologist who asks whether the differential distribution of life chances is indicative of a particular power system or whether it means the emergence of segregated ways of life. But by itself it is simply a part of the study of human biology in which exact descriptive and mathematical techniques have been developed to a high level." ²¹

Having pointed to guidelines for investigation, to signposts for

the social scientific enterprise, we have, of course, as yet said nothing of how, concretely, Weber suggests we establish the existence of a causal relationship and how one might employ his guidelines, concepts, and methods. It is to these issues that we must now turn.

In his critique of Edward Meyer's methodological writings,²² Weber makes both a crucial and central distinction. Meyer, he points out, is in "danger of confusing two fundamentally different but often identified categories: the ratio essendi and the ratio cognoscendi."²³ The distinction is between two forms of analysis and it is explicated, albeit in embryonic form, three pages later. Weber talks of

. . . this division of the logical use of data given by cultural reality into (1) conceptualization with the illustrative use of "particular facts" as "typical" instances of an abstract "concept," i. e. as an heuristic instrument on the one hand--and (2) integration of the "particular fact" as a link, i. e. as a real causal factor into a real, hence concrete context with the use among other things of the products of conceptualization on the one hand as exemplificatory and on the other as heuristic devices--entails the distinction between what Rickert called the "natural scientific" and Windelband the "nomothetic" (ad 1) and the logical goal of the "historical cultural" sciences (ad 2). It also implies the only justified sense in which history can be called a science of reality (Wirklichkeitswissenschaft). For the meaning of history as a science of reality can only be that it treats particular elements of reality not merely as heuristic instruments but as the objects of knowledge, and particular causal connections not as premises of knowledge but as real causal factors.²⁴

The methods of analysis of the form of ratio cognoscendi are said to have a different logical structure from that of ratio essendi. The

former represents the scientist's attempt to construct type concepts (of man, of organizations, of authority, of culture, of socio-economic structures) which are developed and elaborated as heuristic devices. The latter form represents the attempt to establish causal linkages in explaining historical events. Both moments of the neo-Kantian distinction of "generalizing and individualizing tendencies"²⁵ are present but in a form that would have surprised Rickert. For as we have seen, he associated the Kulturwissenschaften with the predominant use of the historical or individualizing method, whereas Weber has located within the human sciences the applicability of both forms of analysis. Furthermore, it is our contention that by the time of Economy and Society, Weber's fully developed work embodies these two modes of analysis as two distinct types of causal analysis. That is to say that ratio cognoscendi no longer can be understood (as in the Methodology essays) as being only concerned with the construction of (ideal) type concepts for heuristic purposes. The distinction between the two modes of analysis, their development, and their consequences need careful attention.

The treatment of these two forms of analysis differs in the methodological works over time. In "Objectivity in the Social Sciences"²⁶ both are present; the major discussion evolves around concept formation but, when Weber talks of causality, he is talking

about the method of ratio essendi.

To the extent that our science imputes particular causes--be they economic or non-economic--to economic cultural phenomena, it seeks "historical" knowledge.²⁷

In "Critical Studies in the Logic of the Cultural Sciences,"²⁸ the distinctions between modes of analysis are again present, but here the primary concern revolves around causal analysis and the extension and elaboration of the techniques of ratio essendi. In Economy and Society there is a significant shift in emphases. He moves the focus of attention towards the establishment of uniformities of social and economic organization, to the problems underpinning the formulation of general principles, generic types, ideal-types; toward sociology. Let us proceed more slowly and examine each position in turn.

The determination of (hypothetical) "laws" and (psychological) factors is only the first of many operations which lead us to the desired type of knowledge, it is a preliminary task. The essential stages of analysis include:

The analysis of the historically given individual configuration of those "factors" and their significant concrete interaction, conditioned by their historical context and especially the rendering intelligible of the basis and type of this significance would be the next task to be achieved. This task must be achieved, it is true, by the utilization of the preliminary analysis but it is nonetheless an entirely new and distinct task. The tracing as far into the past as possible of the individual features of these historically evolved configurations which are

contemporaneously significant, and their historical explanation by antecedent and equally individual configurations would be the third task. Finally the prediction of possible future constellations would be a conceivable fourth task.²⁹

In "Objectivity in the Social Sciences" this "entirely new and distinct task" and the "third task" are early expressions of the two modes of analysis. Weber offers an example in a discussion of exchange and the market. Here he clearly distinguishes between the analysis of general aspects of exchanges (a "highly important task") and the application of the concepts which we are provided by the investigation. The application entails their use as heuristic devices for historical, causal analysis.³⁰ The constituent elements of causal analysis are given in the techniques of ratio essendi.

Although both moments of the investigatory procedure are inadequately developed and little discussed in this essay (ratio essendi receiving fuller theoretical treatment in the critique of Edward Meyer), one topic does attract Weber's attention: the specification and usage of ideal-types. Weber does not consider his discussion of ideal-type concepts original, a new form of conceptual method. Rather he feels he is making explicit what was always implicit in past procedure and practice.³¹ Since the status of these concepts has already been discussed, it is sufficient here to sharpen the context of their usage.³²

The interpretation and explanation of an historical configuration requires the construction and elaboration of concepts which are specifically delineated for that purpose and which, as we have seen, cannot and do not reflect "universally 'essential' properties of reality."³³ As "mental constructs," these concepts are not "descriptions" nor are they "hypotheses." But they can assist and further both description and explanation.

Ideal-types are not created in and for themselves. Their utility can be judged only in relation to a specific concrete problem. For example, in formulating an ideal-type of a phenomenon such as rational capitalism the "social scientist attempts to delineate, through the empirical examination of specific forms of capitalism, the most important respects (in relation to the concerns which he has set himself) in which rational capitalism is distinctive."²⁴ The ideal is created and developed with empirical analysis and it, in turn, sharpens that analysis. As A. Giddens has noted, "Weber concentrates his discussion upon the formulation of ideal types which relate to the elucidation of specific historical configurations, since this presents the clearest differentiation of descriptive and ideal-types. But ideal-type concepts are not solely limited to this objective, and there are various kinds of ideal-types which, without being simple descriptive concepts, nevertheless are generic in character."³⁵ The

question arises, then: when does a descriptive classification of phenomena become an ideal-type?

Ideal-types (the "one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view") are to be distinguished from the descriptive-type which involves "the abstract synthesis of those traits which are common to numerous concrete phenomena."³⁵ "The transition from descriptive to ideal-types takes place when we move from descriptive classification of phenomena towards the explanatory or theoretical analysis of these phenomena."³⁷ Once again this can be illustrated in reference to the discussion of "exchange." Weber holds that the notion of "exchange" is descriptive to the extent that we observe that a large number of human actions may be labelled and classified as exchange transactions. "But if we attempt to make the notion an element in marginal utility theory in economics, we construct an ideal-type of "exchange" which is based upon a purely rational construct."³⁸

The role of ideal-types and concept formation is central to Weber's early methodological essay. Its exposition highlights his stress on the importance of the process of their formation as an independent (yet obviously interlinked) stage of analysis. The emergent concepts (a type of man, authority, economy, etc.) as heuristic and/or expository instruments are argued to provide increasing clarity and precision for historical causal analysis.

This procedure gives rise to no methodological doubts so long as we clearly keep in mind that ideal-typical developmental constructs and history are to be sharply distinguished from each other, and that the construct here is no more than the means for explicitly and validly imputing an historical event to its real causes while eliminating those which on the basis of our present knowledge seem possible.³⁹

As yet our discussion of "ratio cognoscendi" has not shown it to be a separate stage of causal analysis (although types such as "handicraft economy," "early Christianity," "rational capitalism," the "modern state" have potential explanatory power and usage). Weber was to develop this initial discussion of types and concept formation several stages further: before doing so, his whole conception of ratio essendi was to be explicated.

Since "the meaning of history as a science of reality can only be that it treats particular elements of reality not merely as heuristic instruments, but as the subject of knowledge and particular causal connections not as premises of knowledge but as real causal factors,"⁴⁰ the question arises as to how one can establish the validity of "real causal" factors, causal linkages.

Obviously not by the simple "observation" of the course of events in any case, certainly not if one understands by that a "presuppositionless" mental "photograph" of all the physical and psychic events occurring in the space-time region in question--even if such were possible. Rather does the attribution of effects to causes take place through a process of

thought which includes a series of abstractions. The first and decisive one occurs when we conceive of one or a few of the actual causal components as modified in a certain direction and then ask ourselves whether under the conditions which have been thus changed, the same effect (the same, i. e., in "essential" points) or some other effect "would be expected."⁴¹

Here, in "Critical Studies in the Logic of Cultural Sciences," Weber is introducing a key notion, the notion of "objective possibility."

The category was derived by Weber from a study of certain theories of criminal law. The reasons for and significance of this position are well brought out by Andrew Arate:

Objective necessity has no place in criminal law, because it does not leave room for a dimension of subjective knowledge; foreknowledge and intention. But a criminal case must be ultimately decided according to evaluations of this subjective dimension. Thus criminal cases must be reinterpreted according to an objective dynamic that allows for more than one possibility, even if we know that only one of these was realized. In other words, a man can be punished for his subjective role in an event only if the event was influenced by this role. But that means that without that role other possible events could have taken place instead of the event that did.⁴² Weber adopts this principle for historical research. The adoption means, among other things, that the interest of law to locate a subjective dimension in the past is replaced by the (contemporary) interest of the historian. The stress on a prior interest is important because Weber rejects the possibility of (1) the synthesis of a historical totality in-itself and (2) the presuppositionless photographic observation of facts. The a priori interest of the

historian isolates and generalizes individual components of events to locate the possibilities within the dynamic of the past. 43, 44

The analytic technique is a means whereby one can discriminate between factors which are relevant and those which are not, in accounting for certain observed events and effects.⁴⁵ In his classic example, Weber recasts Edward Meyer's treatment of the significance of the outcome of the battle of Marathon for the consequential development of Hellenic and Western European culture.

The historian's interest in the battle, itself a "relatively" small and contained event, is precisely in its consequences for later developments and with the thought of what might have been had the Persians won.⁴⁶ In order to demonstrate that the battle was "causally significant" in a particular way, we are asked to consider alternative possible outcomes. Two possible course of events are presented (i. e., the effects of Greek versus Persian influence over the development of the Western World). The procedure in this kind of causal analysis is necessarily one of abstraction, involving "imaginative reconstruction"; the projection of what would have occurred if events had been qualitatively and quantitatively different.⁴⁷

The assessment of causal significance of an historical fact will begin with the posing of the following question: in the event of the exclusion of that fact from the complex of factors which are taken into account as

co-determinants, or in the event of its modification in a certain direction, could the course of events, in accordance with general empirical rules (Erfahrungsregeln), have taken a direction in any way different in any features which would be decisive for our interest? 48

In the case of the battle of Marathon, the consequences of Persian victory would have been decisive for the subsequent formation and advancement of Hellenic and, therefore, Western European culture. One can conclude that had the battle taken a turn to the Persian advantage, the outcome would have been "adequate" to produce a qualitatively different pattern in the development of the Western World. 49

This method of "imaginative reconstruction" is the process whereby the historian can attribute significance to causal factors and establish "adequate causation" through "judgments of possibilities." Furthermore, Weber argues, "we can . . . well enough estimate the relative 'degree' to which the outcome is 'favoured' by the general rule by a comparison involving the consideration of how other conditions operating differently 'would' have favoured it. When we carry through this comparison in our imagination by sufficiently numerous conceivable modifications of the constellation of conditions, then a considerable degree of certainty for a judgement of the 'degree' of objective possibility is conceivable, at least in principle." 50

Despite the familiar and fully justified notice which warns against the transference of the calculus of probabilities into other domains, it is clear that the . . . case of favourable chance or "objective probability" determined from general empirical propositions or from empirical frequencies, has its analogues in the sphere of all concrete causality, including the historical.⁵¹

But we cannot, Weber immediately adds, assign a numerical measure of chance, because what is "wholly lacking" in historical analysis is what would have to be presupposed in order to assign quantitative measures -- "the existence of 'absolute chance' or certain measurable or countable aspects of phenomena." if we ask about the possibility of predicting an event, it is given in the historical enterprise to attempt answers which may vary depending upon "the degree of knowledge of empirical regularities" -- ranging from the unpredictable to various degrees of objective possibility and objective probability.⁵² These answers, however, cannot be quantified.

(It should be noted that Weber does not mean to imply that this "thought experiment" should take place without consideration of past relevant studies and existing empirical knowledge. "The simplest historical judgement represents not only a categorically formed intellectual construct but it also does acquire a valid content until we bring to the "given" reality the whole body of our "nomological" empirical knowledge."⁵³)

* * * * *

From the early methodological essays to Economy and Society, Weber shifts the (methodological) emphasis from ratio essendi to ratio cognoscendi; from history to sociology. The philosophical backdrop and underpinnings of this method remain unrelinquished. The same basic positions are taken for granted. The concern for sociology is also not "new." For in its fundamental conception, it is an extension of the earlier focus on ration cognoscendi, etc.⁵⁴ Thus Weber states bluntly:

It has continually been assumed as obvious that the science of sociology seeks to formulate type concepts and generalized uniformities of empirical process. This distinguishes it from history, which is oriented to the causal analysis and explanation of individual actions, structures, and personalities possessing cultural significance.⁵³

The full text reveals that the envisaged sociological project is both involved and complicated. In what is by now a classic passage, entitled "The Definitions of Sociology and Social Action," Weber says:

Sociology (in the sense in which this highly ambiguous word is used here) is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects.⁵⁶

Sociology is, on this conception, as Weber says, "highly ambiguous." For it is conceived to involve (1) interpretive understanding of social action in order, Weber suggests, to arrive at (2) a causal explanation. However, a question arises: Does Weber mean (a) that sociology is

just concerned with (1) interpretive understanding which would provide empirical information about general principles etc., to (2) i. e., causal analysis, which is the sole province of the methods of ratio essendi (as it has been so far in our exegesis)? Or does he mean (b) that sociology itself involves a form of analysis capable of causal explanations (of social action)? Weber's stated position is not transparent between these two alternative positions, although it will be argued here that despite the fact that discussion and analysis at the level of ratio essendi always take their point of departure from analysis and formulations at the level of ratio cognoscendi, textual analysis suggests strongly that ratio cognoscendi itself embodies position (b) above. In other words, whereas history is seen as primarily involving analysis to establish causal linkages between "historical individuals," sociology is conceived as also embodying the capacity to offer a causal account of social action. Weber's position needs careful explication. We can begin by asking what Weber means by social action.

"In 'action' is included," he suggests, "all human behaviour when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it. . . . Action is social in so far as, by virtue of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual (or individuals), takes account of the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in

its course. "57

"Meaning," Weber envisages, may be of two kinds:

The term may refer first to the actual existing meaning in the given concrete case of a particular actor, or to the average or approximate meaning attributable to a given plurality of actors; or secondly to the theoretically-conceived pure type of subjective meaning attributed to the hypothetical actor or actors in a given type of action. 58

The line between meaningful action and behavior (which is reactive and nonreflexive) "cannot be sharply drawn." Many areas of human activity--important for sociological investigation--lie between the two, e. g., traditional behavior, mystical experiences ("which cannot be adequately communicated in words") and many psycho-physical processes ("discernible" at best "by the expert psychologist"). However, empathy and/or a "complete" recapitulation of an experience, "is not a prerequisite to understanding": "one need not have been Caesar in order to understand Caesar. "59

Interpretative sociology, Weber argued, must be based on intersubjectively recognized methods of procedure, for verifiable, reproducible accuracy, if it is to be counted amongst the sciences. There was no doubt, Weber believed, that the canons of scientific wisdom would be met. "The basis for certainty in understanding can be either rational, which can be further subdivided into logical or mathematical or it can be of an emotionally empathic or artistically appreciative

quality."⁶⁰ The latter is attained when, through sympathetic participation, we can adequately grasp the emotional context in which the action took place. Rational understanding is most complete when we attain an intellectual grasp of the "action elements in their intended context of meaning." It is best illustrated in the use, by a subject of mathematical reasoning or formal logic. "We have a perfectly clear understanding of what it means when somebody employs the proposition $2 \times 2 = 4$, or the Pythagorean theorem in reasoning or argument, or when somebody correctly carries out a logical train of reasoning according to our accepted modes of thinking."⁶¹ Likewise, we also understand what a person is doing "when he tries to achieve certain ends by choosing appropriate means on the basis of the facts of the situation as experience has accustomed us to interpret them."⁶² An interpretation of this type of rationally purposeful action (reminiscent of the Aristotelean idea of "practical syllogisms")⁶³ possesses the highest degree of verifiable certainty.

On the other hand, much human activity is not oriented to such explicitly given ends or values. Furthermore, the more these ends and values differ from our own, the more cultural distance between investigator and the subject of study, "the more difficult it is for us to make them understandable by imaginatively participating in them." Empathy, Weber tells us, is an important means of obtaining

understanding of social action but is only one technique to help us achieve such understanding. Understanding requires of the sociologist both emotional sympathy (if possible empathy) and an "intellectual interpretation," i. e., an intellectual "grasping" and "catching," of the "subjective intelligibility" of action.*

Given our "basis for certainty in understanding," Weber subdivides further the two essential types of Verstehen he distinguished. The first, "direct understanding" (the grasping of the meaning of an action through direct observation), may be subdivided according to whether it involves rational or emotive actions. Both are simply illustrated. "We understand perfectly" what it means when somebody "employs the proposition $2 \times 2 = 4$." Likewise, we "understand an outbreak of anger as manifested by facial expressions, exclamations, or irrational emotional reactions." The second type of Verstehen, "explanatory understanding" (erklärendes Verstehen) is more complex and difficult and it is this form that occupies Weber's attention the most. Here a particular act is placed:

*However, Weber briefly notes, "understanding" might fail due to major cultural differences, etc. Then, he states, "we must simply accept them [the overt and resultant action, etc. D. H.] as given data."

. . . in an understandable sequence of motivation,* the understanding of which can be treated as an explanation of the actual course of behaviour. Thus for a science which is concerned with the subjective meaning of action, explanation requires a grasp of the complex of meaning in which an actual course of understandable action thus interpreted belongs. ⁶⁴

If the action is rational we are able to grasp the content without difficulty. "Thus we understand the chopping of wood or aiming of a gun in terms of motive in addition to direct observation if we know that the woodchopper is working for a wage or is chopping a supply of firewood for his own use or possibly is doing it for recreation."⁶⁶ If the action is emotive we may attain a similar "motivational understanding." For example, we may understand an outburst of anger if we know that it has been provoked by "jealousy, injured pride, or and insult."**

*"A motive," on Weber's view, "is a complex of subjective meaning which seems to the actor himself or to the observer an adequate ground for the conduct in question."⁶⁵ Weber's concept of "motive" (or "subjective meaning") appears as a "catch-all" category for a subject's intended meanings, reasons, motives, common-sense knowledge, and procedures. We briefly discuss some of these concepts, conflated by Weber, at the end of this chapter.

**Weber recognizes that "in a large number of cases" it is extremely difficult to arrive at a "satisfactory interpretation of motives." He argues that "verification of subjective interpretation by comparison with the concrete course of events is, as in the case of all hypothesis, indispensable." A few cases are "susceptible to psychological experimentation." "For the rest there remains only the possibility of comparing the largest possible number of historical or contemporary processes which, while otherwise similar, differ

We can apply the term "adequacy on the level of meaning" to "the subjective interpretation of a coherent course of conduct when and insofar as, according to our habitual modes of thought and feeling, its component parts taken in their mutual relation are recognized to constitute a 'typical' complex of meaning."⁶⁷ However, such adequacy is not to be taken as having synonymy with causal adequacy. There is, of course, in Weber's opinion no simple and direct relationship between motives, "complexes of meaning" and action. But there is scope to explore whether or not there are systematic interconnections between motives, etc., and action. In order to demonstrate such interconnections and, therefore, "explanatory significance," we must, Weber contends, establish "empirical generalizations" which relate an understandable sequence of motivation to a specified class of assessable consequences.⁶⁸ An alternative form of causal analysis to that subsumed by ratio essendi seems to be suggested.

A correct causal analysis, Weber states, pivots on our capacity "to determine that there is a probability, which in the rare ideal case can be numerically stated, but is always in some sense calculable, that a given observable event (overt or subjective) will be followed or

in the one decisive point of their relation to the particular motive or factor the role of which is being investigated. This is a fundamental task of comparative sociology. Often unfortunately . . . we are left to the 'imaginary experiment'. . . to arrive at a causal judgement" (T.S.E.O., p. 97.)

accompanied by another event."⁶⁹ Therefore, a correct causal interpretation of a concrete course of action is arrived at when the relationship between overt action and motives has become meaningfully comprehensible and at the same time shown to be typical.

A correct causal interpretation of typical action means that the process which is claimed to be typical is shown to be both adequately grasped on the level of meaning and at the same time the interpretation is to some degree causally adequate. If adequacy in respect to meaning is lacking, then no matter how high the degree of uniformity and how precisely its probability can be numerically determined, it is still an incomprehensible statistical probability, whether dealing with overt or subjective processes. On the other hand, even the most perfect adequacy on the level of meaning has causal significance from a sociological point of view only in so far as there is some kind of proof for the existence of a probability that action in fact normally takes the course which has been held to be meaningful. For this there must be some degree of determinable frequency of approximation to an average or pure type.

Statistical uniformities constitute understandable types of action . . . and thus constitute "sociological generalisations" only when they can be regarded as manifestations of the understandable subjective meaning of a course of social action.⁷⁰

In sociology, if we are applying the methods of explanatory understanding, a correct causal analysis of social action is stipulated to require adequacy at the level of meaning and causation. It is crucially important here to note Weber's remarks on causality. For what Weber seems to be suggesting is that, given one adequately grasps "the level of meaning," a correct analysis also depends on our capacity to show causal significance, i. e., that the relationship

between "motives," a complex of subjective meaning and a given action, is empirically significant (i. e., typical). This will be the case if there is proof "for the existence of a probability that action in fact normally takes the course which has been held to be meaningful." If an "empirically significant" relationship can be established between "motives," etc., and overt action, we have established adequate grounds to ascribe typical causation, i. e., "motives" can be causes. On the basis of such an analysis of experiences in particular situations with particular outcomes, we can make "sociological generalizations" about understandable, regular types of actions. An example of such an analysis is P. Walton's and L. Taylor's study of industrial sabotage. The study attempts an analysis of "the meanings or motives which lie behind such action,"⁷¹ (i. e., industrial sabotage) within the context of "an imaginative reconstruction of the contextual situation in which the actor performs."⁷² They find three pure types showing that individuals attempt "to destroy or mutilate objects in the work environment in order (i) to reduce tension, or (ii) to facilitate the work process, or (iii) to assert some form of direct control."⁷³ The types that are presented are pure in that they do not reflect the actual behavior of any person, but they can be used as a benchmark against which to analyze an actual course of behavior.

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It is important, J. Eldridge has pointed out, "to distinguish between two kinds of probabilistic statement, both of which can properly be thought of as conditional generalizations. The one we might term an empirical tendency statement based upon statistical knowledge--for example, the tendency of certain groups of people to be located in the commanding positions in a society. The other we might term ideal typical constructions with built-in statements about probability, which may be utilized as a benchmark against which to analyze the actual course of behaviour."⁷⁴ And these ideal-typical constructions of action, as we have seen, if they are the result of explanatory understanding, rest on a form of causal analysis.

If there is to be a scientific analysis of social action--an analysis that proceeds beyond description--it has, Weber argues, to construct ideal types. Through the use of such types (constructed on ideas of rational action [Zweckrational] or value-oriented action [Wertrational] or emotive or traditionally oriented action), "it is possible to compare with this the actual course of action and to arrive at a causal explanation of the observed deviations," which can be "attributed to the influence of " logical fallacies, personal factors, and a host of other possible elements. Although "as in the case of every generalizing science the abstract character of the concepts of sociology is responsible for the fact that, compared with actual historical reality, they are

relatively lacking in fullness of concrete content. To compensate for this disadvantage, sociological analysis can offer a greater precision of concepts . . . by striving for the highest possible degree of adequacy on the level of meaning. . . . "75 And if our pure action concepts are only constructed on the basis of "direct understanding" (or if we cannot demonstrate causal adequacy in an attempted explanatory understanding), adequacy on the level of meaning is the only way we can compensate for the lack of fullness of our generalizations. These generalizations, nevertheless, add very important precision to any historical analysis (which might employ a whole range of types) that we might make.

In all cases, rational or irrational, sociological analysis both abstracts from reality and at the same time helps us to understand it, in that it shows with what degree of approximation a concrete historical phenomenon may be in one aspect "feudal" in another "patrimonial" in another "bureaucratic," and in still another "charismatic." In order to give a precise meaning to these terms, it is necessary for the sociologist to formulate pure ideal types of the corresponding forms of action which in each case involve the highest possible degree of logical integration, by virtue of their complete adequacy at the level of meaning. But precisely because this is true, it is probably seldom if ever that a real phenomenon can be found which corresponds exactly to any one of these ideally constructed pure types.⁷⁶

To briefly summarize we should note that Weber's emergent methodological position is one that combines and locates the two movements of the neo-Kantian view of the methods of the sciences

within a single framework. Both ratio cognoscendi and ratio essendi provide us with a form of causal analysis. Ratio cognoscendi also generates heuristic instruments, formulations that ratio essendi embraces as a point of departure. But it is sociology and history that provide the developed methodological position for investigation. Weber thus distinguishes sciences oriented toward generalization and individuation, toward sociology and history, but distinguishes only one methodological framework for the human sciences as a whole.

* * * * *

The tensions we have discerned and discussed so far revolved around Weber's account of the relationship between fact and value, theory and practice, and that which he took for granted and subsumed. Our present account of his methodological procedures highlight a further central issue: that the very logical structure of Weber's approach to the human sciences and theory formation, predetermines the possible applications of the knowledge generated by such sciences. In other words, that the very structure of knowledge generated by Weber's conception of rational method is restricted in its potential usage and that the investigatory procedures structure this bias. The suggestion needs careful explication.

For Weber the methods of ratio cognoscendi has as an essential

task the establishment of types, with the aim of finding out reliable general rules of social behavior. They can be applied at two levels. Firstly, they can be used for the empirical study of social action where the sociologist attempts to explore and elaborate relationships between motives and actions, which may then help to explain actual courses of behavior. Secondly, they can be used--as the emphasis in the Methodology essays and on "Direct Understanding" suggests--for the construction of types by an investigator (without the empirical study entailed by the previous level of application) and then employed purely for heuristic purposes in the application of the methods of ratio essendi. In the first named procedure, Weber can be seen as attempting to provide a methodological framework for a hermeneutic account of social action. We will say more about this later. To the second named procedures, which are also hermeneutic in intent and predominate in Weber's own studies and empirical work, a number of points can be made that "connect" a great deal of what we have said to date. (In the following discussion we will refer to these two levels of application as position A and B, respectively.)

To begin with it can be noted that these investigatory procedures are representative of more than is made explicit; they are a "consistent expression of a quite definite attitude of man to reality."⁷⁷ In a comment that summarizes many of our themes to date, Loewith has said:

The ideal-typical construct has as its foundation a specific "illusionless" man who has been thrown back upon himself alone by a world become objectively meaningless and sober, and therefore, to that extent, emphatically "realistic." He is therefore forced to forge by himself any objective meaning and a meaningful relationship to things, and in particular the relationship to reality, as one specifically his own: in short "to create" a meaning, practically and theoretically. People, state, and individual therefore can no longer be regarded and integrated as uniform substances with deeper backgrounds -- not merely because it would be unscientific but because such an attitude would be marked by transcendental prejudices and ideals, and the world view into which "we have been placed" no longer justifies such prejudices. "78

In a world that has eaten of the tree of knowledge, that "suffers the fate of the modern era," it is the individual who alone is sanctified.

A pivotal presupposition, which Weber tries to justify through empirical reference is that

. . . since all kinds of objectivities, as a result of their disenchantment (through rationalization) can no longer be imputed an independent meaning, it is only the "individual," the single man dependent solely upon himself who is truly real and justified in his existence. 79

Weber asserts the purely methodological meaning of "individualistic" and "rational" definitions, types, and constructs and denies their substantive character and value-relatedness.⁸⁰ However, his method embraces, as we have shown, an atomistic and individualistic ontology, an evaluation of a mode of rationality and practice, and a commitment to the production of certain forms of knowledge, which alone are considered objective.

As such, his work is also ambivalent between an explicit atomistic and rationalistic conception of the totality and an implicit organicist or formalist conception.⁸¹ In the former case, the whole can never be known. We can only know elements of the whole and in Weber's view even these from only a partial and one-sided view. This conception of the totality is clearly the view that Weber explicitly holds. As a consequence a methodological individualism can be seen to permeate his approach in that firstly, what we can know of the world is fragmentary and depends on our constituting standpoint (value-orientations) and secondly, if one wants to understand what passes, for example, under "collective" conceptions, then according to Weber "the clear-cut sharply defined analysis of the various possible standpoints is the only path which will lead us out of verbal confusion."⁸² "Collective" conceptions are important and useful for an initial orientation to an issue, but should always be superseded by analytical concepts which can put the research topic into perspective.

However, Weber's approach also embodies an implicit reference and commitment to a formalist conception of the totality (although he explicitly rejected such an approach in his methodological writings). His work embraces interpretations of the whole of society and the totality of tendencies and, therefore, subsumes "a more pretentious concept of sociology." Here the conception of the whole is formalized

and is raised to a position of domination over the parts. Social reality is conceived as being held within an "iron cage," an inescapable condition.⁸³

It is, in fact, Weber's implicit conception of the nature of totality as a formal whole which becomes the empirical basis and hence partial justification of an individualistic ontology and his methodological commitment to an atomistic conception of the totality. Since we have already considered these issues at some length, let us here firstly, direct attention to his explicit methodological commitments (and then come back to his implicit methodological "interests").

The establishment, application, and use of ideal types is central to Weber's study of history and the working out of historical explanations and "real" causal factors. The nature and quality of the historical relationships these procedures uncover have been well summarized by A. Arato:

In the first instance, the concept of ideal type seems to methodologically negate the historicity of the spectacle it constructs.⁸⁴ However, Weber considered ideal typic analysis only a means toward (and not the whole of) historical analysis. He believed that the same problem complex can be, and must be, cut into from the points of view of several (at times opposing) ideal types. But the aim of this procedure is the imputation of the "adequate causation" of a unique cultural event, or rather the reconstruction of the "objective possibilities" of the unique cultural problem complex.⁸⁵ The adequate cause is comprised of all the elements (each formulated as ideal types: e. g., "Puritan ethic," "rational law," "modern science," "free labor," "bureaucratic state")

which made the emergence of a unique cultural complex (also formulated as an ideal-type, e. g. , "capitalism," "the spirit of capitalism," and ultimately Western rationality) objectively possible. But the adequate cause is not yet a historical dynamic: the possibility of history is not yet its reality. Weber seeks this dynamic through his concept of "elective affinity" (Wahlverwandschaft). He rejects the possibility, e. g. , that "Western rationality" is a whole that develops through its special cases, e. g. , Protestant ethic, rational law, etc. , because these elements move in distinctly separate spheres: in their original form they are not even comparable. Nevertheless, these elements are the givens whose interaction "establishes the rationality which each possesses in outline form," each "acquires its historical meaning only through its encounter with the others." 86, 87

The results of Weberian analysis are an account/explanation of an aspect of the historical social world, which is always partial and one-sided, and takes place through concepts which capture an aspect of this world but cannot grasp it in itself. Weber explicitly rejects the possibility of knowing the historical totality or any of its parts in themselves. The analysis is always external to the object of investigation because this object, ultimately, cannot be known. The social scientist imposes order on the "infinite cultural manifold," in his/her attempts to account for a segment of this "flux." In other words, the social scientist gives and imposes form and categories on the social world and creates valid representations. But a plethora of forms, types, and explanations are, of course, legitimate and valid (so long as the procedures and canons of rational

method are adhered to).

Central to Weber's methodological position are the dichotomies between the world that can and cannot be known, between the knowing subject and the ultimately unknowable object. Weber attempts to locate all cognition and rationality on the side of the knower. There is an empirical basis and justification for this view and these dichotomies; they reflect the diremption of man and the world in the age of disenchantment and, consequentially, new found autonomy. There is also a crucial epistemological foundation. It is clearly Kantian. For Weber ultimately reproduces the Kantian dualism between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds; the worlds we can know and that which exists in itself and is unknowable. We say ultimately because Weber has his own version of this position. Firstly, its genesis is to be accounted for historically. It is an historical derivation and product (the result of rationalization and disenchantment). Secondly, the outcome of these historical processes was held to be the realization that reality is an objectively meaningless, valueless, infinite flux, the overcoming of which Weber saw as possible only through individual commitment and decision which could create and impose form and potentially "objective" and valid knowledge. A number of points about these issues can usefully be made to elucidate Weber's view.

The Kantian doctrine of transcendental categories serves to bring and tie together two realms or levels of phenomena:

. . . (1) the cognitions, perceptions, intuitions, feelings, etc., of the particular individual, which are commonly referred to through the use of terms such as Erlebnis (lived experience) or simply Leben (life in the sense in which German Lebensphilosophie developed the term; as human life and experience . . . and (2) categories, forms, means of expression, and symbols which are universal in some fashion, and shared by a community of individuals, thus making possible transpersonal, inter-subjective discourse about the contents of Erlebnis and Leben.⁸⁸

Kant's Critique of Pure Reason brought these two levels together and attempted to bind them into an indisputable unity.

If the receptivity of our mind, its power of receiving representations in so far as it is in any wise affected, is to be entitled sensibility, then the mind's power of producing representations from itself, the spontaneity of knowledge, should be called the understanding. Our nature is so constituted that our intuition can never be other than sensible; that is, it contains only the mode in which we are affected by objects. The faculty, on the other hand, which enables us to think the object of sensible intuition is the understanding. To neither of these powers may a preference be given over the other. Without sensibility no object would be given to us, without understanding no object would be thought. Thoughts without contents are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind.⁸⁹

As James Schmidt has point out:

With the requirements that empirical knowledge must be viewed as consisting of both a general, inter-subjectively shared power of producing representations ("the spontaneity of knowledge") and a-specific, intuited, personal experience ("the receptivity of our mind") Kant has given a solution to the problem of

knowledge which neither sacrifices the individual's experience to the dictates of a higher or more enlightend intuition (such as a wisdom which can only be achieved by a limited group within the society) nor dissolves the general images and representations of discourse into a babel of competing claims and descriptions. Disagreements may arise between individual experience, but there exist reasonable ways of settling them, since both the spontaneity of knowledge and the receptivity of mind are general species traits of all human beings. Kant is able to win this battle, however, only at the cost of the problematic Ding an sich.⁹⁰

Weber follows this Kantian position very closely. For, as we have seen, he provides a solution to the problem of knowledge which also grants central importance to the individual's experience, values, faith, and yet also does not dissolve general forms and representations into solipsism. In the human sciences Weber both preserves the autonomous constituting role of the individual and the possibility of rational, inter-subjective discourse. We are prevented from collapsing into a babel of competing claims (skepticism) by adherence to the canons of rational scientific method. Weber wins this battle also only at the cost of reproducing Kant's dualism between the phenomenal and noumenal realms and establishing the problematic Ding an sich. Even if the object of investigation is another subject or oneself, there is a noumenal realm, which we cannot know.

It is very important to realize the consequences of this view for the human science. This further dualism insures that a critically

reflexive understanding of the genesis of different values, value-orientations, etc., which we referred to at the end of the previous chapter, cannot become part of the human sciences program. Weber's approach and methods, with its "individualistic" and "rational" definitions, structure the world as to make such a project anathema. Why this is so needs careful explication.

It has already been shown that Weber's attempt to maintain the dualisms of fact and value and theory and practice masks a commitment to a particular schema of values and practice. It has also been argued that Weber's methodological position embraces an evaluation of the meaning of the rationalized world, as it subsumes formal rationality as a position supposedly free of evaluations and value-judgments (from which it criticizes all other views as ideological, i. e., embodying commitments to practical and value judgments). It can also be noted, as previously pointed out, that on this view reality is both the object of analysis and the guiding thread for the interpretation of this reality. This is because Weber claims the disenchanting, rationalized world, or totality, to be of a particular quality and kind, i. e., meaningless, etc., and therefore can only be given meaning and known if one pursues a particular form of method, etc. But now we should note that we are in a circle. For what is (claimed to be) known has become the standard of what can be known. It is like

Kant's demand that we should know the cognitive faculty before we know.

Even if we leave aside this last point, the consequences of the dualism between the world of appearances that we can know and the essence that we cannot, can be seen to have further implications. For since the world (or an aspect of it) cannot be known in itself, there is no justification available, no privileged standpoint, etc., which can claim access to it. Quite literally, in the end, one man's value-orientations, concepts, etc., are able to shed as much light on this world as another's (so long, of course, as they employ the rational method). For historical reasons, there now exists a philosophical position that can justify the inapplicability of a critical reflexive understanding of the "social world."

In Weber's view we can give a partial description of the processes whereby people acquire their values, world-views, etc., but we cannot give a critical account of these. Weber can help give an individual an account of the ultimate meaning of his or her own conduct and even point out the one-sided, limited nature of this person's views and orientations. But Weber can only do so by pointing out the legitimacy of competing claims, explanations, and by arguing that the totality is objectively meaningless, etc., outside of individually grounded characterizations. He cannot, in the end, arbitrate

between claims and claim the ideological nature of certain values, standpoints, etc., i. e. , that they are not only limited and one-sided but also false and distorted. He cannot do this because he has no conception of a false and distorted view of the world (given we follow the correct methodological procedures). He only claims ideology when value-judgments enter into science. The philosophical justification of this position is, of course, that since we cannot know the object of investigation in-itself, we cannot ground any privileged access to this world. As we have seen and see again here, Weber's position condones a situation of theoretical relativism, a pluralism in the human sciences and allows no objective ground for discriminating amongst competing accounts and explanations and voicing a preference. Weber's methods and concepts remain external to the world in-itself and in so doing find a philosophical ground and justification for relativism.

Hence inquiry into the conditions of possible knowledge can only be meaningfully pursued in the form of methodological inquiry into the rules for the construction and corroboration of scientific theories. Weber's methodological "discussions" with his contemporaries should be seen in this light.⁹¹ The subjects that proceed according to these rules lose their significance. But this view, firstly, as we have already repeatedly noted, makes a dogma of

method and masks a commitment to the values and consequences of formal rationality, which cannot be justified within its own terms of reference, i.e., requires a practically reasoned justification which is not made. Secondly, it rests on a philosophical argument that dirempts the world into phenomenal and noumenal realms. The question remains: is this view and argument justified?

To answer this question fully and adequately is beyond the bounds of this work. It would require "nothing less" than a recapitulation of Hegel's critique of Kant. Here we can only suggest a number of points and arguments that point to the inadequacy of the Kantian dualism and Weber's failure to grasp the dialectic of experience. The arguments and directions we suggest here are taken further in the second part of the thesis. For they highlight an alternative program for the social sciences, a critical program that becomes justified and plausible when it is seen that this final dualism breaks down.

* * * * *

In the Phenomenology⁹² Hegel sought to demonstrate that any methodological procedure that concentrates exclusively on either the subject or object of investigation breaks down through immanent contradiction. Likewise any epistemology that hopes to establish

and delineate the knowing process in abstract philosophical reflection. Writing of Kant's circular reasoning, Hegel points out that:

What is demanded [by Kant, D. H.] is thus the following: we should know the cognitive faculty before we know . . . The investigation of the faculty of knowledge is itself knowledge, and cannot arrive at its goal because it is this goal already.⁹³

Weber's reasoning, we have already seen, embodies an analogous circle.

We cannot, Hegel contends, restrict our attention to concepts, forms, and categories, but rather must concentrate on the explication of the knowing process that gives rise to new conceptual forms. Such a process Hegel finds is a continuous dialectic of subject and object in which both terms are constantly changing, developing, and being redefined. It makes no sense to talk of an unknowable object, a distinct noumenal realm, because to posit such a realm is to make a cognitive claim. Summarizing an important part of Hegel's argument, Marcuse writes:

When experience begins, the object seems a stable entity, independent of consciousness; subject and object appear to be alien to one another. The progress of knowledge, however, reveals that the two do not subsist in isolation. It becomes clear that the object gets its objectivity from the subject. "The real" which consciousness actually holds in the endless flux of sensations and perceptions, is a universal that cannot be reduced to objective elements free of the subject (for example, quality, thing, force, laws). In other words, the real object is constituted by the (intellectual) activity of the subject. The latter discovers that it itself stands "behind" the objects. . . .⁹⁴

We cannot obviously follow Hegel's account of a subject's (or as Hegel puts it, a "consciousness' ") journey of discovery. For this would mean nothing less than a recapitulation of the Phenomenology. We can, however, and this is crucial for our argument, say a little about Hegel's analysis of the dialectical nature of experience.

In the Introduction of the Phenomenology Hegel wrote:

The dialectical movement, which consciousness exercises on itself--on its knowledge as well as its object--is, in so far as the new, true object emerges to consciousness as a result of it, precisely that which is called experience. . . . Consciousness knows something, and this object is the essence or the in-itself. But this object is also the in-itself for consciousness; and hence the ambiguity of truth comes into play. We see that consciousness now has two objects; one is the first in-itself and the second is the being for consciousness of this in-itself.

(These two objects, in the above and following passages, can be thought of as Hegel's equivalent conception of what Kant had called the noumena (the being in-itself) and phenomena (the being for consciousness of this in-itself.) Hegel continues the passage by saying that:

The latter seems at first to be merely the reflection of consciousness into its self, a representation, not of an object, but only of its knowledge of the first object. But as already indicated, the first object comes to be altered for consciousness in this very process; it ceases to be the in-itself and becomes to consciousness an object which is the in-itself only for it. And therefore it follows that this, the being-of-consciousness of this in-itself, is the true, which is to say that this true is the essence or consciousness' new object.

This new object contains the annihilation of the first; it is the experience constituted through that first object.⁹⁵

The necessity to discuss the nature of the true in-itself becomes redundant and left to the medium of philosophical abstraction. The result of Hegel's decision to attempt to explicate the process of knowing reveals that consciousness can come and can only come to know the world as it appears. The knowledge we have of the world is our knowledge, in its being for us. As K. Dove wrote, "Since the object of our inquiry is knowing, any distinction on our part between subject and object would be playing with mere abstractions. Our object is at once and inseparably both the object-knowing subject and the object known-by-the-subject. Thus our object, consciousness or Spirit, contains this subject-object distinction within itself and requires no further distinction by us."⁹⁶

The "supra-phenomenal" constructs of Kantian philosophy are unnecessary since the experiences of consciousness itself lead to the discovery and uncovering of a more concrete distinction.

Natural consciousness will show itself to be merely the concept (Begriff) of knowledge, or unreal knowledge. But since it immediately takes itself to be real knowledge, this pathway has a negative significance for it, and what is actually the realization of the Concept is for it [for consciousness, D. H.] rather the loss and destruction of its self. The road may thus be viewed as the way of doubt or, more properly as the way of despair. For what happens here is not what is usually understood by "doubt," i. e., entertaining a disbelief in this or that presumed truth only to

return to that same "truth" once the "doubt" has been appropriately dissipated . . . On the contrary, this road is the conscious insight into the truth of phenomenal knowledge, a knowledge for which that is most real which is in truth only the unrealized Concept. ⁹⁷

Phenomenal knowledge shows its incompleteness, one-sidedness, limitedness, and falseness at the phenomenal level. The development of the knowing subject is not epistemological activity per se, for that process cannot be severed from the historical struggle between man and his world, "a struggle that is itself a constitutive part of the way to truth and of truth itself." ⁹⁸ It is struggle along a road of doubt and despair where the subject is continually confronted with the inadequacy of its concepts. But the question arises: do we not risk skepticism or solipsism in this process? For what standards or criteria reveal incompleteness or the inadequacy of our concepts?

For Hegel it is, of course, of central importance to realize that standards are always our standards--"consciousness provides itself with its own standard, and the investigation will accordingly be a comparison of consciousness with its own self." ⁹⁹ K. Dove has elucidated this process well:

To understand how this comparison takes place we must observe that, just as consciousness or Spirit was seen to be at one both "subjective" and "objective," this same duality holds true for the Concept: consciousness itself distinguishes between (a) the Concept qua knowledge and (b) the Concept qua object. Hence there is with consciousness not only something which is taken to be for it; consciousness also assumes that that which is for it,

is in-itself or has an independent status as well. Accordingly, we see that the Concept has two moments. If we take the Concept to be knowledge, then the standard for this Concept qua knowledge will be its object or what is said to exist in-itself. In this case the comparison will consist in seeing whether the Concept corresponds to the object, i. e. , what consciousness now regards as the standard of truth. But, on the other hand, if we take the Concept to be the object as it is essentially or in-itself, then the Concept itself will be the standard for the Concept qua known, i. e. , the Concept qua object of knowledge. Here the comparison consists in seeing whether the Concept qua known or qua object corresponds to the Concept itself.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, as Dove points out, it must be noted that (a) both these aspects of the Concept must be taken into account in any attempt to describe the knowing process and (b) it must be realized that both these aspects embody, in fact, the same process. "The standard is selected by consciousness itself and, since both moments of the process fall within our object, i. e. , knowledge as it appears, any selection of standards on our part would be superfluous."¹⁰¹ The movement and development of consciousness depends then on the process whereby "consciousness not only selects its own standard but is also the comparison of its knowledge with its own standard."¹⁰² And if, as happens continually in the subject's struggle in the world, consciousness finds that its criteria or standard and its knowledge do not match, it will, "on the basis of its own assumptions, have to change its knowledge in order to make it correspond to its

standards."¹⁰³ But as consciousness' knowledge changes, it follows from what we have said above, that consciousness' standard changes, "for the standard was based upon the object and, indeed, upon the object qua known."¹⁰⁴

Consciousness thus discovers that the process in which it placed its knowledge in doubt, all the while certain that it held a firm criterion for what the object of its knowledge was in-itself, turns out to be a movement in which it loses its own truth; the "path of doubt" (Zweifel) is transformed into "the way of despair" (Verzweiflung). . . . Moreover, this despair is not something arbitrarily imposed on consciousness from without; it is immanent in the very movement of consciousness itself. Thus, in Baillie's poignant translation, consciousness "suffers this violence at its own hands."¹⁰⁵

Experience is, therefore, a dialectical process to the extent to which "new objects" are generated and established for itself. It is a process in which consciousness negates the appearance of the first object of consciousness' experience and in this process uncovers a new object and a new standard. The negation has a content, it is a determinate negation.¹⁰⁶

Hegel speaks of the Concept (Begriff), where Kant spoke of Categories, forms, intuitions, etc. And where Kant speaks of a phenomenal and noumenal world, a given diremption between subject and object, Hegel argues we can only speak of an interaction and tension between subject and object in the process of knowing, out of which the concept arises. This concept cannot be identified with the

subject or object. It is neither simply a subjective creation and representation nor an objective structure. Rather, it is temporal and variable and is given subjectively, but dependent for its realization and validity on concrete human, inter-subjective, history, in which man interacts with the world that he is conscious of. To speak of two worlds, as Weber did, is to gloss the complexity of man's self-formative process and his constitution of the world. How we might further conceive these processes will be taken up in the next part of the thesis. It is important here, however, to note the consequences of Hegel's critique of the Kantian dualism for Weber's own approach to the human sciences.

Firstly, we must note that where Weber claims discontinuity, we can only find continuity. The dualism that Weber subsumes cannot be maintained. Secondly, we must notice that the formal rationality of Weber's method structures the object of investigation in such a way as to perpetuate this dualism. The true in-itself cannot be known. We can only make valid claims about an object from our own individual standpoints and if we utilize the rational method. Our concepts will then capture parts of this object and render valid knowledge. But since the true in-itself cannot be grasped, any number of points of view can formulate starting points of investigation. We, therefore, have a conception of the human sciences, previously

noted, that sees relativism as an essential feature.

But, thirdly, and in light of our above discussion of Hegel, we must note that Weber's position is a curious one for the social scientist to accept. For the objects of the social world are our objects. Following Hegel we can note that objects of investigation are always objects for us, the being for consciousness of an in-itself. As such the interesting question becomes how a given body of ideas, beliefs, and knowledge comes to be established as and in social reality. Indeed, it is only through an account of the knowing subject (and the constitutive presuppositions of knowledge) that the human sciences (in fact, all sciences) can render themselves comprehensible. What is required is an account of the human subject, of the subject's knowledge, values, and interests. If we trace the social origins of conflicting standpoints, the questions that surround Weberian relativism can be transformed from a preoccupation of the correspondence of knowledge to reality, to a systematic examination of the genesis of knowledge and its correspondence to social situations, causes, and structures. What is required initially at least, is an analysis and account of the constitutive elements that are at the base and roots of the production of different (world-) views of social phenomena.

The process of knowing cannot be severed from the historical struggle between man and his world. The process of knowing becomes

the process of history in which consciousness discovers the world as its own new and real world. "The subject conceives the world as its own 'presence' and truth; it is certain of finding only itself there."¹⁰⁷ To uncover this process of knowing and, therefore, to uncover man's constitution of the world, is to necessitate an historical reconstruction of the self-formative process of man and of the social situatedness of all human thought.

On this account the formal rationality of Weber's methodology is seen to be inadequate to the task of conceptualizing the historicity of knowing process and the development of man. The method of ratio essendi, despite its important stress on the necessity of historical, interpretative analysis, ultimately emancipates itself from history. As Merleau-Ponty observed, "Historical epochs become ordered around a questioning of human possibility, of which each has its formula, rather than around an immanent solution, of which history would be the manifestation."¹⁰⁸ Weber's types and concepts grasp at the world and offer us a series of representations, the relationship between can only be established through the imputation of adequate causes, etc. But these methods cannot grasp the self-formative process of man as process, for Weber's representations freeze this process in a presentation of types and categories which impose form and, therefore, order on the "cultural manifold" in a

series of interrelated one-sided categories, which seek to analyze unique historical configurations. This analysis, restricted to a causal analysis of historical individuals, cannot provide us with a sufficient method to uncover the self-formative struggles of man. This process can only be understood in the attempt to explicate man's reality as a self-structured, self-unfolding, and forming whole. The method must be historical, but as historical also dialectical. It must proceed:

a. through the explication of the actual constitution of ideas in consciousness and interaction, of the dialectics of experience;

b. through the analysis of the creation, maintenance and change of man's inter-subjective, historical Concepts;

c. it must not (nor can it) smooth over contradictions and contradictory claims at the phenomenal level, by appealing to an unknowable noumenal world as the justification for differences, etc. For this view, as we have seen, embodies a false dualism and in Weber's justification of it a dogmatic conception of the totality. Instead our task here is --along with Hegel in the Phenomenology-- to observe and explicate "determinate and historical acts of negation" and capture the dynamic aspects of the subject; and finally

d. it must leave open the possibility of a critically reflexive understanding of history and tradition. It must not only accept the

importance of a hermeneutical understanding of the communicative structure of tradition, but also recognize that this tradition must not be idealized. For it might also embody interaction based on deception, distortion, i. e. , ideology. As Habermas has put it, it is necessary to go beyond a limited hermeneutical perspective to uncover "what lies behind the consensus, presented as a fact, that supports the dominant tradition of the time, and does so with a view to the relations of power surreptitiously incorporated in the symbolic structures of the systems of speech and action."¹⁰⁹

The formal method Weber posits glosses these processes and as such reifies the social world. Despite the fact that the method of ratio essendi is hermeneutic in intent, its tools of analysis are insufficient for hermeneutic understanding. In fact, this whole application of Weber's methodology is ambivalent to a hermeneutic and, as previously noted, technical intent. For the methods of ratio cognoscendi when applied at the level of position B are productive of knowledge suitable to the role Weber allots to science. Sociology on this account is concerned with the establishment of generalities, empirical regularities, and with the expansion of knowledge of behavioral uniformities that can provide a basis for conditional prognosis and/or causal explanation. On this level Weber's conceptual apparatus objectifies the social world and renders it open to instrumental action and manipulation.¹¹⁰ The idea that knowledge could be

produced to emancipate people from hypostatized forces and processes is ruled out as Weber closes off the dimension of critically reflexive understanding. How we might reconceptualize those processes and a method suitable to their analysis and comprehension is a topic we will take further in the second part of this thesis.

Before closing our discussion of Weber with a few concluding remarks, a number of further points can briefly be made. Many of the remarks above about Weber's conception of diachronic analysis also apply to the methodology of synchronic analysis and its application to the empirical study of social action (position A, cf. p. 119). In this context A. Schutz's critique of Weber's treatment of subjectivity is apposite.¹¹¹

Schutz argues that Weber's exposition of interpretive sociology was a contribution of enormous importance to the human sciences, but doesn't go far enough.

Never before had the project of reducing the "world of objective mind" to the behaviour of individuals been so radically carried out as it was in Max Weber's initial statement of the goal of interpretative sociology. This science is to study social behaviour by interpreting its subjective meaning as found in the intentions of individuals. The aim, then, is to interpret the actions of individuals in the social world and the ways in which individuals give meaning to social phenomena.¹¹²

However, Schutz adds that

He [Weber, D.H.] breaks off his analysis of the social world when he arrives at what he assumes to be the basic

and irreducible elements of social phenomena. But he is wrong in this assumption. His concept of the meaningful act of the individual--the key idea of interpretative sociology--by no means defines a primitive, as he thinks it does. It is, on the contrary, a mere label for a highly complex and ramified area that calls for much further study.¹¹³

Weber's project of understanding social action falls short of its interpretative intentions. For example, when Weber speaks of "Direct Understanding," Schutz argues, he conflates important constitutive elements of social action, rather than clarifying them. The procedure of "Direct Understanding" is equivalent to "methods of understanding employed in everyday life" and while these methods are satisfactory for the purposes of everyday accomplishments they gloss, Schutz suggests, a series of factors and influences which themselves have to be explored.¹¹⁴ The two crucial sources of difficulty in Weber's work are, according to Schutz,

1. his reference to meaning as simply constituted subjectively, rather than inter-subjectively, and

2. his consequential conflation of action as a "completed" or "objectified" act, and action as a series and flow of events.

Weber fails to grasp the temporality of action, the process of constituting. (These remarks, it should be noted, have close affinity to our previous criticisms of the application of Weber's methods to position B.)

Considerations of space make a lengthy analysis of Schutz's critique of Weber impossible. I would, however, like to extrapolate a few points from the issues Schutz raises (leaving aside Schutz's own solution to the problems of studying the social world which are not without their own difficulties).¹¹⁵

It is necessary, we can argue from Schutz's critique, to go beyond Weber's conception of social action and to inquire into the common-sense world of everyday life. This can only be done by exploring the processes that are taken for granted and presupposed by a subject who attempts the execution of a projected act¹¹⁶ and by showing how social realities are created, constructed, sustained, and changed by interacting subjects.

"Efficiency, efficacy, effectiveness, intelligibility, consistency, planfulness, typicality, uniformity, reproducibility of activities"--i. e. , the rational properties of practical activities--cannot be "assessed, recognized, categorized, described . . . outside actual settings within which such properties are recognized, used, produced . . . Structurally differing organized practical activities of everyday life, " can and must be "sought out and examined for the production, origins, recognition, and representations of rational practices. All 'logical' and 'methodological' properties of action, every feature of an activity's sense, facility, objectivity, accountability,

communality, " must be treated--as Garfinkel put it--"as a contingent accomplishment of socially organized common practices."¹¹⁷ Social reality can only be known from within social situations constituted through the interactional use of language. Social structures are generated by means of interaction, they are the product of "organic self-mobilization,"¹¹⁸ in inter-subjectively constructed organizations of interaction. Weber's conception of "subjective meaning" considered to be the irreducible element of social phenomena, glosses the complexity of this social interaction and as a consequence cuts short the (conceptualization of the) inquiry into social action.¹¹⁹

What is required in an empirical analysis of social action is (1) an explication of the procedures and methods used by members of a society, i. e. , their conventional practices, in constituting their communicative relationships; (2) an explication of the processes whereby social realities are maintained and sustained; (3) an explication and understanding of members reflexive accounts of their experience, i. e. , their "intentional description" (which would entail a study of their expressed intentions, goals, reasons, or motives); and (4) very importantly, to place these intentional descriptions within the context of a critically reflexive understanding of their social situatedness. Such an understanding would attempt to avoid idealizing such descriptions and would test (a) the consistency of

meaning between verbal and nonverbal expression and actions; (b) check the possibility of systematically excluded meanings which might inhibit self-expression and communicative interaction and, therefore; (c) to assess the possibility of a deceptive self-understanding,¹²⁰ i. e., as we have discussed it hitherto, the possibility of ideological distortion.

This account which is suggestive of the enormous complexity of issues embraced by Weber's concept of "subjective meaning" makes, of course, no claims to completeness. Rather, the account is intended to show the limitedness of Weber's conception of the analysis of social action and the multitude of questions which he does not address.

It goes without saying that Weber's analysis of social action was an outstanding contribution. That it did not go far enough in its intent to provide a groundwork and methodological basis for an hermeneutic account of social action is less significant perhaps than the long distance it did take us toward such a goal. But that this hermeneutic intention was not also able to see the necessity for a critical reflexive understanding was not, as we have seen, because Weber did not go far enough. His epistemology and approach to the human sciences closes this dimension off.

In the second part of this thesis we will not add a great deal to

our discussion of methods applicable to the empirical analysis of social action (position A), although we intend to draw from the following discussion a few additional remarks. Instead, we concentrate on an explication of the views of those who have consistently recognized that the dualisms, so consistently upheld by many and here, of course, by Weber, mask a commitment to a particular form of monism.

Where a dichotomy and discontinuity was claimed by Weber between fact and value, theory and practice, essence and appearance (the two-world theory), we have found certain definite relationships. Where Weber claimed a diremption between fact and value, we found an unexplicated attachment to a mode of rationality that subsumed a schema of values that could not be justified within its own terms of reference. Where Weber claimed a diremption between theory and practice, we found an immanent commitment to decisionism, the freedoms of possessive individualism and the practice of science envisaged as a "technical critique" of the choice of means (as well as the commitment to a hermeneutic practice). Where Weber claimed a diremption between essence and appearance, we found a commitment to a particular conception of essence, i. e., a conception of the unknowable.

Our discussion of Weber has served purposes other than an

assessment of the difficulties, ambiguities, and tensions in Weber's work. For it has helped to make explicit the questions, issues, and problems which a more adequate epistemological and methodological framework would have to (attempt to) contend with. It is the Marxist tradition that has continually sought to grapple with the interrelation of the supposed dualisms and dichotomies we have discussed here. How they did this and the form their theory takes is the topic of the following chapters.

NOTES

- ¹Weber, T.S.E.O., pp. 102-3.
- ²Ibid., p. 103.
- ³Cf., for example, T. Parson's introduction to T.S.E.O., pp. 18 ff.
- ⁴Weber, T.S.E.O., pp. 103-4. (My emphasis.)
- ⁵From a letter to R. Liefmann quoted by W. Mommsen in Max Weber, "Political Sociology and His Philosophy of World History," International Social Science Journal 17 (1965): 25. Quoted in Eldridge, Max Weber, p. 25.
- ⁶Weber, T.S.E.O., p. 99.
- ⁷Parsons, The Structure of Social Action, p. 595, quoted in Eldridge, Max Weber, p. 15.
- ⁸Ibid. (My discussion of the status of laws in Weber's thought follows the useful exergesis of Weber's views on this issue by Eldridge, Max Weber, pp. 15-17.)
- ⁹Weber, M.S.S., pp. 72-73.
- ¹⁰Weber, M.S.S., p. 84.
- ¹¹Eldridge, Max Weber, p. 16.
- ¹²Weber, M.S.S., p. 84.
- ¹³Weber, M.S.S., p. 79.
- ¹⁴Weber, M.S.S., p. 79.
- ¹⁵Giddens, Capitalism and Social Theory, p. 140, from Weber, M.S.S., pp. 82 ff.

- ¹⁶ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 74-75, and Weber, T.S.E.O., p. 94.
- ¹⁷ Weber, M.S.S., p. 75. (Given the current state of Biology, the analogy is unhelpful and very weak.)
- ¹⁸ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 88-89.
- ¹⁹ Weber, T.S.E.O., pp. 94, 100.
- ²⁰ Weber, T.S.E.O., p. 100.
- ²¹ J. Rex, Key Problems of Sociological Theory, p. 189, quoted in Eldridge, Max Weber, p. 19.
- ²² Weber, M.S.S., pp. 113-88.
- ²³ Weber, M.S.S., p. 132.
- ²⁴ Weber, M.S.S., p. 135.
- ²⁵ See p. 57.
- ²⁶ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 50-113.
- ²⁷ Weber, M.S.S., p. 66.
- ²⁸ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 113-88.
- ²⁹ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 75-76.
- ³⁰ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 76-77.
- ³¹ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 92-93.
- ³² The "specification" of ideal-types was made on p. 47.
- ³³ Giddens, Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, p. 140. Giddens' discussion of ideal-types is extremely helpful. Cf. pp. 141-44. My analysis of ideal-types follows, in large part, this analysis.
- ³⁴ Ibid., p. 142.
- ³⁵ Ibid.

- ³⁶ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 90-92, 100.
- ³⁷ Giddens, Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, p. 143.
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ Weber, M.S.S., p. 102.
- ⁴⁰ Weber, M.S.S., p. 135.
- ⁴¹ Weber, M.S.S., p. 171.
- ⁴² Weber, M.S.S., pp. 168-69.
- ⁴³ Ibid., p. 177.
- ⁴⁴ A. Arato, "Lukacs' Theory of Reification," Telos, no. 6 (Spring 1972), p. 62.
- ⁴⁵ For a contemporary restatement and elaboration of Weber's account of causality, cf. A. MacIntyre, "Causation and History," unpublished.
- ⁴⁶ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 174-75.
- ⁴⁷ Giddens, Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, p. 140.
- ⁴⁸ Weber, M.S.S., p. 180, quoted in *ibid.*
- ⁴⁹ Giddens, Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, p. 140.
- ⁵⁰ Weber, M.S.S., p. 183.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² As pointed out in Eldridge, Max Weber, p. 21.
- ⁵³ Weber, M.S.S., p. 17.
- ⁵⁴ In fact, Economy and Society was written as part of an ambitious, large work on aspects of political economy. The project was one in which several authors collaborated, or were to have collaborated (including A. Weber, Schumpeter, and Sombart), parts of which were published between 1914 and 1930. Weber conceived his contribution to be comparable in intention to the

writing of a Preface (!), a preparation and establishment of types, concepts, etc., essential to the study of historical individuals.

⁵⁵ Weber, T. S. E. O., p. 109.

⁵⁶ Weber, T. S. E. O., p. 88.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Weber, T. S. E. O., p. 89.

⁵⁹ Weber, T. S. E. O., p. 90, quoted in Giddens, Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, p. 147.

⁶⁰ Weber, T. S. E. O., p. 91.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ For an elaboration of this point, cf. F. H. Von Wright, Explanation and Understanding (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1971), chaps. 1, 2.

⁶⁴ Weber, T. S. E. O., pp. 95-96.

⁶⁵ Weber, T. S. E. O., pp. 98-99. (My emphasis.)

⁶⁶ Weber, T. S. E. O., p. 95.

⁶⁷ Weber, T. S. E. O., p. 99.

⁶⁸ Giddens, Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, p. 149. This position is developed below.

⁶⁹ Weber, T. S. E. O., p. 99.

⁷⁰ Weber, T. S. E. O., pp. 99-100.

⁷¹ L. Taylor and P. Walton, "Industrial Sabotage: Motives and Meanings," in Images of Deviance, ed. S. Cohen (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 220

⁷² Ibid., p. 226

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Eldridge, Max Weber, pp. 22-23.

⁷⁵ Weber, T.S.E.O., pp. 109-10.

⁷⁶ Weber, T.S.E.O., p. 110.

⁷⁷ K. Löwith, "Weber's Interpretation of the Bourgeois-Capitalistic World in Terms of the Guiding Principle of 'Rationalization'," in Max Weber, ed. Wrong.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 108.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ The distinctions being used here between types of totality are based on those made by the Czech philosopher, K. Kosík, in Die Dialektik des Konkreten, trans. from Czech, by Hoffman (Frankfurt, 1967), p. 45, who distinguished three notions of totality in the history of philosophical thought:

1. the atomistic-rationalistic conception, from Descartes to Wittgenstein, which understands the whole or totality as simple elements or facts;

2. the organicist or organicist-dynamist conception, which formalizes the whole and raises the priority of the whole to a position of domination over the parts (Schelling, Spann);

3. the dialectical conception (Heraklitus, Hegel, Marx), which grasps the reality as a structured, self-unfolding and forming whole.

We will discuss the third conception of totality in Part II of the thesis.

For additional and very helpful analysis of the concepts of totality cf. B. Ollman, "Marxism and Political Science," Politics and Society (1973), pp. 491 ff; P. Diessing, Patterns of Discovery in the Social Sciences (Chicago: Aldine, 1971), chaps. 9, 20.

(The above passage from K. Kosík was translated by J. Schmidt.)

⁸² Weber, M.S.S., p. 110. Cf. Weber's discussion and consideration of "the interests of agriculture," M.S.S., p. 109 ff.

⁸³ I. e., the process of rationalization, etc.

- ⁸⁴ M. Merleau-Ponty, "The Crises of the Understanding," in Adventures of the Dialectic (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 11.
- ⁸⁵ Weber, M.S.S., pp. 92-93.
- ⁸⁶ Merleau-Ponty, "The Crises of the Understanding," p. 47.
- ⁸⁷ Andrew Arato, "The Neo-Idealist Defense of Subjectivity," Telos (Fall 1974), p. 135.
- ⁸⁸ J. Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics: Lukacs' Path From Simmel to Marx" (Ph.D. dissertation, M. I. T., 1974), p. 11.
- ⁸⁹ I. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. N. Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), p. 93. Quoted in Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics," pp. 11-12.
- ⁹⁰ Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics," p. 12. For an elaboration of these issues, see Goldman, Immanuel Kant, pp. 152-66.
- ⁹¹ For example, his critique of E. Meyer.
- ⁹² G. W. F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans J. B. Baille (New York: Harper, 1967).
- ⁹³ G. W. F. Hegel, from lectures in the history of philosophy, quoted by Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, p. 7.
- ⁹⁴ H. Marcuse, Reason and Revolution (Boston: Beacon, 1970), p. 94.
- ⁹⁵ Hegel, "Introduction" to the Phenomenology, trans. K. Dove, in M. Heidegger, Hegel's Concept of Experience (New York: Harper, 1970), pp. 23-24. Dove's translation is more accurate to the "spirit" of Hegel's work.
- ⁹⁶ K. Dove, "Hegel's Phenomenological Method," Review of Metaphysics 23 (June 1970), p. 618.
- ⁹⁷ Hegel, "Introduction" to the Phenomenology, in Heidegger, Hegel's Concept of Experience, pp. 13-14.

- ⁹⁸ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 95.
- ⁹⁹ Dove, "Hegel's Phenomenological Method," p. 619.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 620.
- ¹⁰² Ibid.
- ¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 621.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 622.
- ¹⁰⁶ For an elaboration of the concept of determinate negation, cf. A. Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, trans. J. H. Nichols, Jr. (New York: Basic Books, 1969), chaps. 1 and 7 especially.
- ¹⁰⁷ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 120.
- ¹⁰⁸ Merleau-Ponty, Adventures of the Dialectic.
- ¹⁰⁹ Habermas, Theory and Practice, p. 12.
- ¹¹⁰ Cf. our earlier discussion of these issues on pp. 39-44.
- ¹¹¹ A. Schutz, The Phenomenology of the Social World, trans G. Walsh and F. Lehnert (London: Heinemann, 1972), especially chap. 1.
- ¹¹² Ibid., p. 6.
- ¹¹³ Ibid. pp. 7-8.
- ¹¹⁴ For a useful summary of Schutz's views cf. Giddens, ed., Positivism and Sociology, pp. 7-11.
- ¹¹⁵ Schutz falls back into a form of objectivism.
- ¹¹⁶ In Schutz's view, a "project is the intended act imagined as already accomplished, the in-order-to motive in the future

state of affairs to be realized by the projected action" (quoted in Eldridge, Max Weber, p. 30.) If we seek to know why an actor carries out one project rather than another, Schutz argues that we must refer to the actor's past experiences to furnish a "reason" or "cause," a "because-motive." Schutz ultimately follows Weber in holding that actions can be causally explained by reference to "motives" (albeit "because-motives") but warns against any attempt to ascribe "invariant motives." There are many, however, who would not agree that we can treat reasons (or Weber's conception of "motives") as themselves a species of cause. This issue is too extensive a topic to be dealt with here, but see P. Winch, The Idea of a Social Science and Its Relation to Philosophy (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 45-50, 111-20; J. Coulter, "The Ethnomethodological Programme," Human Context 6 (Spring 1974); A. MacIntyre, "A Mistake About Causality," in P. Laslett and W. Runciman, Philosophy, Politics and Society (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967, 2nd series), pp. 48-70, for arguments against and references. For arguments for and references, A. MacIntyre, "The Idea of a Social Science," in Proceedings of the Aristotlean Society, supplementary vol. 41 (1967); I. Bernstein, Praxis and Action (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pt. 2.

¹¹⁷ H. Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 33.

¹¹⁸ Coulter, "The Ethnomethodological Programme," p. 103.

¹¹⁹ For an elaboration of one aspect of this theme (that takes the critique in the direction of Ethnomethodology), cf. E. Bittner, "The Concept of Organization," in Ethnomethodology, ed. R. Turner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974).

¹²⁰ Points (a) to (c) are drawn from Habermas' and Wellmer's critique of H. G. Gadamer. Cf. A. Wellmer, Critical Theory of Society, trans. J. Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1971), pp. 31-41.

PART II

THE MARXIST RESPONSE

CHAPTER IV

ON THE UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE: THE REFORMULATION OF THE NOTION OF THEORETICAL TRUTH IN LUKACS, HORKHEIMER, AND MARCUSE

In order to overcome the cleavages between fact and value, description and evaluation, subject and object, and science and criticism that pervaded Weber's work, it becomes necessary to supersede these dualisms and the separation of theory from practice that follows in their wake. Such a reformulation requires a reconceptualization of the notion of theoretical truth. For if it is admitted that there is continuity where Weber claimed discontinuity and if, in consequence, we are to avoid the fall of theory and science into relativism (i. e., position two) and/or skepticism, and/or solipsism, the question and problematic becomes one of grounding, rationally justifying, ones' choice of ultimate and theoretical principles and of methodological procedure.

Against the background of the Second International and "official" Marxism such a reconceptualization was undertaken amongst others by the Frankfurt School and Lukacs. It is to their work, and elevation of these issues, that we must now turn. Of the "Frankfurt" theorists we intend to address essentially the works of Max Horkheimer and

Herbert Marcuse.¹ We shall further briefly suggest how some other contemporary Marxist figures have reflected on, and attempted to come to terms with, the questions raised.

Two objections, however, might be made to pursuing the problem of grounding in the work of the Frankfurt School and Lukacs. First, it might be argued that the Frankfurt theorists, even if they raised these issues, were not primarily concerned with the questions of grounding in the form the problematic has been raised here. It has been suggested by James Schmidt, for example, that a "key discussion in Horkheimer's 'Traditional and Critical Theory' defines critical theory as 'in its totality, the unfolding of a single existential judgement' based on Marx's notion of the general course of the commodity economy."² Commenting on these passages he says: "What is significant here is that the truths to be extracted from this expansion are primarily negations: unfolding of the judgement does not establish the truth of the existential judgement as a predictive theory, but rather serves as a means of indicating the one-sidedness of the other social theories which claim to have accounted for reality."³ Even if this is so, it can be contended that the issues we raise are implicitly spoken to. For the early theoretical formulations of Horkheimer and Marcuse assume Marx's critique of political economy as the center of their theory. The "general course" of the commodity economy is taken as

nonproblematic and as an adequate account of the concrete totality from which all other views can be regarded as "one-sided." An historical account of this subsumption might well be offered and it is, of course, true that Horkheimer and Marcuse were essentially concerned with extending Marx's critique to other areas of human endeavor. But these works and remarks nevertheless indicate a peculiar ambivalence between a dogmatic certitude and a hypothetical openness of an unconcluded, incomplete, negative dialectic.⁴ The ambiguity does not dissolve the problems; answers to the questions of the adequacy of Marx's conceptualization of the concrete totality and the basis on which we justify our conclusions cannot be simply assumed.⁵ We shall return to Horkheimer's and Marcuse's approach to these themes in a moment.

Secondly, it might be objected and argued that even if the Frankfurt School raised various questions around the themes of "reason," "truth," "freedom" the fact that they did not pursue them is of interest in itself and speaks to the incapacity to reformulate the relationship between theory and practice, truth and goodness, etc., in theory. Such an argument could take a variety of forms, but (surely) reach their highest development in Lukacs' History and Class Consciousness.⁶

It might be held that bourgeois science was and is unworthy of lengthy consideration because the antinomic expressions of its thinking

can only be overcome practically; theoretical disputes with bourgeois science could be maintained only as a form of the class struggle. The "structure of the historical process," it might be argued, is decisive against the "methodological self-restriction" of bourgeois thought in all its manifestations. On this view, which reaches its high water mark in Lukacs, modern science is criticized for three reasons. Andrew Arato has summarized these as "(1) loss of totality; (2) loss of ontological (historical) substratum; (3) freezing of the given."⁷

All of modern science is dominated by specialization and organizationally, by forms of increasingly bureaucratic administration. On the level of scientific content, the sciences are first characterized by their fragmentation of reality, and consequently by their loss of totality, and their "ontological substratum": the more intricate a modern science becomes and the better it understands itself methodologically, the more resolutely it will turn its back on the ontological problems of its own sphere of influence . . . the more it will become a formally closed system of partial laws. It will find that its own concrete underlying reality lies, methodologically and in principle beyond its grasp. Second, the sciences are characterized by their freezing of immediate factuality of the given because the dynamic of reality is visible only from the point of view of totality.⁸

Likewise, the cultural and historical sciences disregard what is central for Lukacs; the historical dialectic of their contents and forms. In the famous "Reification" chapter Lukacs argues and concludes that the efforts of the bourgeoisie to confront the problem of

reification reach class limits.⁹ The methodological project of German Classical philosophy cannot be fulfilled within philosophy, itself indulged in endless contemplation. The overcoming of the problem of reification is a social project, which can only be continued outside philosophy. "The continuation and concretization of 'the dialectical method as the true historical method was reserved for a class which was able to discover within itself on the basis of its life experience (Lebensgrund) the identical subject-object, the subject of action, the "we" of genesis, namely, the proletariat."¹⁰ The concrete becoming of men in history, expressed in the contemporary age as the standpoint of the proletariat, is the only possible basis for the synthesis of the concrete totality and its sublation. (Aufhebung).

Lukacs' position is one that attempts to overcome both voluntarism and fatalism, the poles of the Second International and neo-Kantian social science. Historical Materialism, in his view, cannot gain an adequate understanding of the social totality and has no meaning outside the struggle of the proletariat, the negating subject. Its claims to truth and objectivity are not those of a simple correspondence or coherence theory. For the truth and objectivity of any method cannot be dirempted from the social praxis of classes and groups. All forms of thought are rooted in a particular historical context and relative to the social situatedness of social structure. But

Lukacs argues the standpoint of the proletariat and consequently Marxism transcends the "one-sidedness" and distortions of other social theories and class ideologies. The proletariat is the class on whose genesis capitalist society rests. The process of Bildung within the society can only be successfully grasped from the pivot in its constitution. "Since the proletariat will find that it itself has been a key party in this constitution, it stands in a relationship to reality which gives it the possibility of viewing the reality not as mere fact [i. e., the freezing of the given--D. H.], but as a set of relations which are historically determined and capable of alteration. In other words, the proletariat has the capability of seeing all of the relations of capitalist society as a stage in the process of its own Bildung which must be overcome."¹¹ Objectivity and truth depend on knowledge of the totality, the coherence of which is dependent on the process of history from which the standpoint of the proletariat as a potential identical subject-object finds its foundations.

Lukacs refuses to ground the "theory of proletarian Bildung" outside of the historical process and portray the role of the theorist as neutral and detached. Theory and theoretical labor are inextricably intertwined in the social process on which it cannot passively contemplate, reflect, and describe. Rather, the theorist is seen as a participant in an on-going class conflict, explicating an objective

possibility immanent in the dynamic of reified class-relations and animized things. There are numerous issues which could be raised here but for our purposes only a number of points need be noted.¹²

Lukacs' argument is predicated on the existence of a class whose social position is said to be unique in that, firstly, from its position the historical process is claimed to be transparent and within reach of theory. Secondly, from its standpoint the universal interests of the species are assumed to be uncoverable. Thirdly, that it is necessary for the proletariat to have a correct understanding of its position and, fourthly, that it is capable of transcending its social conditions as a result of the de-mythologizing of its interests. Finally, it is argued by Lukacs that even if (mass) revolutionary working class praxis does not exist the dynamic of the historical process contains within it an immanent objective possibility of this praxis. As such, Marxist social theory is continuous with the imputable consciousness of the identical subject-object. Marxism remains objective and possible. For Lukacs there is a proletarian praxis present for class existence before it is actually known, but such an existence is not sufficient unto itself and demands a further critical elaboration. "The Party is the instrument in history that does this by degrees through a dual mediation: there is a first mediation--the Party, mediating between the proletariat and history--

and a second--the Party, consulting the proletariat or in other words, the proletariat mediating between the Party and history."¹³

Lukacs does not argue or say that the proletariat will necessarily complete its Bildung process and surmount the irresolvable tensions and contradictions in the capitalist social order. The concept of imputed class consciousness specifies what is logically required (not what empirically exists), if the proletariat is to complete its transformation into the identical subject-object. "Logically analyzed, the situation of the proletariat is seen as being both within society (as an element of the synchronic arrangement of commodities exchanged) and outside of society (as a subject which cannot come to self-realization within the present arrangement of forms). Lukacs sees no way of reconciling this duality theoretically. . . . Rather he seeks to make the task of theorizing contingent on this very dissonance, and argues that the purpose of theory, which now becomes equated with the activities of the party . . . " is to explicate these contradictions to a subject "which at this point in history possesses the possibility of practically overcoming the separations as a part of the very process which brings it to consciousness of them."¹⁴

Whatever its other merits, the epistemological and political difficulties of this position are far reaching. We have to ask whether or not in the absence of revolutionary working class praxis, Marxism,

as it is here developed, can be anything more than an abstract negation. Does the revolutionary dialectic become anything more than a "conceptual mythology?" Is the proletariat then, nothing but the carrier of a myth, which as J. Revai argues, presents this identification as desirable;¹⁵ i. e., is it a logical abstraction which Lukacs imposes on the historical process? If this is the case, the Party ceases to be a mediation and becomes an expression of an ethical ideal forcing itself on history.

Lukacs attempted to show that the empirical proletariat "surpassed by the richness of a history which it cannot represent to itself either as it was or it will be, retains, nevertheless, an implicit totality and is itself the universal subject which, because it is self-critical and sublates itself, can become for itself only through the indefinite development of the classless society."¹⁶ An important feature of Lukacs' thought was not to posit an identical subject-object, to grant the meaning of history to a "world spirit." The analysis of reification attempts to derive the objective possibility of overcoming reification in the dynamic of reification itself.¹⁷ As such, the analysis is contingent on a verifiable process and, as Arato suggests, "one particular analysis of economic development (namely, Rosa Luxemburg's)."¹⁸ But Lukacs' analysis and his solution, the identical subject-object, are far from satisfactory.

Given Stalinism and (current) technocratic social management in Russia, the (as yet?) unfulfilled proletarian Bildung process in the Western World, etc., we may well wonder (with Merleau-Ponty) where these developments leave our original theory. Yet, in wondering within Lukacs' theoretical framework we are caught in a circle. For the only standard of truth we have is deeply embedded in the proletariat's standpoint. Yet it is precisely this standpoint that is here problematic and questioned. To what standards and criteria does one appeal in determining whether certain historical developments are falsifications of the original theory, signs that its premises are dubious, that it is inadequate to comprehend the dynamics of capitalism; or rather, developments which leave the original theory intact but with minor modifications? "In short," as T. McCarthy put it, "if the notion of practical confirmation or falsification is to be used selectively, one must inquire after the theoretical basis of this selection. And if the principles of selection themselves contain theoretical moments, one must ask about the adequacy of this background theory and its relation to the one under investigation."¹⁹ As the standard of truth the proletariat's standpoint does not allow us recourse to challenge it without undermining the entire theoretical structure. If this is done questions of grounding cannot be subsumed as nonproblematic.

Yet all of this itself assumes that it is and ever was obvious what the standpoint of the proletariat is and that it is imputable in its practical absence; that universal interests are uncoverable from its actual or imputable standpoint, and, therefore, what an adequate representation of these interests by the particular, the Party, is. Unless these questions are addressed, we risk--as Lukacs did--subordinating class, theory, and action to the Party.²⁰ In all these respects, Lukacs' resolution of the problem of grounding raises the same questions as the first objection attempted to ignore: the answers and the method of developing answers are assumed as self-evident.

The connections of objectivity and truth, theory and practice in Lukacs are closely tied to the actuality of proletariat revolutionary praxis or its imputable possibility. In nonrevolutionary periods and historical change the problem of the theory/practice relationship, etc., becomes, to say the least, problematic. In Lukacs' theoretical framework these relationships are dogmatically assumed. To tie the truth claims of Marxism as a critique of society to the standpoint of the proletariat is to leave Marxism open to Merleau-Ponty's view that the proletariat is a withering historical force in both socialist and capitalist countries. Consequentially, he argues, Marxism as a critique loses its claim to truth and becomes nothing

more or less than a competing ideology or moral standpoint.²¹ The Party then cannot claim, with surety, the privileged status of historical mediator. There are further empirical objections that can be made to the theory. For example, Lukacs fails to address many determinants of the empirical consciousness of the working class and its historically changing needs. Obviously, the historical conditions of Lukacs' and our time are considerably different from that of Marx and Engels. Yet, in Lukacs, the potentiality of the identical subject-object was and is assumed to be revolutionary, its standpoint transparent and immanently realizable. For Lukacs it cannot be otherwise. The standpoint is dependent on these assumptions. The theory can only answer its critics by restating its premises.

Whether or not we can go beyond Lukacs' position in History and Class Consciousness is, as yet, an open question. But for Lukacs, of course, there is a way. Writing in the 1967 Preface to the new edition, he suggests that the ideal of an identical subject-object must be rejected. It was an attempt to "out Hegel Hegel. . . . Thus the proletariat seen as the identical subject-object of the real history of mankind is no materialist consumation that overcomes the constructions of idealism."²² With the rejection of the identical subject-object we may well ask what of other moments of Lukacs' theoretical edifice remain intact? "Since the identical subject-

object is the telos towards which all other moments of the Bildung process are directed, there is, as J. Schmidt argues, "good reason to believe that they too will have to be altered if they are to be transformed into a materialist dialectic."²³ In Lukacs' other three criticisms he confirms the need for major developments in the groundwork and categories of historical materialism. These include alterations in his concept of nature,²⁴ the development of a theory of labor and, consequentially, the recognition of the need to elaborate an adequate notion of praxis (that goes beyond an idealized imputed class consciousness).²⁵ The criticisms are of crucial importance. In Lukacs opinion, the basic category of Marxist political economy, "labour, as the mediator of the metabolic interaction between society and nature, is missing."²⁶

It means that the most important real pillars of the Marxist view of the world disappear and the attempt to deduce the ultimately revolutionary implications of Marxism in as radical a fashion as possible is deprived of a genuinely economic foundation. It is self-evident that this means the disappearance of the ontological objectivity of nature upon which the process of change is based. But it also means the disappearance of the interaction between labour as seen from a genuinely materialist standpoint and the evolution of the men who labour.²⁷

The foundation of History and Class Consciousness has to be revised in Lukacs' view on the basis of Marx's "great insight" into the labor process. What Lukacs points to is a theory of labor and a theory of

needs. A discussion of what this might entail must be postponed to our discussion of Marcuse who, it can be argued--amongst others--also attempted to develop a theory of labor and needs as a critical foundation for Marxism. The search for such a ground independent of (immediate) proletariat praxis became (and becomes) particularly acute in times characterized by the loss of revolutionary praxis. Few struggled with this issue and its consequences more than the Frankfurt School. A few general remarks should, firstly, be made about this school.

In the early work of the Frankfurt theorists, an essential tenet was that "even the situation of the proletariat is, in this society, no guarantee of correct knowledge."²⁸ As Horkheimer wrote, "On the identity of theory and praxis is not to be forgotten their difference."²⁹ Marcuse develops this theme, "Theory accompanies the practice at every moment, analyzing the changing situation and formulating its concepts accordingly. The concrete conditions for realizing the truth may vary, but the truth remains the same and theory remains its ultimate guardian. Theory will preserve the truth even if revolutionary practice deviates from its proper path. Practice follows the truth, not vice versa."²⁹ How did the Frankfurt School interpret the notions of truth and objectivity?

It has already been argued (against an anticipated first

objection) that questions of foundation and grounding are implicit in all social theory (and science). In fact, any close reading of the Frankfurt School suggests that these problematics and questions are not only implicit but explicitly addressed. Obviously, a complete discussion of Horkheimer's and Marcuse's approaches to these issues is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, from a reading of Marcuse's work up to and including Reason and Revolution³¹ and Horkheimer's Zeitschrift essays a number of important points are developed which should not be overlooked.³²

The early formulations of the Frankfurt theorists presented critical theory as part of a "dynamic unity with the oppressed class." Critical theory was considered part of the present class struggle, as a "promotive factor in the development of the masses."³³ The practical impact of the theorist was conceived in a way which was not dissimilar to that of Lukacs; to articulate and help develop a latent class consciousness.³⁴ There were, as J. Schmidt has pointed out, strong echoes of "the Manheim-Lukacs group during the days of the Free School: the task of the theoretician is to attempt to provide a milieu in which a negation of the present social order can take place. This task is carried out through an indication of alternatives which are not analyzed by contemplative theorists who merely confirm 'what is' at any given moment."³⁴ But in fascist Germany and with

exile the theoretical and practical could do nothing but diverge; "the political meaning of the Frankfurt School lost its immediacy."³⁶ As Marcuse put it, "the divorce of thought from action, of theory from practice, is itself part of the unfree world. No thought and no theory can undo it; but theory may help to prepare the ground for their possible reunion."³⁷ Against the objectivism of bourgeois ideology and orthodox Marxism the task of the critical theorist became more that of "remembering," "recollecting," capturing a past which was in danger of being forgotten. Indeed, Marcuse wrote Reason and Revolution to "make a contribution . . . to the revival of a mental faculty which is in danger of being obliterated: the power of negative thinking."³⁸ Theirs was an attempt to preserve a residue of Marx's original project against a theory and practice frozen into second nature; a theory uniting, in both West and East, with production, "a night in which all cows are black."³⁹

In examining Horkheimer's and Marcuse's theoretical position we begin with Horkheimer's Zeitschrift essays. The argument here follows closely that of T. McCarthy.⁴⁰ Our intention, however, is to develop the discussion into Marcuse's work. Although both Horkheimer and Marcuse share many fundamental positions, they diverge on the question of the centrality of labor, with the consequences that Marcuse hesitated to implicate Marx in his critique of

instrumental rationality.⁴¹ A discussion of this theme will take us to a conjuncture in critical theoretic development.

Horkheimer argues that critical theory, as a dialectical critique of ideology, must locate all thought in its historical context, uncover its rootedness in human interests and yet avoid relativism and be distinguished from skepticism. He accepts the Hegelian idea of a critique of forms of thought, but rejects Hegel's systematic intention, in particular the telos of consciousness's journey: the identity of subject and object in absolute knowledge.

In making these distinctions Horkheimer (and Marcuse) stress the centrality of the "governing principle of dialectical thought," Hegel's concept of determinate (bestimmte) negation. "In recognizing the dependence and limitedness of any finite truth or isolated perspective, that is in rejecting the claim on its part to unlimited truth, Hegel does not simply dismiss it out of hand, but rather finds for this limited knowledge, as limited, one-sided, isolated, etc., its place in the total system of truth. Thus critique in the Hegelian sense does not result in mere negation, in the simple assurance that all determinate knowledge is transitory, and worthless, in a word in skepticism or relativism."⁴² As Horkheimer argues: "If the true is the whole according to Hegel, the whole is not something other than the parts in their determinate structure, but the whole process

of thought which contains in itself all limited representations in the consciousness of their limitedness."⁴³ What distinguishes the dialectical method is its recognition of what is limited as limited, as well as its recognition of its own limitations. Dialectical logic is critical logic for, as Marcuse put it, "it reveals modes and contents of thought which transcend the codified pattern of use and validation."⁴⁴

But Horkheimer cannot ground a materialist critique on Hegel's comprehensive system. Hegel's philosophy, consonant with the "innermost effort" of his own thought, is superseded, "not by substituting for Reason some extrarational standards, but by driving Reason itself to recognize the extent to which it is still unreasonable, blind, the victim of unmastered forces."⁴⁵ Insofar as the dialectic is embedded in Hegel as an idealist system, it must be recast and itself determinately negated. Horkheimer: "In the reflection on his own system Hegel forgets a very definite part of experience. The view that this system is the completion of truth conceals from him the meaning of the time-bound interest which influences the individual dialectical presentations as regards the direction of thought, the choice of material and the use of names and words, and which turns his attention from the fact that his conscious and unconscious partiality *vis-à-vis* the questions of life must necessarily become operative as constitutive elements of his philosophy."⁴⁶ In

contradistinction, Horkheimer formulates the materialist dialectic as the "unconcluded" dialectic (the Unabgeschlossene Dialektik). The recognition that the prevailing socio-economic conditions are transitory and limited is not synonymous with the conception of their Aufhebung. Horkheimer's materialism asserts that "objective" reality can never be identical with, or absorbed into, men's concepts; "an isolated and completable theory of reality is simply inconceivable." Thus, as T. McCarthy has summarized it, "Horkheimer undertakes to radicalize Hegel's already radically historical approach by (1) giving up the theologically motivated belief that progress, whatever it might consist in, is in any way guaranteed. The progress of history depends on the decisions and actions of historically acting subjects; by (2) distancing himself from the conception of a universal history in the strict, i. e., Hegelian, sense. Thought, rooted as it is in actual history, can never overview the whole of history as a pre-given totality. Rather it owes its most general categories to actual history itself; and by (3) accepting the consequences of this context-boundedness for critical theory itself."⁴⁷

Marcuse develops a parallel position. Dialectical thought invalidates the claimed opposition between fact and value. Facts can only be understood as stages of a single process; truth can be uncovered only within the subject-object totality. The totality is the

result of the constitutive activity of both theoretical and practical labor. "All facts embody the knower as well as the doer; they continually translate past into present." Objects "contain" subjectivity in their very structure. Dialectical analysis becomes historical analysis. It embraces the prevailing negativity (that-which-is in terms of that-which-is-not; that which is real which opposes and denies the potentialities inherent in itself, the being other than itself): As well as its negation (the transformation of factuality into realization; of subjectivity coming to itself in history, where the development has a rational content).

The given state of affairs is negative and can be rendered positive only by liberating the possibilities immanent in it. This last, the negation of the negation, is accomplished by establishing a new order of things. The negativity and its negation are two different phases of the same historical process, straddled by man's historical action. The "new" state is the truth of the old, but that truth does not steadily and automatically grow out of the earlier state; it can be set free only by an autonomous act on the part of men, that will cancel the whole of the negative state. 48

Against Hegel's transposition of the tension between what could be and what exists, between being-in-itself (essence) and appearance, into the very structure of Geist, Marcuse interprets this tension materialistically. Theory attempts to grasp the contradictory character of social processes and presents their immanent but "unconcluded," incomplete possibilities (the materialistic dialectic

is "Unabgeschlossen"). This framework becomes the basis of his reading of Marx,⁴⁹ which we will say more about in a moment.

This sociological radicalism raises questions as to the logical structure of critical theory. How are the relationships between theory and praxis, fact and value, etc., conceived to avoid relativism or skepticism? To what concept of truth does critical theory appeal, if not to the Hegelian? Horkheimer's and Marcuse's responses contain moments of both identity and difference. For Horkheimer (1937) critical theory stood against the embeddedness of traditional theory in the reproductive process of present day society and those very processes themselves. Critical theory was conceived to accelerate the subversion of structures of exploitation. The difference between traditional and critical theory was the difference between two different "modes of cognition" (Erkenntnisweisen): Traditional theory being shaped by the mode of cognition of the natural sciences.

The axioms of traditional theory define general concepts within which all the facts in the field must be conceived. . . . In between, there is a hierarchy of genera and species, between which there are generally appropriate relations of subordination. The facts are individual cases, examples or embodiments of the genera. There are no temporal differences between the units of the system . . . Individual genera may be added to the system or other changes made, but this is not normally conceived in the sense that the determinations are necessarily too rigid and must prove inadequate where the relation to the object or

the object itself changes without thereby losing its identity. Rather, changes are treated as omissions in our earlier knowledge or as the replacement of individual parts of the object . . . Discursive logic, or the logic of the intellect (Verstand), even conceives living development in this way. It is unable to conceive the fact that man changes and yet remains identical with himself.⁵⁰

Critical theory, on the other hand, is, as we have seen, radically sociological. Its content is ever changing.

There are no general criteria for critical theory as a whole, for such criteria always depend on a repetition of events and thus on a self-reproducing totality . . . Despite all its insights into individual steps and the congruence of its elements with those of the most advanced traditional theories, critical theory has no specific instance for itself other than its inherent interest in the supersession of class domination.⁵¹

Nor is there, Horkheimer adds further, a social class by whose adherence and acceptance of the theory we could be guided. "It is possible for the consciousness of every social stratum today to be limited and corrupted by ideology, however much, for its circumstances, it may be bent on truth." In his important early programmatic statement about Critical theory,⁵² Horkheimer explicates critical theory's concerns and preoccupations. Critical theory, in the formation of its categories, concepts, and in all phases of its development makes its own "an interest in a rational organization of human activity which it has set itself to elucidate and legitimize.

For it is not just concerned with goals as they have been prescribed by the existing life forms, but with men and all their possibilities."⁵³

Horkheimer asserts the objectivity of this truth for the goal of a rational society "which today, of course, only appears to arise in the imagination, is really invested in every man."⁵⁴ It is given in men as potential. From this standpoint critical theory can unmask the ideological, one-sided, and partial character of competing theories. But our questions as to the logical structure of critical theory are not resolved. This description of critical theory gives rise, as T. McCarthy has argued, to a related question: "in what way can the interest in the future (an interest in a rational society) that guides critical theory be distinguished from the particularistic interests concealed behind ideological theories?"⁵⁵

This question must, of course, be answered if the interest in the future which guides critical theory is to be distinguished from the interest(s) guiding ideological theories and suspicion of one-sidedness, etc. "What is there, then, about the conception of freedom which guides it [critical theory--D. H.] that ensures that it too is not just another time-bound (say post-Enlightenment), culture-bound (say secularized bourgeois culture), and perhaps even class-bound (say alienated intellectuals) standpoint?"⁵⁶

A reading of Horkheimer's "Critical and Traditional Theory"

and other Zeitschrift essays suggests that he more or less took up the notion of the "coincidence of reason and freedom directly or indirectly (i. e. , through Marx) from Hegel without sufficiently attending to the reworking of philosophical foundations that a rejection of Hegel's idealism entails."⁵⁷ It is, however, less plausible to suggest that the above is true for all Horkheimer's colleagues. Here we argue that Marcuse's greater emphasis and explication of Marx's philosophy and theory of labor does not allow such concentering of positions.⁵⁸ But before attempting to discuss Marcuse, a few more points might be added to our examination of Horkheimer.

When the issues we raised above arise in Horkheimer he attempts to ground critical theory either, as we have seen, in an "interest" in the future that is immanent in man, and/or in human work. Thus, for example, Horkheimer writes: "The viewpoints which critical theory draws from historical analysis as the goals of human activity, especially the idea of the reasonable organization of society that will meet the needs of the whole community, are immanent in human work, but are not correctly grasped by individuals or by the common mind."⁵⁹ In this paper Horkheimer presents this view of work almost without argument, as if it were obvious and could be taken for granted. The question is not which interpretation of work is correct (and there are many), but how

does one decide which interpretation and theory is correct and which are ideologically corrupt?⁶⁰

In various expressions of culture, in art, religion, and philosophy, Horkheimer (and Marcuse, although for some different reasons as we shall see) sought to uncover the desire for a rational organization of life and realization of freedom. But most cultural artifacts, as they argued, have a double character; they are differentiable as both (and predominantly) affirmative and yet also critical, progressive and regressive.⁶¹ But who is to interpret these criteria, and how? The critical theorist is required to differentiate between progressive and regressive tendencies. This, Horkheimer suggests, he can do only on the basis of his interest in the future. "A certain concern is also required if these tendencies are to be preserved or expressed."⁶² We have moved in a circle, "since it was precisely the legitimacy of this interest, its universal and nonideological character, that we wished to ground."⁶³ Elsewhere, other suggestions are to be found,⁶⁴ but there is little philosophical elucidation of what a rejection of Hegel's idealism entails, and little clarification of a philosophy and social theory based on materialist presuppositions.

What then, we must ask, is the status of Marx's critique of political economy? What is the status of a theory that claims to be

radically historical and at the same time attaches truth and validity claims to its analysis of the epoch. In "Zum Probleme der Wahrheit," Horkheimer argues that a dialectical theory which has given up the

. . . metaphysical character of finality, the solemnity of a revelation, becomes itself a transitory element bound up with the destiny of men. The unconcluded dialectic does not however lose the stamp of truth. In fact, the uncovering of limitedness and one-sidedness in one's own and in other's thought constitutes an important aspect of the intellectual processes. . . . In so far as the experiences won through perception and deduction, methodical research and historic events, everyday work and political struggle stand up to the available means of knowledge, they are the truth. The abstract reservation that one day a justified critique of one's own epistemic situation will be put into play, that it is open to correction, expresses itself among materialists not in a tolerance for contradictory opinions or even in a skeptical indecision, but in a watchfulness against one's own error and in the mobility of thought. . . . The theory which we see as right may one day disappear because the practical and scientific interests which played a role in its conceptual development, and more importantly the things and conditions to which it referred have disappeared . . . but a later correction does not mean that an earlier truth was an earlier untruth, . . . the dialectic freed from the idealist illusion overcomes the contradiction between relativism and dogmatism. While it does not presume that the progress of critique and determination will end with its own standpoint, it in no way gives up the conviction that its knowledge--in the total context to which its concepts and judgements refer--is valid not only for individuals or groups but simply valid, i. e. that opposed theories are false.⁶⁵

Our questions remain: what are the criteria for this nonabsolute truth? How do we judge between competing theories?

Horkheimer summarizes his position by reference to a type of historico-practical confirmation:

It is not history which takes care of the correction and further determination of the truth, so that the knowing subject . . . would only have to look and see; rather the truth is carried forward in so far as the men who have it stand firm by it, apply and support it, act according to it, bring it to power against all resistance from regressive, limited, one-sided standpoints. The process of knowledge involves real historical willing and acting as well as experiencing and conceiving. The latter cannot progress without the former.⁶⁶

In reference to the claimed innateness of the goal of a rational society in men, etc., Horkheimer adds that this is not a claim "that should bring a sigh of relief. For the realization of possibilities depends on historical conflicts . . . man's own will plays a part in that truth, and he may not take his ease if the prognosis is to come true."⁶⁷ This concept of practical confirmation raises a series of problems. Obviously, numerous questions arise here of a type not dissimilar to those we discussed in Lukacs. For example, what if social praxis is oriented towards fascism or technocratism, does this confirm or leave intact our claims about the essence of human reality? Given the quotations we started with (p. 171), it is clear that Horkheimer would agree with Marcuse when he writes that the truth of critical theory is indeterminate and remains necessarily so "as long as it [the truth--D. H.] is measured against the

idea of unconditionally certain knowledge. For it is fulfilled only through historical action. . . .⁶⁸ The truth claim remains-- unfalsified--but the theory awaits verification. The issues that are invoked can be further illustrated by Horkheimer's conception of the status of Marx's critique of political economy.

On the one hand he (and Marcuse) presuppose Marx's theory of the general course of the commodity economy: Critical theory becomes the unfolding of this unique existential judgement. Marx's critique of political economy is the truth of capitalist society.⁶⁹ On the other hand, the need for revision is frequently recognized in light of the "course" of capitalist society and socialism in Russia, etc.⁷⁰ Yet, this theory is still the basis for judging the one-sidedness and partiality of all other competing theories. It is the basis on which all other incomplete theories can be judged. If the truth is the whole, it is here assumed to be grasped by Marx. Here, as with Lukacs, there are epistemological difficulties and here, as with Lukacs, there is a similar circle. The conclusion must also be the same: "if the notion of practical confirmation or falsification is to be used selectively, one must inquire after the theoretical basis of the selection": Since "the principles of selection themselves contain theoretical moments, one must ask about the adequacy of these theoretical moments,"⁷¹ the taken-for-

granted background theory and its relation to those under investigation and the society that is changing. Otherwise, we risk leaving everything as it was.

The critical spirit attempts to provide the milieu for the determinate negation of the present social order. Those that partake of its original tenets refuse "to speak the language of domination."⁷² Horkheimer's version of critical theory is in essence negative, but not wholly so. For Horkheimer seeks to maintain a positive ideal of truth and virtue, while adopting a wholly negative attitude to other theories, views, and interested standpoints. In Hegel, such a unity of positive and negative moments is not a necessary contradiction, if we pass through Stoicism and Skepticism to the insights of the Unhappy Consciousness. There,

. . . the "hitherto negative attitude" of self-consciousness towards reality "turns into a positive attitude. So far it [consciousness--D.H.] has been concerned merely with its own independence and freedom; it has sought to keep itself "for itself" at the expense of the world as its own and real world, which in its permanence possesses an interest for it." The subject conceives the world as its own "presence" and truth; it is certain of finding only itself there.⁷³

This process is the movement of history itself. The question, nonetheless, arises: how is this process and presence of the subject and its truth to be conceived? Horkheimer clearly rejects Hegel's own view and in doing so risks contradiction unless he

adequately grounds, historically and/or philosophically, his privileged standpoint. For Horkheimer the truths to be drawn out are primarily negations. He is unable to accept, as foundational, the claims to rigor of the model of the natural sciences; the standpoint of the proletariat; the position of the party or its leadership; or, for example, the social practice of groups and classes of his day. He says little, if anything, positive about the telos of his work. "in regard to the essential kind of change at which critical theory aims, there can be no . . . concrete perception of it until it actually comes about. If the proof of the pudding is in the eating, the eating here is still in the future."⁷⁴ The dialectic is necessarily negative for "in a historical period like the present, true theory is more critical than affirmative." This view finds its full development and justification in The Dialectics of the Enlightenment. However, the negative judgments of Horkheimer's critical theory always, as we have tried to point out, subsume a social theory to which it grants a privileged status and/or an interest in a rational society according to which it demarcates itself from other ideological theories. His view of the privileged status of this theory is, as we have seen, circular and insufficiently founded. Further, this "interest" was, we argued, neither philosophically grounded nor identifiable with a particular class standpoint. The (possible)

convergence of reason and freedom was said, by Horkheimer, to be immanent in man and work. But who is justified in interpreting this criterion? A few intellectuals? How can we interpret it, let alone elaborate and justify its immanence? Horkheimer had a strong tendency to treat the answers to these questions as self-evident. What is required and what is lacking is an elaboration and elucidation of the notions of "reason," "truth," and "freedom" upon which his theory relied, but which are taken over from Hegel, via Marx, without adequate reflection. The rejection of Hegel's idealism requires the development of alternative philosophical and social foundations which finds too brief an extension here.

NOTES

¹ Obviously a detailed discussion of the "Frankfurt" approach to these issues would have to include a detailed reading of T. W. Adorno's, W. Benjamin's, and other members' work.

² Cf. J. Schmidt, "Critical Theory and the Sociology of Knowledge: A Response to Martin Jay," Telos (Fall 1974), p. 176. (Emphasis mine.) Horkheimer's paper is in Critical Theory, trans. M. J. O'Connell (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972). These papers are reprinted and translated from Horkheimer's Kritische Theorie, 2 vols. (Frankfurt, 1968).

³ Schmidt, "Critical Theory and the Sociology of Knowledge," p. 176. This view of Horkheimer's essay is not to be confused with Schmidt's position.

⁴ For an elaboration of this criticism, which is also launched at Habermas, see R. Bubner, "Was Ist Kritische Theorie?," Philosophische Rundschau 16 (1969). Bubner's article is reprinted in K. O. Apel, et al., Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik (Frankfurt, 1971), pp. 160-209.

⁵ This is especially true in light of the issues raised on p. 8 f.

⁶ G. Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, trans. R. Livingstone (Cambridge: M. I. T. Press, 1971).

⁷ These points are well elaborated in A. Arato, "Lukacs' Theory of Reification," Telos, no. 11 (1972), p. 38.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 37-38. Cf. Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, pp. 92-110.

⁹ Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, p. 121.

¹⁰ Arato, "Lukacs' Theory of Reification," p. 51; and quoting Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, p. 149.

¹¹Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics," p. 232. Chap. 4 is an outstanding account of the notion of "The Concrete Totality and Lukacs' Theory of Proletarian Bildung," (forthcoming in Telos).

¹²For a fuller discussion, see Arato, "Lukacs' Theory of Reification"; Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics"; and P. Breines, Praxis and Its Theorists: The Impact of Lukacs and Korsch in the 1920's, " Telos, no. 11 (1972).

¹³Merleau-Ponty, Adventures of the Dialectic, from the Introduction by J. Bien, p. xix.

¹⁴Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics," pp. 238-39.

¹⁵Cf. Merleau-Ponty, Adventures of the Dialectic, pp. 53-55.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁷Arato, "Lukacs' Theory of Reification," p. 54.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹T. McCarthy, "On the Problems of Truth and Objectivity in the Early Writings of Max Horkheimer" (Boston: Department of Philosophy, Boston University), p. 9. (Mimeographed.)

²⁰Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, pp. 300 ff.

²¹Merleau-Ponty, Adventures of the Dialectic, pp. 310-11. J. Schmidt has pointed out that this argument is only a consistent application of Lukacs' arguments. Cf. Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics," chap. 5.

²²Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, p. xxiii.

²³Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics," p. 249.

²⁴Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, pp. xxiii-xxiv. Cf. Arato, "Lukacs' Theory of Reification," pp. 42-43.

²⁵Ibid., pp. xvii-xviii.

²⁶Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, p. xvii.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Horkheimer, Critical Theory, p. 213.

²⁹ Horkheimer, Kritische Theorie, vol. 1, p. 256, quoted in R. Jacoby, "Marxism and the Critical School," Theory and Society, vol. 1, no. 2 (1974).

³⁰ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 322. (Emphasis mine.)

³¹ Apart from Marcuse's Reason and Revolution, and a number of scattered references to his more recent works, I intend to concentrate the discussion on "On the Philosophical Foundations of the Concept of Labour in Economics" (1933), trans. Douglas Kellner, Telos 16 (1973); "The Foundations of Historical Materialism" (1932), in his Studies in Critical Philosophy, trans. Joris de Bres (Boston: Beacon, 1973); "The Concept of Essence" (1936); "Philosophy and Critical Theory" (1937), in his Negations. We leave, for future discussion, the bulk of Marcuse's "Heideggerian Marxist" work and his Marx-Freud synthesis (with its resultant tendencies to biologism and objectivism).

³² Cf. Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory" (1937), "Postscript" (1937) in his Critical Theory. Of considerable importance also are Horkheimer's "Zum Probleme der Wahrheit" (1935) and "Montaigne und die Funktion der Skepsis" (1938) in his Kritische Theorie.

³³ Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," pp. 214-15.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectics," p. 255.

³⁶ R. Jacoby, "Critique of Automatic Marxism," Telos 10 (1971).

³⁷ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. xii.

³⁸ Ibid., p. vii.

³⁹ Cf. Marcuse, "Philosophy and Critical Theory." Also, H. Marcuse, Counterrevolution and Revolt (Boston: Beacon, 1972), pp. 69-74; Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment.

For an important new study in the same tradition, R. Jacoby, Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology from Adler to Laing (Boston: Beacon, 1975).

⁴⁰ T. McCarthy, "On the Problem of Truth and Objectivity." Cf. also T. McCarthy, "Introduction" to J. Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, trans. T. McCarthy (Boston: Beacon, 1975).

⁴¹ M. Jay, The Dialectical Imagination (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), pp. 78-80.

⁴² McCarthy, "On the Problem," p. 2.

⁴³ Horkheimer, Kritische Theorie, p. 237, trans. and quoted in McCarthy, "On the Problem."

⁴⁴ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. xii.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

⁴⁶ Horkheimer, Kritische Theorie, p. 240, trans. and quoted in McCarthy, "On the Problem," p. 3.

⁴⁷ McCarthy, "On the Problem," p. 3. Cf. Bubner, "Was Ist Kritische Theorie?"; M. Theunissen, Gesellschaft und Geschichte, Zur Kritik der Kritischen Theorie (Berlin, 1969).

⁴⁸ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 315.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 282 ff., especially pp. 312-22.

⁵⁰ Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," in Critical Theory, pp. 223-25. This translation, quoted from G. Therborn, "The Frankfurt School," New Left Review 63 (1970), pp. 68-69.

⁵¹ Horkheimer, Critical Theory, p. 242. This translation, quoted from Therborn, "The Frankfurt School," p. 68. Therborn's article is useful insofar as it points out where Horkheimer later modified and "toned down" the radicalism of his early work. The above quotation is from the original Zeitschrift essays. In his later republication of this essay, "social injustice" has been substituted for "class domination" (Klassenherrschaft).

⁵² See "Traditional and Critical Theory," "Postscript," in Critical Theory or Kritische Theorie.

⁵³ Horkheimer, Critical Theory, p. 245. The translation is once more that of Therborn, "The Frankfurt School," p. 69.

⁵⁴ Horkheimer, Critical Theory, p. 251; Therborn, "The Frankfurt School," p. 69.

⁵⁵ McCarthy, from the "Introduction" to Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, pp. xi-xii.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. xii.

⁵⁸ It could be argued that such a philosophy of labor is implicit in Horkheimer's work. Cf. his views on work that follow. Even if this were true, it could not be doubted that what is implicit, is highly undeveloped.

⁵⁹ Horkheimer, Critical Theory, p. 213. (Emphasis mine.)

⁶⁰ McCarthy, from the "Introduction" to Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, p. xii. For alternative discussion of "work" see, for example, Horkheimer and Adorno, The Dialectics of the Enlightenment.

⁶¹ Cf., for example, "The Social Function of Philosophy," "Art and Mass Culture," in Horkheimer, Critical Theory. And, "Philosophy and Critical Theory," "The Affirmative Character of Culture," in Marcuse, Negations.

⁶² Horkheimer, Critical Theory, p. 213.

⁶³ McCarthy, from the "Introduction" to Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, p. xii.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. xiii.

⁶⁵ Horkheimer, Kritische Theorie, p. 246, trans. and quoted in McCarthy, "On the Problem," pp. 6-7.

⁶⁶ Horkheimer, Kritische Theorie, p. 247, trans. and quoted in McCarthy, "On the Problem," p. 8. (Emphasis mine.)

⁶⁷Horkheimer, Critical Theory, p. 251.

⁶⁸Marcuse, "The Concept of Essence," Negations, p. 75.

⁶⁹For example, cf. Horkheimer's "Traditional and Critical Theory," in Critical Theory; or his "Zum Probleme der Wahrheit," in Kritische Theorie. Cf., also, Marcuse, "Philosophy and Critical Theory," in Negations.

⁷⁰The "etc." was elaborated on p. 8 f.

⁷¹As in note 19.

⁷²P. Piccone in his review of M. Jay's The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-50, Telos 16 (1973), p. 146.

⁷³Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. 119-20, quoting from Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind, vol. 1, p. 223.

⁷⁴Horkheimer, Critical Theory, p. 220.

CHAPTER V

THE THEORY OF LABOR AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

The views of Lukacs' 1967 Preface suggest that a theory of labor and needs could provide a material consumation that overcomes the construction of idealism and provides an elucidation of thought on materialist presuppositions. Some of the arguments of Lukacs' most sympathetic critics would suggest the same direction.¹ The argument is also found in Marcuse.² We attempt, below, to explicate such a theoretical position, although the position is not claimed to be that which is found in Lukacs' later work, or throughout Marcuse.³ However, it seems worthwhile to reconstruct and develop a theory of labor, etc., given the stress both theorists have placed on it and given its contemporary vitality (e. g., Alfred Schmidt).⁴ It should be emphasized that what is outlined here is only the briefest development of a series of arguments that take various complex forms. We only hope to sketch an approach which is claimed to go beyond the positions of the early Lukacs and Horkheimer. (A more complete exploration of these points would,

of course, have to involve a detailed consideration of Lukacs' last labor in the Ontology,⁵ an examination of Marcuse's Heideggerian Marxism, the various developments of his later work and a detailed consideration of contemporary positions.) Here we merely hope to indicate the direction of the program and say a little about its limitations.

It was in Lukacs' later writing, as we noted earlier, that he suggested that Marx's "great insight" into the labor process was passed by and over in History and Class Consciousness.

Marx's great insight that "even production for the sake of production means nothing more than the development of the productive energies of man, and hence the development of the wealth of human nature as an end in itself" lies outside the terrain which History and Class Consciousness is able to explore.⁶

For Lukacs this meant that (1) Capitalist exploitation loses its "objectively revolutionary aspect," i. e., its objectively progressive qualities and revolutionary implications. He felt that, in his earlier work, he had not yet comprehended the material foundation of capitalist exploitation. In Lukacs' view this was because he had not grasped the ontological objectivity of nature, the labor process, upon which all social processes are based and therefore, in his view, to be understood. Secondly, that there was a failure to grasp and comprehend the fact that "although this evolution of the species Man is accomplished at first at the expense of the majority of

individual human beings and of certain human classes, it finally overcomes this antagonism and coincides with the evolution of the particular individual. This the higher development of individuality is only purchased by a historical process in which individuals are sacrificed."⁷

What Lukacs is suggesting in these quotations is that the understanding of the development of history, the species and the individual has to be closely tied to an adequate conceptualization of the process of labor, the "dialectics of labour." Further, the telos of social formation is, no longer, the elusive and abstract notion of the identity of subject and object, but rather "a notion of a harmonious, total appropriation of objective reality by an objective, embodied subject."⁸ The fulfillment of what Marx called man's "species nature" (a notion that will be elaborated below) becomes the goal of a future rational social order, the "paradigm" of which might be conceived in, for example, the terms of the following passage:

The immediate, natural and necessary relation of person to person is the relation of man to woman. In this natural species relationship man's relationship to nature is immediately his relation to man, just as his relation to man is immediately his relation to nature--his own natural destination. In this relationship, therefore, is sensuously manifested, reduced to an observable fact, the extent to which the human essence has become the human essence of man. From this relationship one can therefore judge man's whole level of development.⁹

Commenting on this passage from Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, P. Walton et al. note that "the humanised relation of two reproducing animals is precisely its nature as a reciprocal activity, entered into freely and consciously, with the aim of satisfying the other as oneself."¹⁰ This constitutes full, undistorted sociality which, as we shall see, is a key element constitutive of species nature.¹¹ These ideas need closer examination. We begin by addressing the concept of labor.

In a recent interview, that was published posthumously, Lukacs suggests that his new work centers on the question of the relationship between necessity and freedom, causality and teleology. "Traditionally," Lukacs said, "philosophers have always built systems founded on one or the other of these two poles. They have either denied necessity or denied human freedom. My aim is to show the ontological interrelation of the two, and to reject the 'either-or' standpoints with which philosophy has presented man. The concept of labour is the hinge of my analysis . . . The notion of alternatives is basic to the meaning of human labour, which is thus always teleological--it sets an aim which is the result of a choice. It thus expresses human freedom."¹² What is this concept of labor or, as Lukacs puts it elsewhere, "the dialectics of labour," the "Marxian Ontology"? How can we conceptualize this new direction?

For Marx, nature becomes objective for us through the laboring process, in which both nature and the laboring subjects are themselves transformed. We may speak, in a limited sense, about a "dialectics of nature" in that the synthesis of material labor unites the historical subject (which is of nature) and the process of nature. Through Man, and by virtue of men's theoretical-practical activity, "nature attains self-consciousness" and "amalgamates with itself."¹³ Human activity, labor, production, and creation also, therefore, mediates between men and society. For Marx the world was the "world of man." He rejects the metaphysical idea of a "final universal goal" given and unfolding in history;¹⁴ a goal that predetermines the meaning of the world; a Spirit or Logos that guides man's praxis from an organic, sense-certain, undifferentiated unity between man and nature to a rational, reasoned differentiated unity between man and nature (which preserves individuality in a context of self-conscious collectivity).¹⁵ Goals and purposes, in the strict sense, are always a category of human practice and here, as A. Schmidt has pointed out, Marx "limited himself, as a materialist, to what Hegel called the "finite-teleological standpoint," Hegel put it this way:

In practice man relates to nature as to something immediate and external. He himself is in this relation an immediately external and hence sensuous and individual, who has however the right to conduct himself towards natural objects as their purpose.¹⁶

In Capital, Marx discussed at length the way in which the "purposive will"¹⁷ of man "triumphs over nature":

We presuppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of the labour process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement, that was therefore already ideally present. He not only effects a change of the form of the natural basis; in it he also realizes his purpose, which he knows, which determines the mode of his activity, and to which he must subordinate his will.¹⁸

According to both Hegel and Marx, labor's purposes are subject to necessary limitations; they are limited objectively "by the material at men's disposal . . . and, subjectively, by the structure of men's needs and drives."¹⁹ Marx, of course, went beyond Hegel in attempting to work out the socio-historical roots of human purposes. In doing so, he includes (although in sketchy form) an analysis of the complex further mediations that arise when labor casts off its "first, instinctual form" in which man (simply) utilized nature through the natural organs of his body. In a higher unity of man and nature, conscious production directed to a purpose, is mediated through the role of tools²⁰ or artifacts.²¹

Marx conceives man's "finite-telological activity," his "purposeful creations," his "conscious activity" as critical for the adequate separation of man's species characteristics from those of animals. Man externalizes and objectifies his nature, history is the creation and record of his praxis. Labor is the defining, natural, and historical condition of man. But more than this can be said. In the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, Marx argued that ". . . an animal only produces what it immediately needs for itself or its young. It produces one-sidedly, whilst man produces universally. It produces only under the dominion of immediate physical need, whilst man produces even when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom therefrom."²²

Here and elsewhere in these early writings²³ Marx distinguishes human nature from the nature of animals by reference to four characteristics of man's productive activity. It is, as we have seen, (1) conscious, purposive (sometimes he uses the words "self-conscious"). It is also (2) universal, there are no limits to man's capacity to extend himself and, therefore, history. Man produces in order to live, to satisfy his material needs. He also, according to Marx, produces free of physical need and men "only truly produce in freedom therefrom." There are, we suggested above, necessary limitations on human production. But these are operative in qualitatively different ways in each historical epoch.

What man will make or is capable of making admits of no formal answer. (3) Man's productive activity can be planned, and (4) it is "social." In the Manuscripts Marx suggests that man is a social being because "he exists in reality as the representation and the real mind of social existence, and as the sum of human manifestations of social existence."²⁴ Each man is both unique and a communal being. He is the "subjective existence of society as thought and experienced."²⁵ In the German Ideology the concept of social being receives important further alteration.²⁶ It can be argued²⁷ that Marx saw language as intrinsic to and, therefore, further defining of human production. Although Marx's statements about language are underdeveloped, they provide us with further insight into the social nature of man's species being. He wrote:

Language is as old as [human] consciousness, language is practical consciousness that exists also for other men, and for that reason alone it really exists personally as well; language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse, with other men.²⁸

As M. Gordy has pointed out, "the necessity he [Marx--D.H.] speaks of is empirical necessity because language is practical consciousness and practice is empirical. Since practical consciousness, i. e., purposive consciousness, is what makes production human, then language, or the possibility of language, is coextensive with human production." For Marx, "language is impossible without human

beings living together and talking to each other, so the possibility of language implies human society. Since the possibility of language is coextensive with human production, human production is "social."²⁹

The form of man's labor, its quality and quantity vary, Marx of course reasoned, with natural and historical circumstances. In Capital, however, he says why it is essential to begin with a study of man, man's essence, the nature of labor:

To know what is useful for a dog, one must study dog-nature. This nature itself is not to be deduced from the principle of utility. Applying this to man, he that would criticize all human acts, movements, relations, etc. by the principle of utility, must first deal with human nature in general, and then with human nature as modified in each historical epoch.³⁰

Therefore, it is claimed, in order to know what is central and useful for mankind, we must begin from analysis of man, of labor in general and then labor as developed, changed, and constrained in each social formation. The unity that informs Marx's project is, P. Walton et al. suggest, "his constant insistence on basic premises which reveal the dialectics of labour."

The labour process, which antedates value, and serves as its starting point, thus again makes its appearance within capital, as a process which occurs inside its substance and forms its content. The labour process, because of its abstractness, and its material nature, is equally characteristic of all forms of production.³¹

From an understanding of the "natural unity" of what is "exclusively human" Marx proceeds to explore (from the early writings on alienation to the concrete measure of exploitation of labor power in Capital) how man's development is constrained by the history of class societies.

In tearing away from man the object of his production, [this] tears from him his species-life, his real objectivity as a member of the species, and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken away from him.³²

The analysis is directed to uncover the tensions between the "natural unity" of labor and its historical unfreedom, in order to explore the conditions for the possibility of overcoming structures of alienation; conditions that might reveal developing "needs" and "purposes" that cannot be met under, for example, capitalism's rigid preoccupation with profit and distribution of scarce values.

Commenting on a similar reading of Marx, P. Walton et al. declare that the problem now becomes that of deriving operational concepts from "the dialectic" that will both account for and help reveal the dynamics and direction of social change. "What we have to show," they add, "is how alienation is linked to the labour theory of value in Marx's work and in so doing highlight their dependence upon his view of man."³³

Yet, within the terms of reference of the theory, several questions remain. How given a claimed human essence of the type

discussed above can we explain structures of unfreedom? Does the quality of man's species characteristics change over time? If so, does his essence change? If so, how can we claim a concept of essence that is trans-historical or a-historical or how can we analyze its changing social form over time? What is the relation of essence and appearance over time? How is alienation, if conceived as embracing the four dimensions Marx discusses in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,³⁴ to be linked to a critique of capitalist society that includes the concept of human essence, species characteristics, as its foundational premise? If man is alienated from his species being, how can we still justify our premises, i. e., can we still claim man has species characteristics if, as B. Ollman suggests, "alienated man . . . has lost touch with all human specificity?"³⁵

* * * * *

The argument can be taken several stages further by an analysis of Marcuse's work. In developing this second argumentation we use the above discussion as a backdrop and attempt to advance the argument beyond the problematics raised by the questions above.

Marcuse shares Horkheimer's position on sociological radicalism, the unconcluded nature of the dialectic and the stress on an

immanent, essential potential in man that is yet to be realized. But in place of a relatively static epistemological relationship of essence to appearance and fact, Marcuse develops a critical and dynamic relationship of essence to appearance seen as parts of a historical process. With Horkheimer he stresses the embeddedness of all theory in social struggle; its ultimately necessary confirmation in practice but also its ultimate (as yet) irreducibility to any given form of social practice. "The truth of the model of essence," he argues, "is preserved better in human misery and suffering and the struggle to overcome them than in the forms and concepts of pure thought."³⁶ This truth is "indeterminate" and remains necessarily so. It is fulfilled "only through historical action, and its connection can thus result only post festum." The truth claim remains, as we saw earlier, unfalsified; but the theory awaits verification. While Horkheimer acknowledged the necessity to supersede (aufheben) philosophy with social theory, Marcuse explicated this theoretical intention at greater length. In Reason and Revolution, "The Concept of Essence," and in other places, Marcuse explained that "if there was to be any progress beyond this philosophy [Hegel's --D. H.], it had to advance beyond philosophy itself and, at the same time, beyond the social and political order to which philosophy had tied its fate."³⁷ In a critique of Sartre's existentialism, he wrote:

One step more toward concretization [away from Hegel's philosophy] would have meant a transgression beyond philosophy itself. Such a transgression occurred in opposition to Hegel's philosophy . . . When they [Kierkegaard and Marx--D. H.] came to grips with the concrete existence, they abandoned and repudiated philosophy . . . For Marx, the conception of "réalité humaine" is the critique of political economy and the theory of socialist revolution. The opposition against Hegel pronounces the essential inadequacy of philosophy in the face of the concrete human existence. ³⁸

Marcuse argues that one criterion for the objective validity of dialectical theory's separation of essence and appearance is the "suitability of its concepts for service as the organizing principle in the explanation of a given group of appearances (e. g. , constellations of political power among states of a specific era, their alliances and conflicts). If the historical structure (e. g. , 'imperialism') postulated as 'essential' for the explanation of such a grouping makes it possible to comprehend causally the situation both in its individual phases as well as in terms of the tendencies effective within it, then it is really the essential in that manifold of appearances. This determination of essence is true: it has held good within the theory. "³⁹ Yet, Marcuse goes on to argue, the theory of which it is a part is itself at the same time a factor in the historical struggles that it aims to grasp and catch: "only in them can the essential theoretical truths be ultimately verified. And from this very historicity of dialectical concepts grows a new kind of 'universal validity' and objectivity. "⁴⁰ The question is: how are we to conceive

the dynamic and historical relationship of essence and appearance from which a new kind of "universal validity" and "objectivity" derive? There is a strong tendency, in Marcuse's earlier work, to answer this question, explicitly, through a theory of alienation, grounded in the concept of labor and a dialectic of needs. This is how we shall read his work here.

For Marcuse the distinctions between appearance and essence, form/content, immediacy/potentiality, have significance at more than one level. Firstly, they have import for the analysis and explanation of social formations and realities. The appearance and form of a social reality is not to be taken to be synonymous with illusion. To uncover the essence and content (to explain appearance and form) requires an analysis that is itself a "process of elucidating one reality by disclosing its foundation in and determination by another."⁴¹ (Cf. the example of imperialism above.) Marcuse argues that all the concepts that Marx and critical theory employ make possible a knowledge of reality in opposition to the freezing of the given, the false facticity and evidences of immediate reality. In doing this they refer us to a second level of significance. For in examining, for example, capitalist society they refer us to "standards entirely foreign to commodity production," they are also critical concepts. Concern for man moves into the center of the theory and to a con-

ceptualization of man's potentiality within a particular historical situation. "At this level the tension between essence and appearance, between authentic potentiality and immediate existence, is reflected anew in the concrete notions with which the theory attempts to grasp the social process of life in its antagonistic character."⁴² These concrete notions belong to two levels: (1) Some deal with phenomena in their reified form, as they appear immediately, and others aim at their real content, as it presents itself to theory once its immediate and taken-for-granted phenomenal form has been transcended.

"Both groups of concepts are equally necessary to an understanding of the antagonistic reality; nevertheless, they are not on the same level. In terms of dialectical theory, the second group of concepts, which has been derived from the totality of the social dynamic, is intended to grasp the essence and the true content of the manifestations which the first group describes as they appear."⁴³ The dialectical concepts transcend the given social reality in the direction of another historical structure which is present as a tendency in the given reality. "The positive concept of essence . . . is rooted in this potential structure."

In attempting to demarcate progressive and regressive moments, the potential from the given, Marcuse often has the propensity to make similar arguments to those that Horkheimer used. This was

indicated in the discussion of Horkheimer above. Marcuse often includes references to "the interest of freedom," "historical goals," which have the potentiality to be fulfilled in a real "universality":

Materialist theory moves beyond historical relativism in linking itself with those social forces which the historical situation reveals to be progressive and truly "universal."⁴⁴

The arguments that underlie these statements and similar ones⁴⁵ can easily be read as following Horkheimer's pattern of argumentation, viz., "the interest in a future rational society" or as treating as self-evident what a "progressive and truly universal" view is, etc. To the extent that this is true, the criticisms we made of Horkheimer's position obviously apply and will not be repeated here. However, there is an alternative reading, which is the one that principally concerns us. Marcuse can be read as subsuming a theory of labor and needs, from which a particular type of social theory is said to follow. He can be seen, consequently, as recasting and grounding theory and thought on materialist presuppositions. The theory needs further explication. In Marcuse's work it finds extended development in Reason and Revolution (although we shall refer back to other earlier works).

Marcuse argues that Marx focused his theory on the labor process and "by doing so held to and consummated the principle of the Hegelian dialectic that the structure of the content (reality) determines the structure of the theory."⁴⁶

He made the foundations of civil society the foundations of the theory of civil society. This society operates on the principle of universal labour, with the labour process decisive for the totality of human existence; labour determines the value of all things. Since the society is perpetuated by the continued universal exchange of the products of labour, the totality of human relations is governed by the immanent laws of the economy. The development of the individual and the range of his freedom depend on the extent to which his labour satisfies a social need. All men are free, but the mechanisms of the labour process govern the freedom of them all. The study of the labour process is, in the last analysis, absolutely necessary in order to discover the conditions for realizing reason and freedom in the real sense. A critical analysis of that process thus yields the final theme of philosophy.⁴⁷

Marx, Marcuse argues in an earlier essay, takes up the Hegelian concept of labor with all its essential characteristics: "'Labour is the becoming-for-itself of man within externalization (Entäußerung) or as externalized man.'"⁴⁸ In contrast to the concrete analysis of the "labour processes" in Capital this is, of course, an "abstract" determination of labor (that is insufficient for economic theory). But, Marcuse also points out, "it remains the foundation for all concrete concepts of labour in Marx and is explicitly operative in Capital: As the creator of use-values, as useful labour, labour is therefore a condition of human existence independent of all social forms; it is external natural necessity that mediates the material exchange between man and nature, and thus human life."⁴⁹ The essential tenets of the concept of labor, which were developed on

pages 199ff., are here explicit and/or implicit. Labor as "mediation," "objectification," etc., finds its place, but with one major change in emphasis: the process of history as man's becoming, development and potential realization, finds greater expression and thematization.

Being and becoming are constituted through the being and becoming of historical, human existence. Within the totality of being, the meaning of labor is the key constitutive element for all human praxis. In the "Foundations of the Concept of Labour," Marcuse stresses that the very structure of being human, embraces the "necessity for life" ("the remedy of wants always leaves something to imagine and that some unfulfilled want always remains behind . . . ")⁵⁰

The necessity for life underlines an "ontological" condition: it is grounded in the very structure of being human that simply can never reduce to a passive process, but must constantly be a process of "self-creation" as "self-making." Even praxis of human existence which is self-mediated in the process of coming to know itself, requires "labour" as the mode of its becoming.⁵¹

Being human is always more than its present existence: "a discrepancy that demands constant labour."

This essential excess of being over existence constitutes the primordial and ineliminable human "necessity for life" (Gottl). Man's very structure of need is grounded in it and its fulfilling is the final meaning of labour: the need for an enduring and

lasting self-fulfillment of the existence in the actuality of all its possibilities--a task in whose service the economy ultimately is also engaged. ⁵²

In the labor process man develops both his inner and outer nature in a continuous ever-transforming process. It is a process in which he develops, struggling to fulfill anticipated needs. It is a process of becoming, a process with a final meaning. Any analysis of social life has to capture this dynamic process in its categories.

Marcuse stresses that far from being a mere economic activity (Erwerbstätigkeit), labor is and was conceived by Marx, as the "existential activity" of man, his "free conscious activity"--"not a means for maintaining his life (Lebensmittel) but for developing his 'universal nature.'" ⁵³

The new categories [of political economy--D. H.] will evaluate the economic reality with a view to what it has made of man, of his faculties, powers, and needs. Marx summarizes these human qualities when he speaks of the "universal essence" of man; his examination of the economy is specifically carried on with the question in mind whether that economy realizes man's Gattungswesen (universelles Wesen). ⁵⁴

Marcuse does not specify at length what he considers Marx meant by "universal essence." Nor does he specify at length what he considers the "universal essence" of man to be. We will, following textual suggestions take this to be the fulfillment of man's species nature through labor (hitherto discussed) which can be characterized as self-conscious, universal, social, planned, and free. ⁵⁵ (Man is

free if "'nature is his work and his reality,' so that he 'recognizes himself in a world he has himself made.'"⁵⁶

The "final theme of philosophy" opens problems and possibilities which are no longer philosophical. The self-realization of man now requires the explanation, understanding, and abolition of certain modes of labor. The critique begins in philosophical terms because the "enslavement of labour" and its emancipation are both conditions that affect the very foundation of human existence and go beyond the framework of traditional political economy.⁵⁷ Marx, of course, departs from philosophical terminology in the elaboration of his own theory. However, Marcuse points out: "The critical, transcendental character of economic categories, hitherto expressed by philosophical concepts, later, in Capital, is demonstrated by the economic categories themselves."⁵⁸ A few further points need to be made.

Marcuse elaborates Marx's notion of alienated labour in its complex social forms. We cannot, for obvious reasons of space, develop this specific discussion.⁵⁹ It is important to note, however, the different levels of analysis. On the one hand, Marx's discussion of man's alienation from his product, process, fellow-man, and species being is developed. Under the capitalist mode of production, it is concluded, "the worker does not affirm but

contradicts his essence." The concept of second nature summarizes this state of alienation.⁶⁰ History is nature's coming to be in self-consciousness. Yet a distinction persists. Man is of nature and makes history, but nature is not made by man.

The distinction is vital: if it is lost then the laws of history are simply equated with the laws of nature; they are made timeless and unchangeable. Rather the laws in history exist, are natural, blind, and fateful, but are ultimately grounded in human institutions. They are specifically historical; they can be changed.⁶¹

In an essay on K. Popper, Marcuse writes that: "The less a society is rationally organized and directed by the collective efforts of free men, the more it will appear as an individual governed by 'inexorable' laws . . . "⁶²

The dialectical analysis of social reality . . . shows this reality to be overpowered by objective mechanism that operates with the necessity of "natural" (physical) laws . . . The movement is dialectical in itself inasmuch as it is not yet piloted by the self-conscious activity of freely associating individuals.⁶³

The analysis of economic, objective facts becomes necessary in order to grasp the complex cycle of the reproductive processes of civil society. But in such an analysis itself, objective facts are not simply facts: they come "alive and enter an indictment of society." An economic theory cannot but in turn be a critical theory. "Economic realities exhibit their own inherent negativity."

In Marx, as for Hegel, dialectical analysis moves from

appearance to essence, from immediacy to potentiality. Critical theory follows and explicates the existential dialectic by taking cognizance of the fact that the negation inherent in reality is "the moving and creating principle," the labor process.

The dialectic is the "dialectic of negativity"--every fact is more than a fact; it is a negation and restriction of real possibilities. Wage labour is a fact, but at the same time it is a restraint on free work that might satisfy human needs. Private property is a fact, but at the same time it is a negation of man's collective appropriation of nature. . . . Man's social practice embodies the negativity as well as its overcoming.⁶⁴

From an understanding of labor in general, the dialectics of labor, we can make explicit what is immanently possible, potential, and available to determinate negation. But, Marcuse stresses, this can only be done in historical analysis. It is a central tenet of Marcuse's analysis that man's capacity to realize his essence evolves and changes over time. So, on the other hand, the analysis of alienated labor must be supplemented with an analysis of its continually changing social form, and, also, of the positive concept of essence rooted in it.

Here again the development from Hegel is essential. Hegel's philosophy, Marcuse argues, revolves around the universality of reason; it was a rational system with each moment, its every part (the subjective and objective, of for-itselfness and in-itselfness)

integrated into a comprehensive, structured, self-unfolding whole. Marx shows, and this is the crucial development, in Marcuse's view, that capitalist society first put such a universality into practice.

Capitalism developed the productive forces for the totality of a uniform social system. Universal commerce, universal competition and the universal interdependence of labour were made to prevail and transformed men into "world-historical, empirically universal individuals."⁶⁵

This universality is, of course, a negative one for the productive forces, man's products, impinge on him as uncontrolled alien power, second nature. But in concrete, social theoretic analysis, Marx uncovers in the dynamic of this social formation and mode of production (under the laws of capitalist accumulation and value, etc.)⁶⁶ the objective possibility of this negativity being negated. One class in capitalist society makes this possible and points in the direction of another historical structure which is present as a tendency.

The proletariat is distinguished by the fact that, as a class it signifies the negation of all classes. The interests of all other classes are essentially one-sided; the proletariat's interest is essentially universal.⁶⁷

How can we conceive, ground, and justify the claimed "universal interests"? Marcuse's answer is worth quoting at length:

The universality of the proletariat is, again, a negative universality, indicating that the alienation of labour has intensified. . . . The labour of the proletarian prevents any self-fulfillment; his work negates his entire existence. This utmost negativity, however, takes a positive turn. The very fact that he is deprived of all assets of the prevailing system sets him beyond this system. He is a member of the class "which is really rid of the old world and at the same time stands pitted against it." The "universal character" of the proletariat is the final basis for the universal character of the communist revolution The proletariat is the negation not only of certain particular human potentialities, but also of man as such. All specific distinguishing marks by which men are differentiated lose their validity . . . (Property, culture, religion, nationality) . . . His concern to exist is not the concern of a given group, class or nation, but is truly universal and "world historical."⁶⁸

Capitalism puts universality into practice and creates the possibility of "universal reason." It creates a subject that represents the universality of man, for its structural and historical determinants create the conditions for the realization of man's species nature. Capitalism fulfills the condition of necessary universality; it revolutionizes the productive forces and creates the possibility of production free from the immediacy of physiological needs; it socializes production; "all" that is required and left is that men recognize and repudiate fetishism, the appearance and form of capital, and with their (ever-present) "purposive-will," will history their own.

Few other than Marcuse have appreciated the immense

difficulties involved in this last step and the blocks to its realization.⁶⁹ It is here, however, that critical theory--as we have expounded it--finds its role. And it is the immanent possibility of the confluence of historical developments and human essence, the becoming of man's species characteristics, that directs this theoretical labor. We asked earlier how we could interpret the concept of truth in the following passage of Marcuse's:

Theory accompanies the practice at every moment, analyzing the changing situation and formulating its concepts accordingly. The concrete conditions for realizing the truth may vary, but the truth remains the same and theory remains its ultimate guardian. Theory will preserve the truth even if revolutionary practice deviates from its proper path.⁷⁰

We are now in a situation to offer a reading and interpretation. It was argued that the labor process is pivotal in the constitution of being; that the dialectics of labor disclose the unfolding of man and his powers in history. In the Frankfurt School reading, however, the dialectic is, as we have seen, unconcluded and open. Read in this way the theory of labor and needs attempts to surmount the difficulties raised by our questions to the first argumentation. The potential for man to realize his essence is conceived as being historical and dynamic. Marx was read as resting his theory on the assumption that the labor process determines the totality of human existence and thus gives to society its basic patterns. As

manifest in capitalism, the "productive activity" of man was said to have created the possibility of realizing species nature. The truth of this process and its immanent potentiality is the world constitutive activity of labor. The key constitutive element in the overcoming of capitalism and authoritarianism emerges as dependent on the historical and pivotal role of the proletariat. The truth claims of critical theory are intertwined with man's historio-practical activity and rest, consequently, on a philosophy of materialism, an analysis of labor, and, therefore, on the species characteristics of man. The analysis of modes of labor and production can, as a consequence, be empirical, analytic, and critical. The interest in freedom and a rational social order is grounded in every act of labor. Every moment of labor anticipates the fulfillment of the species-characteristics of man, an enduring and lasting self-fulfillment of existence in the actuality of all its possibilities. The "universal validity" and "objectivity" of this "reconstructed" school of critical theory finds its foundation in an analysis of labor itself.

Marcuse emphasizes that Marx's conception of reality as dialectical was "originally motivated by the same datum as Hegel's, namely, by the negative character of reality."

In the social world this negativity carried forward the contradictions of class society and thus remained the motor of the social process. Every single fact and condition was drawn into this process so that its

significance could be grasped only when seen in this totality to which it belonged. For Marx, as for Hegel, "the truth" lies only in the whole, the "negative totality."⁷¹

Social reality, however, can only be conceived as a negative totality in the process of abstraction, a process which is imposed on critical theory by the very structure of its subject matter. The analysis of the labor process continually reveals the necessity to move through two fundamental levels of analysis. We must first grasp in its immediacy, the fetishized world of appearances, the "pseudo-concrete," and in so doing we must follow the abstractions that make up this world. The second step is then "the abstraction from the abstraction" (Marcuse) to the true concrete world, to essence. Accordingly, the Marxian and critical theory of capitalism elaborates firstly, the abstract relations such as commodity, exchange value, money, wages and return from them to the concrete totality, the structural tendencies that lead to its self-generated collapse and to immanent and potentially successful emergence of a socialist totality.

The negativity of reality is an historical and social condition, the analysis of it always historical. The study of any moment of the "world of men" is, Marcuse argues, inescapably embedded in the structure of the socio-historical process. But what the relationship of part to whole is, is little developed. B. Ollman, developing

K. Kosik's notion of the concrete totality, provides an important elucidation of the dialectical relation of whole to parts which can be employed here with consistency to the theoretical position. Ollman argues that the dialectical and materialist conception of totality in Marx views the whole as "the structured interdependence of its relational parts, the interacting events, processes, and conditions of the 'real' world."⁷² Through the constant interaction and development of these parts, the whole also changes, realizing (some of) the possibilities given in prior stages.

Flux and interaction, projected back into the origins of the present and forward into its possible future, are the chief distinguishing characteristics of the world in this view . . . Since this interdependence is structured--that is, rooted in relatively stable connections--the same interaction accords the whole a relative autonomy, enabling it to have relation as a whole with the parts whose order and unity it represents.⁷³

These relations are of four types:

(1) The whole shapes the parts to make them more functional within this particular whole (so it is that capitalism, for example, gets the laws it requires); (2) the whole gives meaning and relative importance to each part in terms of this function (laws in capitalism are only comprehensible as elements in a structure that maintains capitalist society, and are as important as the contribution they make); (3) the whole expresses itself through the part, so that the part can be seen as a form of the whole . . . (a study of any major capitalist law which includes its necessary conditions and results will be a study of capitalism); and (4) the relations of the parts with each other, as suggested above, forge the contours and meaning of

the whole, transform it into an ongoing system with a history, a goal, and an impact.⁷⁴

The analysis of any part of the socio-historical process cannot and must not avoid the analytic process of totalization. Nor can the part simply be subsumed under the whole. The development of man in history, the changing forms of human practice, can only be grasped if each moment is conceived as embedded in the whole, the Unabgeschlossene Dialektick of labor. Likewise, the totality cannot be understood without reference to its constituents, the consciousness and self-consciousness of men.

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past.⁷⁵

* * * * *

The theoretical position we developed above grounds Marxism as a materialist critique in an analysis of the labor process. The foundations of this process, it was argued, embody and anticipate the "universal interests" of the species, the fulfillment of man's species nature, in a rational social order that conforms to the "good," the "just," and the "true." It attempts to uncover an immanent relationship between truth and freedom in history and, at one and the same time, avoid relativism (being class, culture, and time bound) and, yet, be inextricably intertwined with historical process and social struggle. There are several directions one

could take in commenting on this reconstructed position. For example, much needs to be said about the relationship between causality and teleology or for what passes under the concept "dialectic." However, we must restrict ourselves to the essential themes of this chapter.

The "philosophical anthropology" of our theory of labor attempts to avoid the pitfalls and epistemological circles of Lukacs' theory of the standpoint of the proletariat and that of Horkheimer's static epistemology. The question is, whether the difficulties of the previous positions we addressed are resolved, recast, or determinately negated (preserved and superseded)? A number of major points need to be made.

The theory of labor as it was developed in the first and second argumentation says very little about man's suggested "universal essence." The notion of unalienated labor is ill developed. Yet its "unpacking," concretization and expansion seems of central importance if it is to become something more than an abstract, metaphysical standard recognizable only by "isolated" theorists. How can we or might we recognize this essence, know its content, let alone deduce institutional structures compatible with its principles? How are we to differentiate what is argued to be immanent and potential from those that claim to represent such a standpoint, e. g., the

party, intellectuals, critical theorists? Are there criteria that make such distinctions possible and are there unique principles of social and political organization that follow from the premises of the theory? Or are there a multitude of competing moral and political standpoints compatible with "labor's" uncovered telos? Herbert Marcuse has said that in a rationally organized society, he believes, labor can win back its "originally libidinous" character.⁷⁶ Marx, on the other hand, attacked the (Fourier) thesis that labor could become play in a free society. In the Grundrisse, he chastized and ridiculed Fourier's romantic, "'naive, dreaming shop-girl's view' that labour must become fun: 'Really free labour, e. g., composing, is at the same time grimly serious, the most intensive effort.'"⁷⁷ If the notion of species nature is to have empirical import the issues raised by the questions above cannot be glossed over.⁷⁸

A further objection emerges from those above. The (possible) convergence of reason, freedom, species nature, was said to be immanent in labor. As we asked of Horkheimer earlier, we must ask here: who is justified in interpreting this criterion? A group of critical theorists, intellectuals? Although certainly not conceived as such, the theory is, in fact, potentially "elitist." Without a conscious theoretical defence of the possible political need for a "party,"

"leadership," etc., the theory faces the danger of lapsing into an unconscious, dogmatic, elitism which becomes even more serious given the lack of explicated principles for political and social organization and action.

Furthermore, if the theory of labor is to have analytic, empirical and critical import, it becomes important to be able to recognize true from false needs, ideologically distorted from reflected/true interests and to explore their relationship to social development. The theoretical position that we developed above, argues that despite and given alienation, labor still embodies "human specificity" (the possibility of fulfilling species nature, etc.); that the development of man in labor, is the unfolding of man and his powers in history; that the dialectic is unconcluded but potentially "concluded" (i. e., that man can break through the current structures of unfreedom towards ever greater realization). Yet given the continuance of domination in Eastern Europe, with political suspicion of any free thought (rationalized by use of Marxist terminology); the absence of a universal proletariat; the developments of twentieth-century capitalism (and the emergence of revolutions in the Third World, etc.)⁷⁹ the theoretical position is faced with "discrepancies" which unless it can (begin to) account for has no recourse but to lapse, for example, into the static, epistemological position of a

Horkheimer and/or fall open to the charge of investing groups and classes in the life world with a conceptual mythology.⁸⁰ What seems required is a theory of labor that embodies a more developed theory of human needs and their relationship to historical developments and social evolution. In this light, Habermas' suggestion that the dynamics of human practice embody two essential moments (that are interdependent but irreducible, etc.) speaks of an alternative view of the interconnection between labor, needs, and social evolution (and, therefore, the motor of history) that is deserving of close consideration.⁸¹

NOTES

¹ Cf. Arato, "Lukacs' Theory of Reification"; also P. Piccone, "Dialectics and Materialism in Lukacs," Telos, no. 11 (1972).

² See references listed under fn. 31, chap. 4.

³ Ibid.

⁴ A. Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx (London: New Left Books, 1973).

⁵ The entire Ontology has not, as yet, been published. A brief summary of his views can be found in Georg Lukacs, Die Ontologische des Menschlichen Denkens und Handelns (Vienna: Hundsblume Editione, 1970). Also, "The Dialectic of Labour," Telos 6 (Fall 1970), pp. 162-74.

⁶ Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, p. xvii.

⁷ Ibid., p. xviii.

⁸ Schmidt, "From Tragedy to Dialectic," p. 251.

For an elaboration of this telos, cf. K. Marx, Early Writings, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (London: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 159-60.

Marcuse, Studies in Critical Philosophy, pp. 32-33. For a discussion of "appropriation" in Marx, cf. B. Ollman, Alienation (Cambridge: The University Press, 1973), pp. 91-106.

⁹ Quoted in Walton, From Alienation to Surplus Value, p. 6. See Marx, Early Writings, p. 154.

¹⁰ Walton, From Alienation to Surplus Value, p. 6.

¹¹ The notion of "species nature" in Marx is discussed on pp. 201 ff. below.

¹²G. Lukacs, "Interview on His Life and Work," New Left Review 68 (July-August 1971), p. 51.

¹³Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx, p. 79.

¹⁴For a discussion of this rejection, see Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx, chap. 1.

¹⁵The concepts of undifferentiated and differentiated unity are usefully developed in G. A. Cohen, "Marx's Dialectic of Labour," Philosophy and Public Affairs 3 (Spring 1974), pp. 253-61.

¹⁶Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx, p. 99 (and quoting Hegel, Enzyklopädie, vol. 11, Naturphilosophie, p. 36, Miller, p. 5).

¹⁷Marx, Capital, vol. 1, p. 178.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx, p. 100.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 100-7.

²¹Cf. M. Wartofsky, "Towards an Historical Epistemology," (Cambridge: January 1974, unpublished lectures at M. I. T.).

²²Quoted in Walton, From Alienation to Surplus Value, pp. 27-28.

²³Marx, Early Writings, pp. 120-34, 152-67, 168-78, 189-94.

²⁴Ibid., p. 158.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Cf. K. Marx, The German Ideology (New York: International Publishers, 1973), pp. 50-52.

²⁷I owe this point to M. Gordy's unpublished paper, "Marx's Ethics."

²⁸Marx, The German Ideology, p. 51.

- ²⁹ Gordy, "Marx's Ethics," p. 14.
- ³⁰ Quoted in Walton, From Alienation to Surplus Value, p. 29.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 30 (and quoting from Marx, 's Grundrisse, p. 78).
- ³² Quoted in Walton, From Alienation to Surplus Value, p. 31. Cf. Marx, Early Writings, pp. 120-34.
- ³³ Walton, From Alienation to Surplus Value, p. 34.
- ³⁴ Marx, Early Writings, pp. 120-34. Cf. for an elaboration and discussion of the arguments, Ollman, Alienation; I. Meszaros, Marx's Theory of Alienation (London: Merlin, 1972).
- ³⁵ Ollman, Alienation, p. 134.
- ³⁶ Marcuse, "The Concept of Essence," Negations, p. 73.
- ³⁷ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 257.
- ³⁸ Marcuse, "Sartre's Existentialism," Studies in Critical Philosophy, pp. 188-89.
- ³⁹ Marcuse, "The Concept of Essence," Negations, p. 74.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.* (Emphasis mine.)
- ⁴¹ N. Geras, "Marx and the Critique of Political Economy," in Ideology and the Social Sciences, ed. R. Blackburn (London: Fontana, 1972), p. 294. Cf. Marcuse, "The Concept of Essence," Negations, pp. 69-71; also, Cohen, "Karl Marx and the Withering Away of Social Science."
- ⁴² Marcuse, "The Concept of Essence," Negations, p. 85.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-80. Cf. also references listed under fn. 69, chap. 4.
- ⁴⁶ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. 272-73.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Marcuse, "On the Philosophical Foundations of the Concept of Labour," p. 12 (and quoting Marx and Engels, Gesamtausgabe, 1. Abtg. 3, pp. 157, 168).

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 13 (and quoting Marx, Kapital, Volksausg., ed K. Kautsky (Berlin, 1928), Bd. 1, p. 10).

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 22 (and quoting Gottl, Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft (Jena, 1931), p. 442).

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 22.

⁵² Ibid., pp. 22-23.

⁵³ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 275 (and quoting K. Marx, Okonomisch-Philosophische Manuskripte (1844) in Marx-Engels, Gesamtausgabe, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1932), pp. 87-88).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 274-76.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 275 (and quoting Marx as in reference 49 above, p. 89).

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 276.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 273-87.

⁶⁰ For a discussion of "second-nature" see R. Jacoby, "Towards a Critique of Automatic Marxism: The Politics of Philosophy from Lukacs to the Frankfurt School," Telos 10 (Winter 1971), especially pp. 141-44.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 141-42.

⁶² H. Marcuse, "Notes on the Problem of Historical Laws," Partisan Review 26 (Winter 1959), p. 117 ff.

⁶³ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 316.

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 282.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 287 (and quoting Marx, The German Ideology, p. 64).

⁶⁶ For an explication of these laws, see Marcuse, ibid., pp. 295-312. Or P. Mattick, Marx and Keynes (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1969); E. Mandel, Marxist Economic Theory, vol. 1 (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970).

⁶⁷ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 291.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 291-92.

⁶⁹ Cf., for example, H. Marcuse, Soviet Marxism (New York: Vintage, 1961); Five Lectures (Boston: Beacon, 1970); One Dimensional Man (Boston: Beacon, 1964).

⁷⁰ Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 322.

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 312-13.

⁷² B. Ollman, "Marxism and Political Science," Politics and Society 3 (1973): 496. Also see Kosik, Die Dialektik des Konkreten.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ K. Marx, The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (New York: International Publishers, 1972).

⁷⁶ H. Marcuse, "Trieblehre und Freiheit," printed in Freud in der Gegenwart (Frankfurt, 1957), p. 418. Quoted in Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx, p. 231.

⁷⁷ Marx, Grundrisse, p. 505. Cf. also pp. 595-99. Quoted in Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx.

⁷⁸ The problems are not necessarily insurmountable within the tenets of the theory, i. e., what is missing--e. g., a theory of

socialism and political institutions--could be developed within the terms of reference of the theory.

⁷⁹ See the brief discussion of these issues on p. 7f.

⁸⁰ See our earlier discussion of Lukacs for an elaboration of this point.

⁸¹ Cf. Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, especially chaps. 2, 3.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The theory of Labor, as we have developed it here, is open to several objections, all of which it might be able to respond to but which remain major problems at this time. A question, however, remains: Might it be that the series of philosophical questions that arise when the problems of "ultimate foundations" emerge in critical theory are themselves a misplaced series of questions? We need to ask then, what is the rational justification for grounding, i. e. , how can we ground the problem of grounding? It can clearly not be ruled out that there is no absolute ground for critical theory. The status of critique in Marx's Political Economy might have been developed by the critical tradition in a direction which admits of no final philosophical solution. Are the questions about the nature of Critique, and the foundations of critical theory, adequately posed by, for example, the Frankfurt theorists? There is clearly insufficient time available to adequately deal with these issues, but a few points can briefly be made. These points will suggest another understanding of critique and an alternative direction.

In light of the problems that weigh on the above attempts to reformulate the concept of truth and to find absolute standards for

the foundation of Critique, it might be argued that there are good reasons why Marx did not pursue these issues at length in his later work. They admit of no ultimate solution. Instead, it can and has been argued that the notion of Critique found in Capital is akin to the nature of critique in all science.

G. A. Cohen, in an article entitled "Karl Marx and the Withering Away of Social Science,"¹ argues that the critical base of Marx's work rests on the claim (common to all science) that when scientific explanation uncovers a reality unrepresented and unknown in appearance and, therefore, discredits a common-sense understanding of that appearance, science can be regarded as potentially subversive. The results of the practice of science can only be critical when "there is a gulf between appearance and reality when and only when the explanation of a state of affairs renders unacceptable the description that it is natural to give of it if one lacks the explanation, this description being based purely on observation and committing the observer to know theoretical hypotheses."² The withering away of the Critique of Political Economy can only take place when there is a withering away of the gap between appearance and essence, between the immediacy of the givenness of everyday reality and the mechanisms that creates and generates these appearances and underlies them. When the reality that is pretheoretically available is closed,

science becomes "neutral" to its subject. With the gulf present, we can talk of man's alienation in the sense that "I am alienated from myself and from what I do to the extent that I need theory to reach myself and the reasons governing my actions . . . The need for a theory of the social processes in which I participate reflects a similar alienation from those processes."³ Hence a reduced reliance on the results of science that are subversive and critical is both desirable and immanently necessary to the integrity and autonomy of the individual. This does not, obviously, make it possible.

The possibility, of course, rests on a unity of theory and practice, a unity in which practice is informed by theory and creates the conditions for the transparency of social life. It was Marx's view that under the Feudal and Capitalist modes of production, social relationships and social processes were and are organized in such a way as to produce blocks to the transparency of social life (e. g., the fetishism of commodities).⁴ "When social reality inevitably generates discord between thought and reality, the enemy of illusion must operate on reality, not in thought alone."⁵ The gap can only be closed by practice. The Eleventh Thesis sets the program for the day.

None of this is to say that we are forced back to a view of science that rests on a fact/value, theory/practice dichotomy, etc.

It does say, however, that the problem of demarcation remains a problem. Amongst the writers whose works we have explored, we have not found sufficient grounds for separating science from faith.

NOTES

¹ Cohen, "Karl Marx and the Withering Away of Social Science."

² Ibid., p. 200.

³ Ibid., pp. 202-3.

⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 190-99; Geras, "Marx and the Critique of Political Economy."

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

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