ANTHONY GIDDENS'S THEORY OF STRUCTURATION

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The seven books written by Giddens in the years 1971 to 1979 are a remarkable appraisal and reworking of the major currents of existing social theory. The critical part of his work begins with the founders of social science in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and goes on to what he has called "the orthodox consensus" of the period from the end of the Second World War until about the late 1960's. The constructive part of his work can be divided into two. One is his reconciliation or blending of elements of positivism, structuralism, hermeneutics and Marxism in his theory of structuration and the other is the application of this methodology in his theory of industrial society. The latter, although begun with his book on class structure (Giddens 1973) and continued in chapters 4, 5 and 6 in Central Problems in Social Theory (Giddens 1979), took a large step forward in 1981 with the publication of volume one of A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism. A second volume is to follow and so Giddens's theory of industrial society must be regarded as incomplete. For this reason comment on and criticism of it is premature and can only be tentative. In this paper I have chosen to deal, for the most part, with his epistemological undertaking or the "clarification of logical issues" (Giddens 1976:8); the outcome of which is his distinctive theory of structuration and will draw most heavily on the three books published in 1976, 1977 and 1979. However, because some of the papers in Central Problems in Social Theory as well as volume one of A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism are avowedly based on the theory of structuration, I shall include a short treatment of the links between the two parts of Giddens's work at the end of the sections of the paper on the theory of structuration.

As introduction, it may be helpful to try to place his work against the backdrop of other more established social theories and of some of the recent developments in them. In a very broad sense, Giddens's writings can be seen as a fresh attempt "to bridge the gap" between the positions in the long-standing debate over whether social practices are best explained by some kind of natural science of society or by some version of the interpretative process of understanding. All serious social theory has been concerned with this bridging operation, but two circumstances give special significance to Giddens's attempt to do so. One is that it is taking place at a time when naturalistic social theory has been considerably undermined, not only by the failure to deliver adequate explanations, but also by the attack on its underlying epistemology which has been mounted by contemporary philosophy of science and language. So Giddens has been able to use new means for the old task.

The other circumstance which makes his work unusually significant is its relationship to recent social theory in both its "academic" and Marxist forms. In
respect of the former, Giddens's writings represent a decided break from the predominantly naturalistic tradition of English sociology. The criticisms of his theory of structuration which have come from this quarter, for example, that of M.S. Archer (1982), would seem to bear this out. As would the uneasiness among some of his other critics in the face of Giddens's readiness to accept a large measure of doubt and contingency in the matters of either philosophical or sociological certainty (J. Bleicher and M. Featherstone, 1982:72). Giddens's relationship to Marxism is, of course, an important issue in both his theory of structuration and his theory of industrial society and will be dealt with at the appropriate points in the body of the paper. Here, it should be pointed out that Giddens, while building on some elements in Marx's thought is not a "Neo-Marxist" of any kind and "in diverging from Marx, wants to propose the elements of an alternative interpretation of history" (Giddens 1981:3). Such a thoroughgoing "deconstruction" rather than a "reconstruction" (Bleicher and Featherstone 1982:63) is bound to be rejected by all those who wish to retain those elements of Marxism which Giddens rejects.

More specifically, the work of Giddens can be seen as following up several strands in existing explanatory and interpretative social theory. He draws substantially from phenomenology (including ethnomethodology), hermeneutics, structuralism, systems theory and certain aspects of Marxism. He takes little, if anything, from functionalism as it developed in American sociology and British anthropology and, while recognizing the affinity of his ideas to symbolic interactionism, he is highly critical of that division of subject-matter as is suggested by the terms, "micro" and "macro" levels of analysis. At the same time, he is determined not to abandon the pursuit of that intersubjective causal analysis which is necessary for any critical stance in social theory. Obviously, neither the simple juxtaposition of hermeneutics and naturalistic causation, nor the easy choice of one or the other, will do. Only a satisfactory integration of both will suffice and it is no less than such a thoroughgoing integration which Giddens presents in his theory of structuration.

Preliminary Overview

By reason of its integrative task, Giddens's theory of structuration is an exceedingly close-knit one which does not allow itself to be broken down into parts which are readily comprehensible in isolation. This is especially so when one tries to present an abridged account of what one takes to be the essentials of the theory and its implications. So it may be advisable to begin with a brief and dogmatically expressed overview of what Giddens finds wrong with "the orthodox consensus" and how he proposes to set it right. Thereafter I shall attempt a more detailed statement of his views of social action, of structure and of how he makes them into a whole. That done, I shall turn to the links between the theory of structuration and the theory of industrial society. Finally, I shall elaborate some of the implications of the theory along with some possible criticisms.
In the final chapter of *Central Problems in Social Theory*, Giddens lists five shortcomings of mainstream sociology which I shall repeat and then try to reduce even further. The first weakness of most, if not all of it, is its "mistaken self-interpretation of its origins vis-à-vis the natural sciences" (1979:240). Seeing itself as a newcomer and claiming its youthfulness as the reason for its difficulties, sociology, in the rather less than innocent sense referred to by Giddens (1979:8), doggedly strove after general laws of the same logical form and predictive power that the natural sciences were considered to possess. It thus remained blind to the differences between nature and society. Its second weakness was its "reliance upon a now outmoded and defective philosophy of language" (1979:245). That is to say that language was seen simply as a means of description and communication without adequate recognition of how it played a crucial part in constituting and perpetuating social life. Third, "orthodox sociology relied upon an oversimple revelatory model of social science, based on naturalistic presumptions" (1979:248). So it dismissed the lay criticism that it was telling people things they already knew and misread the role of lay knowledge in producing social practices, which lay behind the criticism. In this way, sociology largely failed to deal with a vital part of social reality: its construction by actors; and thereby, lost a good deal of its subject-matter. Without this crucial element, it was possible for orthodox sociology to get by, almost without noticing, that it had a fourth shortcoming, viz., that it "lacked a theory of action" (1979:253). By this Giddens means that it lacked "a conception of conduct as reflexively monitored by social agents who are partially aware of the conditions of their action" (1979:253). As a consequence various more or less deterministic explanations were offered. These usually took the form of "structural" factors which in the short or long run were considered to determine people's conduct. The fifth and last shortcoming listed by Giddens is, in a sense an extension of the first one in that he seems to feel that not only the followers of the logical positivism of Hempel and Nagel, but also even some interpretative theorists, e.g., Winch and Habermas, have not entirely freed themselves from "the positivistic model of natural science."

For our present, introductory purpose, I wish to try to reduce (without distorting what I retain) the number of shortcomings to three. First, the "natural science" self-understanding is too deterministic and so leaves out the measure of autonomy possessed by social actors. Second, and as a result, the vital part played by language, consciousness and the consequent lay knowledge in the production of social reality is neglected. Third and for the same reason, the orthodox consensus has been unable to integrate adequately a theory of face-to-face interaction with one of institutional analysis.

What then does Giddens propose to do to remedy these shortcomings? First, he places people at the very centre of things by making them the active, skilled agents who actually produce, sustain and transform social life. Second, by using a notion of structure rather different from those used in orthodox sociology and one which was compatible with the role he gives to actors, he considerably reduces its determining effect, and gives equal importance to
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structure as means or resources. Third, he achieves the decisive integration of “action” and “structure” through their interdependence which is brought about in the production of structure (in Giddens’s sense) by actors using it as a resource and at the same time repeatedly reproducing it as a constraining outcome of their interaction. In this way the “duality” of structure, which is simultaneously both the means and the outcome of action, links action and structure as integral parts of each other and replaces the separating “dualism” of face-to-face interaction and the constraining properties of the resultant systems of repeated social practices and relationships. With this crude indication of what is to come, we can now turn to a more detailed account of forcibly separated elements of the theory of structuration.

The Theory of Social Action

A fundamental criticism that Giddens makes of almost all existing social theories is that they do not have an adequate theory of social action, or agency (1976:93-98, 126; 1977:167; 1979:49-53, 253-257). Either they retain too much determinism (including even Parsons’s would-be “voluntaristic” theory) and reduce the actors to mere puppets who respond more or less mechanically to the factors, forces and structures which are held to determine in various ways their actions. Or they make the opposite error and actors are endowed with nearly complete autonomy and full knowledge of themselves and their actions. In contrast, Giddens wishes to “promote a recovery of the subject without lapsing into subjectivism” (1979:44) and while recognizing the limits of our self-knowledge. In seeking to achieve this aim, Giddens turns initially to theories of mainly idealist origin, but then goes on to make certain additions of his own.

Although Giddens's theory of action owes much, as we shall see presently, to phenomenology, the philosophy of language and hermeneutics, he also notes its closeness to Marxian Praxis and to Marx's contention, in the introductory paragraphs of 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,' that “Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please.” While Giddens is critical of the positivist and functionalist aspects of Marx's writings, elements of his philosophy of history are decisively used by Giddens. However, Marx himself did not systematically develop this theme of the partial autonomy of human agents and it is to the later philosophers of language and hermeneutics that Giddens must go for a more adequate account of how it is possible for actors to "make their own history" even if within certain limits. Where does the partial freedom from constraint, or voluntarism of social actors come from? This question, of course, takes us all the way back to the roots of the gap between explanation and understanding which Giddens is trying to bridge. Very broadly speaking, all interpretative social theory makes the assumption that we do not have the more or less direct access to the objects and events of our experience which naturalistic explanations presume; rather, what is accepted as "knowledge" are the interpretations we place upon objects and events through the exercise of consciousness. Hence what we create in the first place we may,
although with difficulty, recreate and transform. This is what gives us a measure
of freedom in making and remaking the social world within the constraints
imposed by incomplete knowledge, nature and the social arrangements, both
past and present, made to satisfy needs. Here, too, lies the essential difference
between nature and society as seen by phenomenology and hermeneutics and
which Giddens also accepts (1976:15-16, 160). However close and important the
ties between the two may be in some respects, or in some ultimate sense, nature
is not a human product whereas society is. The endlessly repeated social
practices which comprise social life are not “given” as nature is, but brought
about by actors endowed with consciousness, language and a body of collective
lay “knowledge.”

These three elements in interpretative theory are closely allied and the
unravelling of their meanings and complex interrelationships would be an
immense task. There is considerable overlapping in the usages of the terms but
they can be loosely held together, as it were, by the inclusive concept of
Verstehen, or understanding. Hence it is necessary and more useful here to
distinguish the earlier usage of this term from that which is taken over by
Giddens. People have probably always known about their awareness of
themselves, their ability to reflect on their conduct and of the possibility of
“self-fulfilling prophecies”, and the attempt to take them into account when
explaining social life is a long-standing one. Thus in the earlier notion of
Verstehen, as generally understood in North America and usually attributed to
Max Weber, “understanding” was the insight attained by putting oneself in
another’s place or reliving another’s experience in some way. It was seen as a
useful source of hypotheses which could then be put to the test of intersubjective
causal analysis in one form or other. In this way the claims of interpretative
theory were partially recognized but also relegated to a minor, preliminary role.
Similarly, the ability of actors to monitor and modify their conduct in the light of
their own, or others’, expectations was dismissed as of minor importance.

In strong contrast, the more recent view of Verstehen, which Giddens applies,
raises reflexive consciousness, language and collective lay knowledge to the
utmost importance. For they become the very preconditions and means of any
kind of social interaction whatsoever. “Understanding” is therefore the
knowing, or having a competent grasp, of the collective lay knowledge,
expressed in language, which is a precondition of our being able to interact with
others. It is upon this stock of shared knowledge that actors draw in order to
produce the social practices through which they pursue their interests. Giddens
calls it “mutual knowledge” or “common-sense understandings possessed by
actors within shared cultural milieux” (1976:88-89) and refers to it as “taken-for-
granted” knowledge; or what any competent actor could be expected to know.
Gadamer, a leading exponent of the philosophical hermeneutics on which
Giddens draws, uses the term, “tradition” (1960), while Wittgenstein and his
followers talk of “forms of life”. But whatever name it bears, a competent, if not a
wholly complete or even conscious, understanding of it is, in Giddens’s words,
“the ontological condition of human society as it is produced and reproduced by
its members” (1976:151).
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Thus far in his theory of action Giddens has incorporated fairly well-established elements of interpretative theory. But he is far from being uncritical of hermeneutics and phenomenology and he goes on to make certain additions in order to meet some of his objections. I have chosen to deal with three of these which seem to me to be especially important, namely, his insistence on action as continuous practical intervention rather than concentrating on meanings and intentions; the inclusion of and stress on power; and the crucial question of the limits to, or the constraining conditions of action.

In his definitions of action (1976:75; 1979:55) Giddens calls it "a continuous flow of conduct"; a "stream of actual or contemplated causal interventions of corporeal beings in the ongoing process of events in the world"; and, a little earlier (1976:53), "the practical realization of interests, including the material transformation of nature through human activity". This definition makes several important points. The stress on action as a continuous flow or stream of acts precludes the breaking up of action into discrete, abstract and context-less acts so dear to analytical philosophers and others in search of examples. It emphasizes the practical nature of action and restores the notion of interests and along with them the weighty implications of the division of interest among individuals or groups. Perhaps most important of all, it establishes the voluntaristic capacity of actors to intervene in "a potentially malleable object-world" and to have "acted otherwise" should they have seen fit to do so (1979:56).

Giddens repeatedly insists on the need to take into account the difference of power in social relationships; not only because we have to know whose meanings, norms and rules are being made effective, or because interaction does not always take place between peers, but mainly because power is logically related to action by implying the application of means to achieve outcomes. True to his aim of reconstructing inadequate elements of social theory, Giddens proposes a composite view of power as the (sometimes latent) capability to use resources both in the sense of "transformative capacity" at the level of interaction and also in the sense of domination, or the power over people, at the "structural" level of established institutions and systems which arise out of repeated social practices. In the latter sense, power involves relations of autonomy and dependence in circumstances where the outcome requires the agency of others (Giddens 1979:91-94). In this way the Parsonian view of power as a facility and the over-simple, but useful, view of power as some kind of zero-sum game can be satisfactorily combined. For Giddens's theory of action, however, it is power in the sense of transformative capacity used in active negotiation among actors which is chiefly involved and is concerned with the continuous intervention by actors in events. At least some measure of this kind of power is inherent in the very concept of agency which implies the possibility that the actor could have done otherwise. So the actors do not just know the meanings and the rules, but have the capability of using them to negotiate the interactions and relationships they produce. They do not simply follow or apply fixed patterns which they have internalized or committed themselves to; they actively bargain using all the transformative capacity they have to produce
practices which are not simply slavish repetitions but contain new elements which alter the relationships as they reproduce them.

To back up this claim to a measure of autonomy for actors, Giddens turns to what he calls the "dialectic of control" (1979:6, 72, 145-150). All power relationships, whether in direct, face-to-face interaction or on the impersonal, institutional level, are a two-way affair in that almost always one partner has more power than the other, but almost never does one partner have no power at all. With the possible exception of someone in a strait-jacket, the subordinate partner in a power relationship has some measure of autonomy even if it is only the desperate act of suicide. Far more often subordinates do have a significant effect on what happens in society. This reinforces the actors' ability to intervene and accounts in part for the ever-changing content of social practices and the relationships built upon them.

The last respect in which Giddens reconstructs the hermeneutic theory of action is in the crucial question of the limits of action. Strictly speaking, this is a question of the extent to which actors are able to give reasons for their actions or what Giddens calls "the rationalization of action" (1976:83-5; 1979:56-9). Thus it bears on how far their "stocks of knowledge" will allow them to reflect on and rationalize their conduct. But there is more to it than simply being able to give accounts of why they acted in a particular way. For the same stocks of knowledge are used in taking action: in their reflexive monitoring and intervention in the course of events. So the limitations which Giddens sees as affecting the rationalization of action also affect the action itself. In his "stratification" model of action, Giddens sets two kinds of limits on actors: unacknowledged (or unconscious) sources of action, on the one side, and unintended consequences of action on the other.

A concept of the unconscious has an important place in Giddens's theory although, as one would expect, he warns against reducing the theory of action to the workings of the unconscious and leaves the conscious reflexive monitoring of action by active agents in pride of place. He does so by distinguishing "practical consciousness" from both the unconscious and discursive consciousness. Practical consciousness rests on the tacit, taken-for-granted "mutual knowledge" which actors use to produce social practices, but of which they cannot give a full, systematic, discursive account. Thus it is knowledge of which the actors are neither unconscious nor yet fully conscious. The measure of discursive ability to analyse and give coherent accounts of their conduct is also incomplete, but, Giddens suggests, is probably greater than is often realized by would-be revelatory social theory. Giddens's conclusions on the unconscious are, he says, rudimentary and for our purposes here it is perhaps sufficient to recognise that unconscious elements of motivation are present in social action and that this represents a limitation on the actor's consciousness.

With the notion of "unintended consequences" we return to firmer sociological ground. At bottom it is no more than the commonplace that our thoughts and actions have a way of escaping from our initial intentions and so producing consequences we did not expect but which we then have to take into
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account. Marx's theory of Praxis can, I think, be interpreted as an example of this: in order to provide people with their material needs, social arrangements are made which have unintended consequences which later become a hindrance to those very provisions for the satisfaction of material needs. Similarly, in the interpretation of written texts the intended meaning of the writer is only the beginning, as it were, and the text can quite legitimately come to have quite different meanings for later readers. Such facts have long been recognized in social theory and have been handled in a number of ways. Surely one of the best-known and sophisticated of these is Merton's treatment of "manifest" and "latent" functions and criticism of it can be used as a convenient means of showing the importance of unintended consequences for the theory of action as well as, incidentally, the grave weakness of the way they are handled in structural-functionalism.

Considerable portions of Giddens's writings are devoted to a detailed and devastating dismantling of functionalism (1976:21; 1977:96-129; 1979:111-115; 210-216 and elsewhere) and he bluntly says at one point (1979:7) that his whole theory of structuration can be regarded as "a non-functionalism manifesto". Nevertheless, he does concede that structural-functionalism recognizes the significance of unintended consequences of action and this is what we are concerned with here.

However, the treatment Merton gives is seriously marred in two ways. First, he wrongly tries to turn latent functions into causal explanations of manifest ones by assuming that the former fulfil certain needs of the reified group. Secondly, and more important, he fails to include in his notion of manifest functions the constitutive role of actors through their rationalization and monitoring of their conduct in the light of their mutual knowledge. So the agents are left out of the picture altogether and their behaviour is explained by assuming that societies have needs and are able to bring actors to fulfil them without knowing that they are doing so. In place of this Giddens argues that we have to recognize that actors know a good deal about their interactions, and that this knowledge enables them to produce social practices and to rationalize them. Yet at the same time, their actions escape, as it were, from their intentions and have unintended consequences which then become limiting conditions of future action. So in the famous example of the Hopi rain dance, the actors (or most of them) may well interpret the dancing as a way of making it rain but their action has consequences other than this, for example, perhaps great solidarity, which then becomes a condition of further action.

But there is much more to the notion of unintended consequences than the failure of functionalism to deal adequately with them; or even than in providing a limit to the effectiveness of the rationalization of action and the interventions of actors. For this escape from the intentions and purposes of actors is a chronic feature of social action and a major link between face-to-face interaction and the repeated, "deeply sedimented" social practices or institutions. I shall have more to say about this, the central issue of Giddens's theory of structuration, in the following section. Here, I want only to point out how unintended
consequences are a limitation on social action as conceived by Giddens. The other matters of its effects on the nature of social generalizations and the resultant precariousness of social outcomes I shall deal with in the third section of this paper.

Structure and its duality

Having, in his theory of action, reinstated human actors as the active, skilled agents who, within limits, produce, maintain and change social practices, Giddens has the task of providing a compatible conceptualization of "structure" and one which can be satisfactorily integrated with his theory of action. For, as already indicated (see above), the burden of Giddens's criticism of existing social theories was their inability to account adequately for the role of actors and to show how face-to-face interaction could be integrated with institutional relations. On this basis Giddens is critical of all three of the main frameworks of social theory. Interpretative theories and the closely allied philosophies of action which Giddens discusses do have a theory of action, or agency, but, Giddens argues, it needs to be complemented by the inclusion of the elements of power and temporality (1979:54). Even more damaging, of course, is the fact that they lack any serious theorization of institutions. This tends to give the impression of actors who are entirely conscious of their motivations and unaffected by the "escape" of unintended consequences. In contrast, functionalism has a theory of institutions, but a defective one. Nor is functionalism successful in generating an adequate theory of action. In functionalism, structure is most often a descriptive term used for the more or less static pattern or organization of social relationships while the more active, explanatory part of the theory is carried by the notion of function. It is this dichotomy, Giddens says, which prevents functionalism from having an adequate theory of action because the notion of function leads to the contention that systems have needs which actors must, willy-nilly, fulfil. As we shall see shortly, this same dichotomy precludes functionalism from developing a proper understanding of temporality in social life. In structuralism, while it has, of course, a very decided theory of institutions, structure appears in a variety of forms as some kind of underlying determinant of surface appearances and so leaves very little room at all for a theory of action. The final point of Giddens's criticism of both structuralism and functionalism is that they seem unable to sustain the distinction between structure and system which both of them make.

Given his aims and the weaknesses he sees in other theories, Giddens's reformulation of the concept of structure abandons the dualism of statics and dynamics and firmly separates structure and system. In place of the former he introduces the notion of temporality and he achieves the latter task by altering the concepts of both structure and system significantly. The distinction which Giddens makes between structure and system can serve as the starting point for the clarification of his conception of structure (1979: 64-66) because his view of
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social system broadly corresponds to the widely accepted (although also rather confused) picture of "structure cum system" as an observable pattern or organization of relationships. In Giddens's definition, systems are the "Reproduced relations between actors or collectivities, organised as regular social practices" or, "Social systems involve regularised relations of interdependence between individuals or groups, that typically can be best analysed as recurrent social practices. Social systems are systems of social interaction: as such they involve the situated activities of human subjects, and exist syntagmatically in the flow of time" (1979:66). So the all-important thing about systems of relations and social practices is that they are "the situated doings of concrete subjects" (1976: 128), and therefore exist in time and space.

This is what so clearly distinguishes system from structure which Giddens sees as an "absent" or "virtual order" of rules and resources which are "temporally 'present' only in their instantiation, in the constituting moments of social systems" (ibid). In clarification of this Giddens refers (1976:118-9) to the difference between "language," as a set of signs and the rules of their use which is possessed by a community of speakers, and "speech" as concrete acts of communication performed by members of that community. Speech acts do exist in time and space and they draw upon and instantiate language as they do so. But language as a set of rules and resources has no existence except in the moments when it is being used to constitute speech acts. In the same fashion, structures exist only when they are drawn upon by actors to produce social practices. Giddens is insistent that this is "not because society is like a language, but on the contrary because language as a practical activity is so central to social life that in some basic aspects it can be treated as exemplifying social processes in general" (1976:127). Thus social structure and language, when differentiated in this way from speech and social acts, can be said to be "subjectless" and therefore placed beyond any "subject/object" relationship which would tend to infringe on the measure of autonomy of actors essential to social agents. Structure as conceived by Giddens does not refer, as it does in some "Structuralist" thinking, to models constructed by observers, nor, as it does in functionalist thought, to the static description of the patterns of relationships found in collectivities. Instead it refers to the rules and resources used by actors in the production and reproduction of social practices designed to pursue their intentions and interests. The idea of social life as the reproduced practices of active agents is fundamental to the theory of structuration in that it shifts the focus of explanation in social theory from its existing concern with order and social control, with the relationship of individuals to society and the internalization of values and the functional needs of social systems and the determinants of behaviour, to the production and maintenance of social practices by the skilled and knowledgeable performance of its members within the limits set by nature and their own history. This means that "structural analysis", or the study of social systems, is "to study the ways in which that system, via the application of generative rules and resources, and in the context of unintended outcomes, is produced and reproduced in interaction" (1979:66).
Having established this shift in focus through his definitions of structure and system, Giddens devotes considerable attention to the dimensions or elements of the rules and resources which go to make up structures (1976:104-113; 1979:65-69, 82-94). He proposes that rules and resources be analytically separated into three kinds: the communication of meanings via interpretative schemes; the exercise of power as transformative capacity; and the evaluative judgement of conduct through norms and sanctions. He is careful to insist that in actual social practices there is intermixture of all three and also to ensure that "negotiable" quality of meanings, evaluations and even power is not overlooked. Thus the analogy with games and their rules is misleading because social rules are not altogether fixed but are amended as we go along. Or moral claims and obligations can be endlessly debated and redefined and even relations of power, as already indicated, are always, in some measure, two-way ones. However, important as this part of Giddens's treatment is, I think in a paper such as this, it is necessary to give priority to the matter of showing how the duality of structure and its binding of space and time enable Giddens to effect the vital linking of his theory of action with the analysis of institutions and social systems.

When actors as competent social agents draw upon their knowledge of structure in all three of its dimensions, they are using structure to produce the flow of their day-to-day interaction. At the same time, however, as structures are instantiated by being thus drawn upon, they are being reconstituted, or reproduced; just as language is kept in being as it were by the speech acts which draw upon it. Hence comes the crucial character of the "duality of structure" as both the medium, or means, through which social practices of interaction are produced and also as the outcome, or product, of such interaction. Says Giddens: "By the duality of structure I mean that social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution" (1976:121). Or again, "By the duality of structure I mean that the structural properties of social systems are both the medium and the outcome of the practices that constitute those systems" (1979:69). The consequences of this duality are of the greatest importance. First, it reveals the essential recursiveness of social life as a series of repeated or reproduced social practices brought about by the interaction of actors equipped with "practical consciousness" and the capacity to intervene in events. This involves, as I have indicated, a highly significant shift in the focus of explanation in social theory: "Social analysis must be founded neither in the consciousness or activities of the subject, nor in the characteristics of the object (society), but in the duality of structure" (1979:120). Secondly, it means that structure must be seen as both enabling as well as constraining. We are certainly constrained by the interweaving of meanings, norms and power in regularised social practices of our own making, but such elements of structure also enable us to produce and transform social practices. This is perhaps more easily seen in the dual nature of sanctions as both inducements and coercion. Thirdly, the duality of structure "expresses the mutual dependence of structure and agency" (1979:69). However,
I wish to postpone discussion of this decisive point until after the theme of temporality, which also contributes to this end, has been brought in.

Giddens's treatment of "temporality" or "time-space" is complex and comes fully into the picture only in the third of the three books under discussion. But, as we shall see shortly, the notion of "time-space distanciation," as developed in volume one of *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, is central to his theory of industrial society. Here my concern with it is limited to the way in which it forms part of the theory of structuration. For it is clear that time-space intersections or relations are implicated in his theory of action as a continuous flow of day-to-day conduct, his view of structure as instantiated only in the moments of its use, and the way in which he brings together face-to-face interaction and institutionalized social practices. It is for this reason that Giddens considers that temporality is "integral to social theory" (1979:198) and that "in order to show the interdependence of action and structure" it is essential "to grasp the time-space relations inherent in the constitution of all social interaction" (1979:3).

Gidden traces the failure of both functionalism and structuralism in this respect to their use of the "statics/dynamics" dichotomy and the resultant tendency to identify time with social change in a simplistic way. So in functionalism and structuralism time and space are generally conceived as some kind of "environment" or "receptacle" of social practices which is in some sense external to them (1979:198-206). All this Giddens rejects and in its place proposes a conception of time-space as "the modes in which objects and events 'are' or 'happen' " (1979:54), or as the manner in which structure provides not only the "binding of time and space in social systems" (1979:64), but also their extension. These statements call for a good deal more in the way of clarification than we can give them here and my discussion will be restricted to but one aspect of Giddens's view of time-space as set out in his writings up to 1979 — the binding and the extension of time-space through structure.

If, following Giddens, social life is viewed as repeated social practices brought into being and made to happen by active agents, then time and space are inherent in, and constitutive of, such a process because interaction has to be carried on across differences in time and space which might otherwise disrupt it. Or, put differently, social life has to be sustained and transmitted across the "gaps" produced by differences in time and space (1979:103). Only by being able to "overcome" time and space, could individuals or groups maintain a "presence" in the social world and give some kind of form to their interaction. This is one reason why Giddens rejects the Parsonian version of the problem of order as one of social control or compliance. Rather, it is one of coping with, or "binding", the possibly disruptive effects of time and space differences in order to produce and sustain a form of social life. This is what makes time and space so much more than simply an "environment" of social action and it is achieved by the use of structure as an absent order of rules and resources available to actors. It is in this sense that time-space enters into the constitution of social practices and is, moreover, manipulated by actors in their relations with one another. For
example, in the ways described by Goffman of "front" and "back" regions (1959), or in Giddens's discussion of class relations (1979:206-10). Structure, in Giddens's sense, also extends the range of interaction across time and space. This has, of course, been the effect of much technological development from the invention of writing up to the present day of electronic communication. The "Great Transformation" to modern industrial society would be unintelligible without taking into account these changes in the way time and space are built into and dealt with by social practices.

We are now at last able to end this section of the paper by showing how, via the duality of structure, Giddens's theory of structuration brings together, in an integral way, his concepts of action and structure. It should be held in mind here that effecting this integration of action and structure is the more substantive part of the larger "bridging operation" referred to at the beginning: the reconciliation of interpretative and naturalistic methodologies. In order to clarify what is involved in "linking action and structure", I propose to distinguish also between the more formal conceptual connecting of an interpretative, active notion of agency to the concept of an "absent" structure, on the one hand and, on the other hand, the linking of "face-to-face" interactions with other "impersonal" interactions, both of which are nonetheless concrete forms of social interaction situated in time and space. After all, it was the failure of existing social theories to make this link which is one object of Giddens's criticism and it is therefore also an important task of his theory of structuration to tie all the forms of social interaction firmly together in a seamless unity. Thus, insofar as the formal connection of action and structure is concerned, it is no more than showing how the theory integrates the concrete acts of actors with the notion of an "absent" structure of rules and resources which actors draw upon, and is a relatively simple matter of conceiving of both action and structure in such a way as to render them interlocking and complementary. Then it is clear that action and structure are linked in the moments of instantiation when structures are drawn on by actors in the production of their day-to-day conduct. This is the sense in which it can be said that, "The duality of structure relates the smallest item of day-to-day behaviour to attributes of far more inclusive social systems: when I utter a grammatical English sentence in a casual conversation, I contribute to the reproduction of the English language as a whole. This is an unintended consequence of my speaking the sentence, but one that is bound in directly to the recursiveness of the duality of structure" (1979:77-8). This relation of moment and totality is very different from the relation of "parts" and "wholes" which is characteristic of functionalist theories (1979:71).

However, social practices are more complex than language and there is another and more important connection than the formal one between action and structure which has to be made. And that is the linking (or, better perhaps, the "holding together") of face-to-face systems of social interaction and those other systems of social interaction which do not involve actual physical presence, but nonetheless exist in time and space and are not "absent" in the
manner of structure. The making of distinctions amongst possible kinds or levels of systems of social interaction on the basis of physical presence may not be the only or best way of doing it, but it is one which has often been used in social theory and which Giddens also incorporates in his differentiation of social and system integration with the former defined as “systemness on the level of face-to-face interaction” and the latter as “systemness on the level of the relations between social systems or collectivities” (1979:77-8). In passing it may be noted that this distinction is not altogether satisfactory as both face-to-face interaction and any other kind are all nonetheless social systems of interaction and so the distinction as made by Giddens becomes one of the difference between interaction among individuals and between groups or collectivities. Such a distinction is reminiscent of “the sociology of small groups” or of the “micro” and “macro” levels of analysis and Giddens is clearly uncomfortable about its use. I shall return to this point at the end of the paper. For the moment, however, we are concerned only with how the theory of structuration prevents this kind of fragmentation however it may be conceived, and holds all kinds of social systems of interaction together, even though it is often convenient, through the application of a methodological époque, to “bracket” one kind or level of interaction in order to concentrate on another (1979:80-1).

So, whatever the differences between forms of social systems of interaction may be in other respects, and however these may be distinguished from one another, the decisive integration of them all lies in their common origin as the products of social actors consciously drawing upon an “absent” structure of rules and resources which is both the means of their being able to do so and also the reproduced outcome of their activity. This is what links the immediate face-to-face interactions of human agents with all other less personal, more institutionalised and “extended” forms of social systems of interaction. The face-to-face interactions underlie and sustain the recursive institutional forms. In Giddens’s words: “The notion of the duality of structure, which I have accentuated as a leading theme of this book, involves recognising that the reflexive monitoring of action both draws upon and reconstitutes the institutional organisation of society” (1979:255).

It remains only to fit the concept of temporality as used by Giddens into this picture. Temporality operates not only in the moments of the instantiation of structure, but also in the longer duration of time and in the extension of space made possible by structure. This, joined with the repetition of social practices results in institutions, which Giddens defines as “deeply-layered” (1979:65) or “deeply-sedimented” (1979:80) social practices. As he puts it: “an understanding of institutional forms can only be achieved in so far as it is shown how, as regularised social practices, institutions are constituted and reconstituted in the tie between the durée of the passing moment and the longue durée of deeply sedimented time-space relations” (1979:110).

The links between the theory of structuration, whose essential features have been outlined above, and Giddens’s theorizing of industrial society are close
HE DICKIE-CLARK

and detailed. To deal adequately with them even in their present unfinished form would require another and different paper. All that can be done here is to point out in a rough way the major areas in which the two parts of Giddens's work are related. One way in which this could be done is to begin with the criticisms Giddens has of Marx's historical materialism and then go on to indicate what Giddens proposes in their place.

As early as in the *New Rules of Sociological Method* in 1976 (1976:12), Giddens made the distinction between Marx's writings as "a natural science of society which happened to predict the demise of capitalism and its replacement by socialism" and Marx's work "as an informed investigation into the historical interconnections of subjectivity and objectivity in human social existence." The former Giddens rejects largely because of its functionalist, evolutionary and Utopian implications. Elements of the latter are incorporated in Giddens's theory of structuration — for example, Marx's notion of Praxis; the measure of active intervention through which people make themselves and their history (even if only within limits); the analysis of historical specificity or situatedness and the importance of unintended consequences which "escape" and become constraints. Thereafter and notably in *Central Problems in Social Theory* (1979:Chap.4) and in *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (1981: Introduction and passim), Giddens has set out in detail his criticism of Marx's views on a wide variety of topics bearing on the historical development of capitalism. Summarily stated, Giddens accepts and uses in his theory of industrial society very little more than Marx's treatment of modern capitalism as radically distinct from what went before. In his interview with Bleicher and Featherstone, Giddens puts this as follows: "...I think the importance of Marx is really to point up the differences between capitalism and pre-existing societies and not to try to compress them all into some overall scheme of evolutionary change" (1982:63-4).

In the place of other features of historical materialism and also to make good certain omissions in it, Giddens has put alternatives drawn from the theory of structuration. For example, the centrality of Giddens's treatment of time and space "distanciation;" the distinction between "authoritative" and "allocative" resources in domination; the crucial theorizing of power and the use of violence in the nation-state; the significance of surveillance and the storage of vast quantities of information in the modern state. Using these components, Giddens has produced a theory of industrial society markedly different from either historical materialism or those theories which simply substituted political power for economic power and left out some of the most decisive aspects of the modern industrial nation-state while, at the same time, making no allowance for skilled and creative agency.

**Implications**

To the extent that it is found acceptable, the theory of structuration offered by Giddens as an alternative to the "orthodox consensus" has important
epistemological and practical implications. The first of these is for a closely-linked cluster of issues concerning the relation of the lay knowledge of actors to the technical knowledge of observers; the question of relativism; and the inherent critical stance of social theory. If the lay or "mutual knowledge" is that used by conscious agents in the production and reproduction of social practices, then it is not simply subject to correction by the revelations of the technical knowledge of observers. Rather, it has to be grasped by the observers as constituting the very object of their study. Without this grasp of the presuppositions and prejudices which make social practices possible, they would literally not know what it was they were looking at. This Giddens refers to as the first stage of the "double hermeneutic" (1976:146, 162) which is required in the study of social life. It involves the use by observers of the agents' natural language and lay knowledge in order to generate adequate descriptions and explanations in theoretical terms. The impossibility of a pure metalanguage is ensured by actors' incorporating observers' technical concepts and "because the concepts invented by the social scientist presume mastery of concepts applied by social actors themselves in the course of their conduct" (1979:247).

In the process of mastering the body of mutual knowledge which constitutes a particular form of life, observers run the risk of ending up in the rather helpless position of being unable to escape from what they have come to regard as a closed system which is immune to critical evaluation from "outside," as it were. Giddens offers a way out of such historicism or relativism via the second stage of the double hermeneutic which enables observers to subject the mutual knowledge, beliefs and the practices based upon them to critical assessment in the light of their technical and comparative knowledge. In thus linking lay and technical knowledge, Giddens kills two birds with one stone. The temptation of naturalistic social theory to "correct" lay knowledge prematurely is arrested and at the same time the inability of interpretative theories to judge between differing stocks of mutual knowledge or frameworks of meaning is overcome. Or, put in another way, in his double hermeneutic Giddens has embodied both the claim of interpretative theory that social reality is a creation of human agents which rests upon "prior" meanings and presuppositions and has therefore to be understood before it can be explained, and also the positivistic demand for some kind of "external," non-relativistic explanation. On this basis, what Giddens calls "a sort of paralysis of the critical will" (1979:250-1) is avoided and the potential of social theory as criticism is grounded. For, as Giddens points out (1976:159) "social science stands in a relation of tension to its 'subject matter' — as a potential instrument of the expansion of rational autonomy of action, but equally as a potential instrument of domination."

The last epistemological implication of Giddens's theory is for the character of the regularities of social conduct and the kind of generalisations which can be made about them. Unlike the regularities of the natural world which are, in a sense, fixed and "given," social regularities are brought about by the actors who produce them. So they are essentially historical and unstable or mutable. This point of view provides a considerably more adequate explanation than is usually
offered for the failure of social theory to come up with the kind of generalisation
and predictability of which the natural sciences are thought capable.

Before concluding with the practical or political implications of Giddens’s
work, I wish to deal here with two possible criticisms. One has to do with the
distinction Giddens makes between social and system integration and the other
concerns the second stage of the “double hermeneutic.”

The first matter arises out of the way in which the theory of structuration
achieves the all-important integration of the various forms or levels of
interaction through the duality of structure. In the interpretation offered above,
this integration comes about because action or face-to-face interaction, or
“strategic conduct” is in a sense the originator of, or prior to, the other levels in
that face-to-face interaction is presupposed when one thinks of the other forms
of interaction or institutionalized social practices. Thus, in his discussion of
social and system integration (1979:76-81), Giddens says, “it is extremely
important, for the point of view developed throughout this book, to emphasize
that the systemness of social integration is fundamental to the systemness of
society as a whole. System integration cannot be adequately conceptualized via
the modalities of social integration; nonetheless, the latter is always the chief
prop of the former, via the reproduction of institutions in the duality of structure.”
So, as pointed out above, the decisive linking of all forms and levels of social
systems of interaction lies in their common origin as the products of actors
drawing on the structure of rules and resources in face-to-face interaction.

Having, in this way, thoroughly integrated all forms of interaction, is there
any necessity for making further distinctions and divisions? Is there not some
risk that rather doubtful divisions between individuals and groups, or “micro”
and “macro” analysis might thereby be reintroduced? Giddens argues that he
makes the distinction between social and system integration “in order to
recognise contrasts between various levels of the articulation of interaction”
(1979:74) and “as a means of coping with basic characteristics of the
differentiation of society” (1979:76). I would suggest that the notion of
“presence-availability” (1979:103; 206-7) along with the use of the methodo-
logical epoche, or bracketing (1979:80-1), should serve to meet these
requirements and at the same time preserve intact the thorough-going
integration of all levels of interaction; from the face-to-face form all the way to
the most completely impersonal and highly institutionalized kind of interaction.

It is noteworthy that one of Archer’s criticisms of Giddens’s theory of
structuration seems to be a version of this point. Within the framework of her
broader criticism that the distinction between macro and micro “levels” must be
sustained, she argues that the use of the epoche here “merely transposes
dualism from the theoretical to the methodological level — thus conceding its
analytical indispensability” (1982:467). Against Archer it could be argued that in
view of the important similarities between her “morphogenesis” and structu-
ration, the difference seems to be one of conceptualization only and therefore
less serious.
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The second matter is probably more important and concerns the concept of the "double hermeneutic" or, more exactly, the second part or stage of that process in which the "technical conceptual schemes" (1976:79-80) of "social scientific analysis" (ibid:158) are called upon to make possible a rational and intersubjective evaluation of "mutual knowledge" and also to deal with "the problem of adequacy" (1976:148-154). Or, stated differently, the issue here boils down to the intention set out in the Introduction to the New Rules; to show how "to sustain a principle of relativity while rejecting relativism" (1976:18).

Despite the thorough treatment of these and other methodological matters in Chapter 4 of the New Rules, some ambiguity seems to remain over the question of whether or no the plea for a relativistic, "authentic" understanding applies only to the first part of the double hermeneutic (1976:148); thus accepting the logical objection to relativism (1976:145) for the second part of the double hermeneutic and thus also implying that the technical analysis done at the second stage is wholly objective. That this is not the case is strongly suggested, however, by Giddens's insistence that there is significant overlap, and a shifting relation, between lay and technical knowledge (1976:151; 153; 159). Such an overlap and shifting relationship between the two parts of the double hermeneutic makes it likely that even the second stage will display some degree of relativity and so weaken the efficacy of the second stage of the double hermeneutic.

In one sense, this criticism is the opposite of that made by those who, like Archer, want Giddens to provide more precise "theoretical propositions" about, for instance, exactly when actors will be transformative and when merely reproductive. For the gist of this argument is that all knowledge, technical as well as lay, remains more or less "seinsverbunden" in Mannheim's sense. Or, in Gadamer's terms, the presuppositions and prejudices of the constitutive "tradition" cannot be completely transcended. This throws doubt on the possibility of a second stage of the double hermeneutic being any more than the wider "inter-subjective criteria of validity" which Simonds argues was all that Mannheim was seeking (1978:19) and which Ricoeur also seems to be suggesting (1974:16-17).

It is probable that Giddens would not be satisfied with either of these two alternatives. In rejecting both the kind of certainty and definitiveness Archer is anxious to achieve and also the persistence of hermeneutic tradition, he would be remaining constant to his goal of blending the two. In any event, such criticisms do not detract from the importance of the practical implications of Giddens's work to which we now turn to end this paper.

The implications of a practical, political kind, which deserve to be recognised, flow from his determined recovery of the active role of individuals in social life and the consequent rejection of determinism. While actors are certainly far from all-knowing about themselves and are subject to constraints, including those of their own making, social existence is inherently contingent, uncertain and precarious. Possibly it is for this very reason that certainty has been so avidly sought after. But, however that may be, perhaps the most
unfortunate effect of existing sociology in all its more influential forms (not excluding Marxism) has been the support it gives to a deterministic view of social life. In many cases this has been contrary to the intentions of the theorists concerned and may be taken as evidence of the way in which texts and actions escape the original intentions of agents. Nonetheless, whether intended or no, there has been considerable support for a more or less thorough-going determinism.

The result has been what one would expect if the interpretative argument is correct: viz., that the deterministic "prophecy" has been fulfilled and the emancipatory potential of knowledge has been largely subverted or left unrecognised. To the extent that the technical knowledge offered by sociology has seeped into the mutual knowledge used by people, this has meant they have been able to talk themselves into a measure of unfreedom and pessimism about their chances of "making their own history" even if only within limits. In such a world-view are to be found "the paralysis of the critical will;" the purely "instrumental" conception of knowledge which members of the Frankfurt School have analysed; and also the overly simple notion of power as being all on one side and totally constraining. These are some of the things which have constituted the social world and made it as it is.

By insisting on the active role of people, by restoring the part played by mutual knowledge and by showing that structures are enabling as well as constraining, Giddens has renewed and given fresh thrust to the possibility of emancipatory knowledge and of human social life as at least partly open and amenable to the conscious efforts and hopes of those who live it. People have had a share in making the social world the way it is and can remake differently if they so choose and go about it in the knowledge that they can do so.

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HEGELIAN MARXISM AND ETHICS

Norman Fischer

I

Did Lukács, as a representative figure of Hegelian Marxism, create an ethic based on overcoming the fact/value dichotomy? To that question we may add another. Do we want Lukács to have overcome the fact/value dichotomy? My answer to both questions is "not completely", and I hope to show that Lukács, indeed the Hegelian Marxist tradition as a whole, has created false friends and false opponents by claiming to have overcome the distance between facts and values, whereas the best work in this tradition has actually created a new way of looking at facts and values which links them more closely than traditional accounts, but still allows some autonomy for value. The result is a Marxist and socialist ethic which differentiates itself from other ethical systems through the way it lessens the gap between facts and values without completely overcoming it.

An example of such false friends and opponents: E.P. Thompson has recently criticized structuralism from the standpoint of a romantic and moral English version of Marxism which he finds exemplified by William Morris. Such a critique should be in many ways amenable to Hegelian Marxists. Yet, in search of an ethical Marxism Thompson has had to counterpose "English poetry" to the tradition of "German philosophy and sociology", in part, no doubt, because Hegelian Marxists have often seemed to simply converge with structuralists in their critique of an ethic based on autonomous values. I submit, however, that a reconceptualization of the Hegelian Marxist tradition on facts and values would show that in the long run that tradition is closer to Thompson on the issue of ethics than it is to structuralism.¹

I say this in spite of Lucien Goldmann's attempt in one of his last essays to sharply separate two lines of Hegelian Marxism on the question of facts, values and ethics: one which did not keep the fact/value dichotomy (himself and Lukács), and one which brought it back (Marcuse and Bloch). Goldmann argued that in Marcuse's philosophy a world of values was set off against a world of facts, whereas Lukács was truer to Hegel in that he overcame the distance between the two. Indeed, Goldmann argued that according to Lukács' own interpretation of left Hegelianism as an attempt to introduce the fact/value dichotomy into a philosophy (Hegel's) which had already overcome it, Marcuse would be a "left Hegelian, defender of a Fichteanized Hegelianism in which values are separate from facts, a position which for both Lukács and Goldmann is a distortion of Marxism and Hegelianism."²
MARXIST ETHICS

The problem with Goldmann's account is that he presents the overcoming of the fact/value dichotomy as a univocal doctrine in Hegel, Marx, and Lukács and, by implication, in himself. Leaving aside the question of whether it is univocal in Hegel, Marx, and Goldmann (I do not believe that it is), I will argue that it is multivocal in Lukács and further that his most famous work, History and Class Consciousness presents a third ethical way between the traditional way of accepting the fact/value dichotomy and what Goldmann presents as the traditional way of overcoming it. I stress that this is a third way and neither simply acceptance of the distance between facts and values nor simply acceptance of the ability to totally overcome that distance. I want to show that Hegelian Marxism has more affinities with, say, Thompson's English moral tradition than might be imagined. But it is not identical with that tradition, and I do not accept structuralist or positivistic accounts that assert such an identity.

This means that I accept many of Lukács' criticisms of autonomous ethics. If there is anything that begins to define Marxist and socialist ethics it is that it establishes itself in part by appealing to a broad range of facts, and analyses of historical laws and structures, certainly a broader range than most other ethical systems. Yet in the end, and this is what Lukács often forgot, understanding these facts, structures and laws, must combine with modes of valuation in such a way that ethical questions are always approached both naturalistically and non-naturalistically; and this combination of naturalistic and non-naturalistic ethics arises both from a factual analysis of what is the case for those moving or potentially moving toward socialism, and a moral analysis of what should be the case for them.

The question of whether Marx himself had an ethics autonomous from his factual and sociological investigations has recently interested philosophers coming from the tradition of English philosophy. Yet I believe that, whatever their intentions, the image of Marx that emerges from those who hold that Marx did not have an autonomous ethics, Allen Wood for example, is not of a person who has overcome the dichotomy between facts and values by changing our conception of both, but of one who has given up the specifically valuational elements; hence, Wood's ultimate resemblance to Althusser. And it is the desire to keep those valuational elements that characterizes the work of Thompson and of Wood's critics, who do have a hard time of it, precisely because what autonomous valuational elements exist in Marx are certainly not presented in the language of English ethics.3

Yet there is something right about these attempts to find autonomous valuational elements in Marx. Marxism needs some autonomy for a valuational language; and this is not just a philosophical desideratum but a need arising out of the failure of the line of automatic progress and the realization, particularly coming from Eastern Europe, that a Marxism without moral choices is a Marxism that will never lead to democratic self-activity. Indeed, the first impulse of that renewed Eastern European ethical Marxism has been to criticize too heavy a Hegelian dose of overcoming facts and values. This is most true of Kolakowski, who has criticized Lukács for giving up on autonomous
ethics, but it is also true of Lukács' own students in the Budapest school. Furthermore, Eastern European doubts on the issue of ethics, facts and values are certainly bound up with changes of emphasis in Frankfurt school thought. Habermas' search for an ethical Marxism has led him to criticize both Hegel and Marx and to argue with Marcuse on the importance of finding a groundwork for ethics; and the body of ethical work produced by Habermas, giving relative autonomy to ethics as communicative action, has been utilized now by the Budapest school as part of the fundamentals of their ethics. Of course neither Habermas nor the Budapest school have gone as far as Kolakowski in accepting the fact/value dichotomy, and they have also, unlike him, remained broadly speaking within the Marxist tradition by continuing to stress historical materialism and the relations of production.4

The paradox that emerges from much of this recent work (Anglo-American philosophers who want to find theories of ethics in Marx, Thompson's critique of Althusser, Kolakowski's critique of Lukács, Habermas' critique of Marcuse) is that Hegelian Marxism itself can be seen as one of the obstacles to the creation of a genuinely ethical Marxism. Yet at the same time that this general charge comes into view against Hegelian Marxism, it should also become clear that actual investigation of the broad range of Hegelian Marxists — Gramsci, Horkheimer, Adorno, Goldmann, I.I. Rubin — shows that in their concrete arguments they were usually concerned with opposing some theory which concerned itself only with facts and not with values. However, what differentiates these thinkers particularly from thinkers within the English ethical tradition, is that values are always tied closely enough to facts that it is easy to misread their works and see the Hegelian Marxists as denying the realm of value altogether. In short, the valuational elements present in their work must be decoded in the light of the Hegelian enterprise of changing our ordinary concepts of facts and values. Each Hegelian Marxist is different from those who talk about values cut off from facts and from those who positivistically confine themselves only to the world of facts.

In section two of this essay I examine how one centrally important Hegelian Marxist, i.e. Georg Lukács, adopted a middle way between accepting a world of autonomous values and concentrating on the facticity of the world. Other Hegelian Marxists differ from Lukács, but I believe that often their general problematic was the same as his, i.e. like him they offered different images of human activity and will, according to whether they leaned more toward acceptance of an autonomous world of values or more toward stressing the facticity of the world. In section three I will also suggest that these different images of activity and will can be located in different tendencies in classical German philosophy as well as different tendencies in Hegelian Marxism itself. If Kant and those Hegelian Marxists who stress the superstructure tended toward the view that liberation is a pure act of will, dependent on value autonomy, and Hegel, particularly when he stressed objective spirit and Sittlichkeit, and those Hegelian Marxists who stress the relations of production,
toward the view that the potential for liberation must be lodged in the depths of existing society, Lukács in *History and Class Consciousness* tends toward the view that the potential for liberation is lodged in the deep structures of society analyzed by historical materialism, but can only be brought to the surface by an active creation of the will, which cannot be accounted for in terms of the more determinate structures of historical materialism, and depends upon value autonomy.

Although this standpoint is not exactly the middle way sought by all Hegelian Marxists, I believe that many of the central figures of this tradition (including Goldmann) stressed the autonomy of values more than would be suggested by the catch all rubric “Hegelian Marxists who have overcome the fact/value dichotomy.” Indeed I would reverse Goldmann’s judgment, which I think is inconsistent with much of his best work, and suggest that neither Hegel nor Marx ever completely overcame the fact/value dichotomy, a task that was more properly left to the right Hegelians. We will never understand Hegel, Marx, or the complexities of the Hegelian Marxist tradition, until we understand that overcoming the fact/value dichotomy always means changing, in many different ways, our concepts of both facts and values and attempting to give a proper combination of a naturalistic ethics, based on a close connection between facts and values, and a less naturalistic one, stressing the relative autonomy of value.

II

I will begin with an analysis of various statements in Lukács’ works concerning facts, values and ethics between his early writings and the writing of *The Young Hegel* in 1938. Michael Löwy has recently argued that roughly from 1910 to 1918 Lukács rejected Hegelianism; that from 1918 to 1923 he began to accept it and that in 1923 with *History and Class Consciousness* he did accept it. Although I do believe that there are three stages in Lukács’ thought on these matters, they cannot simply be expressed in terms of Lukács relation to Hegel, nor are they so easily arranged chronologically, although the logical and the chronological do roughly coincide. Logically one stage is represented by Lukács’ early essay on idealism in which he rejected Hegelianism because he saw it as excluding all autonomy for ethics. Another logical stage is represented by *The Theory of the Novel* (1910) and *History and Class Consciousness*. It is obvious that by the time he had written *History and Class Consciousness* Lukács had begun to accept Hegel’s critique of autonomous ethics, although I would date the beginning of this acceptance even earlier with *The Theory of the Novel*. However, I hold that the ethical system presented in both *History and Class Consciousness* and *The Theory of the Novel* is one in which autonomous and nonautonomous ethics are combined. One can see this as a blending of Kant and Hegel or as a blending of aspects of Hegel or both. I tend to see it as both, since I hold that neither Lukács nor Hegel ever got rid of non-naturalistic elements in their work except when they became most inclined toward a positivist acceptance of what is. Hegel approaches this in some sections and versions of the *Philosophy of*
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Right. Lukács approaches it in the third stage, both logically and chronologically, of this thought, i.e. in his book on Hegel, The Young Hegel, as opposed to his book that used Hegel, History and Class Consciousness. Actually this third stage in Lukács' attitude toward ethics, which involves more complete rejection of the fact/value dichotomy and increased conservatism, begins between 1925 and 1926 with his review of Lasalle's letters and "Moses Hess and the Idealist Dialectic," and receives its most complete expression in The Young Hegel.

I will argue that in these three stages are three concepts of the will and human activity: (1) a stage when accent is put on the power of the will and activity to go beyond facts, a stage when the fact/value dichotomy is completely accepted. In this stage Lukács accepts Kantian non-naturalistic ethics against Hegel; (2) a transitional period to completely rejecting the fact/value dichotomy and accepting a more completely naturalistic ethics. Out of this period the third way on facts and values is constructed; this stage blends naturalistic and non-naturalistic ethics; (3) a stage when action and will become much more based on sociological fact, when Lukács' intention is clearly to completely overcome the fact/value dichotomy and when he comes closest to accepting a completely naturalist ethic. For me Lukács' greatest achievement is in the work of the middle period, for it is this combination of a naturalistic and non-naturalistic ethic which points most clearly to a viable contemporary Marxist and socialist ethic.

Two other points must be added before I begin my discussion of these stages. In the early half of the 19th century in Germany the debate over autonomous and nonautonomous ethics was often set by Hegel's own terminology, whereby Moralität was identified with autonomous ethics and Sittlichkeit with a nonautonomous ethics, based on existing practice. The problem with this was that Moralität was set up as a straw man, easy to knock down and second that Sittlichkeit in fact often contained elements of non-naturalism in it. A second point is that Lukács' understanding of this issue was colored, particularly in his early writings, by the neo-Kantian problematic of value, and their understanding of the fact/value dichotomy. In fact Hegel and Marx hardly ever discuss Wert in the sense that Lukács understood it. Thus even if one were to hold that Lukács was completely orthodox in his Hegelianism, there would still be the problem of defining orthodox Hegelianism on the issue of ethics and the further problem that Lukács approached the issue with conceptual tools that were not available to Hegel or Marx.⁶

In his 1918 essay on idealism Lukács affirmed the Kantian notion of the primacy of an ethics based on the autonomy of value. There, taking up the question of whether a Kantian and Fichtean opposition of fact to value has to be progressive or conservative, Lukács argues that it can be either. However, Hegelian philosophy does tend to be conservative because of its stress on the facts.⁷ At the same time Lukács criticizes the idea that stressing transcendental values leads away from any concern with changing the facts, by recalling revolutionary and transcendental sects such as the Anabaptists. Indeed it was Lukács' view then, apparently, that Kantianism and Hegelianism may in some
cases complement each other. The ethical and inner concerns of the one are not completely opposed to the political and external concerns of the other. Indeed, external politics may allow the inner ethical soul to be transformed. Nevertheless, for Lukács at this time the Hegelian tendency to give autonomy to politics is inherently conservative in that it tends to preserve the institution at all costs. In contrast the idealism of Kant and Fichte is in revolt “against existence as existence.” The importance of this text is not just that it so clearly demonstrates elements of anti-Hegelianism in the young Lukács’ thought. It also shows that his anti-Hegelianism is inspired by a moral critique similar to that found in Thompson and, according to Goldmann, in Marcuse; indeed that it would have to be directed against some of Lukács’ own later espousals of Hegelianism, but not against all of them. Again my argument is that it would be directed against the conservative interpretation of Hegel found in The Young Hegel, but not against the middle way between an ethic based on the autonomy of value and one based on a close intermingling of facts and values that will be delineated in History and Class Consciousness and is already foreshadowed in the idealism essay by the reference to the possibility of synthesizing Hegel and Kant and Fichte.

In the second logical period in Lukács’ thoughts on facts and values, both a naturalistic and a non-naturalistic ethic are defended. The problem is that the two are not properly united but presented as disjunctive. Thus, in The Theory of the Novel the naturalistic ethic is found in Lukács’ depiction of ancient archaic Greece, a world opposed to the restlessness of modern times where a realm of values is elevated over a realm of facts. In the Greek world

man does not stand alone as the sole bearer of substantiality,. . . . What he should be is for him only a pedagogical question, an expression of the fact that he has not yet come home; it does not yet express his only, insurmountable relationship with the substance. Nor is there, within man himself, any compulsion to make the leap.

This compulsion to leap to self knowledge, opposed to the ability to simply find self knowledge in earlier times, is expressed by the Kantian philosophy whose “new spirit of destiny” would be

folly to the Greeks! Kant’s starry firmament now shines only in the dark night of pure cognition, . . . . the inner light affords evidence of security, or its illusion, only to the wanderer’s next step. . . . And who can tell whether the fitness of the action to the essential nature of the subject . . . really touches upon the essence, when the subject has become a phenomenon, . . . when his innermost and most particular essential nature appears to him only as a never-ceasing demand written upon the imaginary sky of that which ‘should be’; when this
innermost nature must emerge... within the subject... art...
is no longer a copy.¹⁰

What could be more opposed to a Kantian ethic than this characterization of a harmonious society that transcends ethics, because it already has the harmony that ethics seeks? Yet there is another picture of life in The Theory of the Novel, one which evokes a Kantian ethic urging people to overcome their alienated situations. How to resolve this paradox? The Kantian ethic is, for Lukács, a necessity in modern times, something which shows the degeneracy of those times; but it is not an eternal necessity, as witness its lack in ancient times (we can leave aside the obvious question of how much Lukács has mythologized ancient Greece).¹¹

Thus, The Theory of the Novel (1916) is a combination of naturalistic and non-naturalistic ethics; the idealism essay (1918) is a defence of non-naturalistic ethics; and History and Class Consciousness (1923) is again a defense of both naturalism and non-naturalism, but combined more organically than in The Theory of the Novel. A point that Lukács makes in the idealism essay may further explain this path from Kant to anti-Kant back to Kant again. He counterposes the different consequences of the ethical and aesthetic or contemplative attitudes. Taking this hint, we may say that although The Theory of the Novel at first presents an aesthetic vision of archaic Greece in which Kant’s dichotomy between fact and value may be overcome, in reality in the modern period the distance between the two may not be bridged. That is why Lukács seems to accept the dichotomy between facts and values, and an ethics based on this dichotomy when discussing the modern period in The Theory of the Novel and throughout the idealism essay.¹² The important point to remember is that in the modern world one must accept the fact/value dichotomy in order to act. Why in the modern world? Because there acting requires being willing to break through the present meaningless factual state of the world. In contrast, acting in archaic Greece did not require an active will but a passive will, since meaning was found in the facts of the world rather than simply being posited there by human beings.

What happens, however in History and Class Consciousness, to the principle that to act in the modern world one must accept some autonomy for value? A possibility is that (1) one can learn to act in another way, and (2) therefore one does not need a naturalistic ethic at all. This is how History and Class Consciousness is usually interpreted. (1) is certainly a collect interpretation. (2) is the disputed point. The problem is that although Lukács often asserts (2), he also often asserts points that are inconsistent with (2). I will hold that Lukács’s original perception about needing distance between facts and values in order to act is present in History and Class Consciousness. Indeed I will argue that the blending of naturalistic and non-naturalistic ethics in History and Class Consciousness represents a third approach to the relation between facts and values in which the dichotomy between them is lessened but not overcome.

My delineation of this middle ethical perspective is indebted to Michael Löwy’s recent attempt to describe the political perspective of History and Class


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*Consciousness*, as located between Lukács' leftism when he first joined the Hungarian Communist Party in 1918 and Lukács' gradual acceptance, in the latter half of the 20s, of a more conservative line. However, for Löwy, *History and Class Consciousness* is not midway between the two political positions, but remained closer to the leftist period. It is with "Moses Hess" and Lukács' attack on avant garde art at the end of the '20s that Löwy sees the real beginnings of the move to conservatism.\(^{13}\) The interesting point, however, is that often *History and Class Consciousness* is closer on the issue of the overcoming of the fact/value dichotomy to the later conservative works such as *The Young Hegel* than to the early works, including those of the leftist period. Yet, if Löwy is right, and I think he is, in political content it is closer to the leftist period than to the more conservative period. To explain this inconsistency we must either assume that the fact/value material in *History and Class Consciousness* is inconsistent with its political content or that the book contains two intermingled accounts of the relation between facts and values. I will uphold the second thesis.

I will distinguish between 6 parts of Lukács' argument. His fundamental overriding standpoint is that the *Sittlichkeit* theory is correct and that this means that the Kantian theory of autonomous ethics is wrong, as well as the Kantian theory, developed more explicit by the neo-Kantians, of the importance of separating facts and values. Along the way he makes the following 5 points: (1) that autonomous ethics should be supplanted by a teleological theory of historical progress; (2) that autonomous ethics leads to an unacceptable way of relating the subject and object. (3) that it leads to passivity; (4) that such an account is individualistic; and (5) that the Kantian theory of autonomous ethics and separation of facts from value does not allow any content for ethics.

Lukács' fundamental point (6) about the opposition between value and *Sittlichkeit* can only be dealt with after the other less encompassing points are analyzed. In section three I will suggest a way in which value and *Sittlichkeit*, autonomous and nonautonomous ethics, can be blended, and also that such a blending fits in with Lukács' standpoint in much of *History and Class Consciousness*. I will now begin with (1) Lukács' critique of value and autonomous ethics from the standpoint of teleology, and show how his argument is connected with his claims about (2) the subject/object relation and (3) passivity. I will then deal with the issues of (4) individuality and (5) lack of content, and finally turn, in section three, to the whole issue of value versus *Sittlichkeit*.

In the early version of "What is Orthodox Marxism?," as in the idealism essay, Lukács had argued that one must scorn the facts and oppose one's will to the facts, that this was the only way to avoid positivism. In the reworked version that appears in *History and Class Consciousness* Lukács argues that 'it is as impossible to impose our will on facts as to discover in the facts a moment giving direction to our will,' i.e., he opposes both the ethicist's scorn of facts and the positivist's worship of facts.\(^{14}\) What happened between the two versions? Lukács substituted for the concept of morality, based on the autonomy of value, the notion of a teleological tendency which can change the facts toward human desires but is not dependent on either facts or desires. With
such a teleological tendency Lukács apparently thought that he could do without the autonomy of value, which he had often treated earlier anyway as a kind of transcendental desire to change the facts.

Thus, this is first an argument against autonomous value and then against Moralität, i.e. against a non-naturalistic ethic based on the autonomy of value. Even on its own terms, however, the argument only claims that teleology makes value unnecessary, not that value is inconsistent with teleology. Furthermore, value, as Rickert and the young Lukács understood, is not just a desire to change the facts. Thus Hegel's teleological critique of Kantian ethics becomes Lukács' self critique, which he uses to overcome his earlier moralism. But it is not clear that he succeeds. Lukács and Hegel both hold that properly understood the facts have within them the same potential to arrive at the goal, that the ethical would impose on the facts from without. Put another way they hold that the facts have a telos in them. Yet neither Hegel nor Lukács ever show convincingly that if one is going to accept the concept of the teleological as a guide to action, then one has to give up the idea of value as a guide to action. Indeed the structure of History and Class Consciousness not only leaves open the possibility that the concept of teleology can be supplemented by an ethic based on the autonomy of value, but in many ways seems to demand this. This is made clear by the way in which Lukács introduces his criticism of autonomous ethics.

When Lukács introduced his critique of the fact/value dichotomy in the section on reification in History and Class Consciousness, the book had come to a stop with the subject in capitalism faced with a reified world in which the objectivity of nature and society is out of tune with his subjectivity. Lukács' description of that reification does not, contrary to what some people seem to have thought, imply affirmation of teleology or denial of the autonomy of value. It does involve the ontological concept of the whole of society being out of control of the individual, but that concept does not imply teleology although it does depend on the concept of Sittlichkeit. For one could imagine a society being out of control and not tending toward a higher stage. The question of teleology enters when Lukács asks how the individual who is reified can break that reification by participating in a telos moving toward liberation. Lukács acknowledges that he is asking the same question raised by the ethical tradition, which enjoins action as a method of breaking down the reified dichotomy between subject and object and thus of attaining unity between them. "But this unity is activity." In other words the ethical tradition does exactly what Lukács himself and done at the end of The Theory of the Novel: oppose to the reified world a world of values which allows the subject to act. It is important, therefore, to remember, that Lukács has shown no evidence that the concepts of teleology and value are inconsistent. It is at this stage that Lukács introduces his second point, i.e. that the theory of value leads to a false conception of the relation of subject and object. This argument, in turn, is closely connected with Lukács' third point, i.e. that emphasis on autonomous value leads to passivity.

Lukács argues that the ethical solution is a paradox. It seems to allow one to break down the subject/object dichotomy, but then it reproduces it even more
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strongly. Why? Because the very fact that the subject must overcome the subject/object dichotomy shows that there still is a dichotomy posed even in the solution to the problem. At this point Lukács has not yet made the passivity argument. Indeed Lukács begins by admitting that those who stress value are interested in change and activity. The major problem with those who uphold the "ought", is not that they do not want to change reality, but that they admit that there is something to change in a meaningful existence the problem of the 'ought' would not arise. But the problem with this viewpoint is that is seems to retreat to the standpoint of The Theory of the Novel in that the superiority of a world where values are not opposed to facts lies in the fact that it already has abolished alienation:

For precisely in the pure classical expression it received in the philosophy of Kant it remains true that the "ought" presupposes an existing reality to which the category of "ought" remains inapplicable in principle. Whenever the refusal of the subject simply to accept the empirically given existence takes the form of an "ought," this means that the immediately given empirical reality receives affirmation and consecration at the hands of philosophy: it is philosophically immortalized.16

From that standpoint the "ought" seems a failure because it has not changed reality. This argument is bad enough. It seems to allow Lukács the position of condemning as ineffective all those who have not yet attained their goals. But Lukács' conclusion that this ineffectivity leads to passivity and worship of the facts is even less warranted.

The striking thing about this criticism is that it brings against the "ought" exactly the arguments that in his essay on idealism Lukács had brought against the overcoming of the "ought": i.e. that it winds up worshipping the present. Indeed if Lukács' Fichteian scorn for the facticity of Hegelian philosophy was strong in the idealism essay, his Hegelian scorn for the facticity of Fichtean philosophy is even stronger here. But we must be dealing with a paradox. Lukács says that stress on values admits the importance of facts because in opposing the facts it admits that they exist. But Lukács would have to be Plotinus himself not to realize that the true self, potentially present in the teleological whole, must have some opposition from the false self, a problem that idealists other than Plotinus from Plato to Augustine have always grappled with. Yet according to his arguments against ethics, such opposition would imply deification of the false self just as admission that the world has not changed would imply deification of the world. As for Lukács' critique of the dualism of the fact/value dichotomy, the same charge can certainly be made against the dualism of the opposition between true and false self which is implied by any theory of alienation or reification.19 Thus it should be noted that argument one, the teleology argument, suspect anyway, gives rise to arguments two and three, the subject/object and passivity arguments which, in addition to having the
problems of their origins are also problematic in themselves.

At any rate, Lukács continues his claims about subject/object relations by noting that for pure Kantian ethics there comes to be an absolute dichotomy between the world and the self so that the problem of human freedom becomes almost incapable of resolution. When freedom is inner and divorced too much from the world, then it may be true that freedom can never realize itself. But to posit a self totally bound up with the world does not resolve the problem either. I am not saying that Lukács in *History and Class Consciousness* does bind the self totally to the world. Rather, I think that he achieves a synthesis between cutting the self and its values off from the world and indentifying the self with the world. Yet his critique of Kant sounds as though he is simply negating the theory of distance between self and the world and positing immediate identity between self and world; indeed, in "Moses Hess" and even more in *The Young Hegel* Lukács actually does what he only suggests here that he wants to do, namely to totally deny transcendent values and to identify the self with society.

Lukács' criticism that Kant's moral theory simply reproduces the concept of external and internal within the human subject is different from the criticisms we have been considering. It is not simply in need of relativization, but seems incompatible with *History and Class Consciousness* as a whole. For though this criticism may be consistent with the idea that the self actually exists in a state of harmony (the idealized archaic Greece of *The Theory of the Novel*), it is not consistent with the idea that the self is not actually in such harmony but only teleologically oriented in that direction. However, the whole structure of *History and Class Consciousness* depends on the idea that there is a dichotomy between the actual and the potential. Indeed Lukács' theory of alienation and reification depends on the possibility of such a dichotomy. Now even if for argument's sake we grant Lukács that the dichotomy between the actual and the possible does not have to be at least partially described in moral language (a highly doubtful proposition), still it certainly must be descriptable in terms of opposition between parts of the self.

Lukács' bad arguments do suggest some general problems with the self realization theory. In the self realization theory the dichotomy is no longer between a value out there, and a fact which is the self or in the self. Instead the dichotomy is between the potential and the actual self. However, the potential, it could be argued, is itself a value. The other way of arguing is that the potential self is simply located in history. Now it is obvious that the notion of finding the true self does have to involve a phylogenetic and ontogenetic recapturing of history. However, it is just not clear that is all there is to it. But if it is said that it is more than history, then the true self must be a value or identified partially by values, and we are half way back to Kantianism again. The problem with Lukács' argument here is that he does not understand this. Thus his arguments about subject/object fail as do his arguments about passivity.

It must be stated, though, that Lukács does seem implicitly aware of some of these problems in his characterizations of passivity. Thus, in the course of stressing that the "ought" ultimately involves the will caving in to the facts.
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Lukács notes, nevertheless, that there is a sense in which the “ought” affirms the will in that “to aspire to Utopia is to affirm the will in what is philosophically the more objective and clearer form of the ‘ought’.” 21 This observation is important for its recognition that there is no absolute dichotomy between the stress on action provided by the teleological whole and that provided by the concept of values. Of course, Lukács is not explicitly admitting much here — only to the idea that the ethicist may have the same aim as the one who wants to insert the human being into a teleological process. He is not at all admitting that ethicism can achieve that aim, nor that the inserting of the human being into the teleological whole can itself be accomplished partly by ethical means. It is this latter point which he seems to be admitting when, returning to the theme of how to end reification, which had originally led to his ambiguous attack on ethics, Lukács says that the end of reification can be accomplished only by “constant and constantly renewed efforts to disrupt the reified structure of existence by concretely relating to . . . the total development”, i.e. the teleological whole.

Unlike that aspect of the thought of Hegel or Marx which stresses that such disruptions can only occur when the facts are right, Lukács then emphasizes that these disruptions can only occur when the proletariat is conscious of the larger issues. Such stress on consciousness seems inconsistent with a strict teleological theory. Consciousness here seems to play the role that value played for the neo-Kantians. Certainly Lukács is not just stressing consciousness of the facts, nor can he be stressing only consciousness of a teleological process. For neither facts nor teleological processes depend on consciousness, but he is talking about actions that do so depend. Lukács’ stress on consciousness here thus implies that action is based on something more than facts or teleology: value. When Lukács adds that “what is crucial is that there should be an intention toward totality,” 22 he seems to be explicitly admitting, as he once did, that the path to the harmony of ancient Greece, the path to the proletariat becoming the identical subject/object of history, is an intention based not just on integrating facts and values, but also on autonomous values.

Let us sum up. I began by talking about Lukács’ three arguments, (1) the teleology argument, (2) the subject/object argument, and (3) the passivity argument. We have seen how interwined they are, and we have seen the internal problems with the subject/object argument and the passivity argument. There are not as many internal problems in the teleology argument, but the major problem is that Lukács never shows that he has better claims for there being such a teleology than the Kantians have for their being a realm of autonomous value; second, he never really shows inconsistency between the two realms, and indeed asserts points, such as his theory of consciousness, which seem to entail a concept of autonomous value. All these points work together, as I will now show, to raise devastating problems for his teleological critique of ethics.

Again I must stress that although Lukács’ solution to the problem of reification in here is different than in his earlier work, the structure of the argument in History and Class Consciousness is not new. The Theory of the Novel also assumed that there was a golden age when there was no ethics, and another age,
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the modern, where autonomous ethics became necessary.\textsuperscript{23} Here, as there, doesn’t Lukács say that in order to end alienation we must act, the difference being that now we can act not because of value, but because of our participation in a teleological process? It is not enough, however, for Lukács to simply say that now he has overcome ethics through teleology: “the working class has no ideals to realize.”\textsuperscript{24} He must show it and this is rather hard for him to do given that his whole account of consciousness suggests that the objective teleological process of history must be accompanied by conscious acceptance of this teleological process; and the easiest way to analyse this conscious acceptance is as a value acceptance. Thus even if we accept Lukács’ teleological assumptions his critique of value is suspect; without them it is of course even more suspect.

Of course a will to act based on the autonomy of value is not necessary for action if one is already in the state of harmony described in the first part of \textit{The Theory of the Novel}. From that standpoint one can critique a non-naturalistic ethic based on the autonomy of value or on the elevation of the will. But the reified modern society described in \textit{History and Class Consciousness} is not harmonious ancient Greece. Lukács wants that modern society to be struggled against. Lukács’ admission that only action can give the unity which has been taken away by reification suggests that there is an elevation of the will in \textit{History and Class Consciousness} and I suggest that, try as hard as he can, Lukács cannot avoid the ethical connotations of this elevation of the will.

Lukács himself, as we have seen, connects the issue of facts and values to the question of activity or passivity of the will when he attacks the passivity engendered by the moral attitude.\textsuperscript{25} Yet this criticism is very strange since he also has given as a distinguishing feature of the philosophy of Kant and Fichte the fact that it is more activist than Hegel’s. In his polemic against Kant and Fichte in “Moses Hess” and in \textit{The Young Hegel}, he argued that their elevation of the “ought” leads to too much opposition to reality, too much action, too little passivity. In the idealism essay he had made the same point but from an opposite perspective. Kant and Fichte were praised for not accepting passivity.\textsuperscript{26} In short, Lukács contradicts himself on the question of whether it is accepting the fact/value dichotomy or rejecting it that leads to activism. He clings to his program in \textit{History and Class Consciousness}, i.e., that he wants action without stressing values, but he cannot even answer his own earlier and later critiques of such a position.

In truth \textit{History and Class Consciousness} is the meeting ground for seemingly opposed tendencies, on facts, values and ethics. Lukács is explicitly arguing that he has overcome Kantian moralism, but in fact there are elements of actionism and moralism in his own account. Thus, Lukács is trying to blend Kant on the one hand and Hegel on the other in a way that he himself does not make totally explicit. This blending emerges more clearly as he works out the details of his opposition of value and teleology. As we saw, one element of opposition is that what is posited as a value outside the fact in ethical philosophies becomes a possibility within the fact when the fact is placed within a teleological process. This allows one to look at facts not just
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immediately but to see them as mediated by the tendencies of the teleological process. It must be recalled, however, that the way in which the teleological whole mediates particulars is different from the way that the reified whole, in which the individual is enveloped at the beginning of *History of Class Consciousness*, mediates particulars. Both mediations involve a distinction between what is immediately perceived and what is mediately true. Yet in the case of the reified whole both the mediate and the immediate are present, whereas in the case of the teleological whole, the immediate is present, but the mediate is only present as a possibility.

It is of the mediating ability of the teleological whole that Lukács is talking when he says that

the category of mediation is a lever with which to overcome the mere immediacy of the empirical world and as such it is not something (subjective) foisted on to the objects from outside. It is no value judgment or 'ought' opposed to the 'is.' It is rather the manifestation of their authentic objective structure.27

Although Lukács asserts that the mediating process of the teleological whole is totally different from the "ought", there is some reason to doubt this. The doubt centers on the concept of possibility. The notion of possibilities creates a dilemma for a philosophy of the present. For if one wants to limit the concept of possibility to what is only very close to the immediate present, then one moves closer to positivism, a move which Lukács seems to have come close to making in *The Young Hegel*, and which he was concerned about both in his early writings and in his more radical days of the late '60s. However, if one stretches the concept of the possibilities of the present then there is the danger that one will wind up with utopias of the type that Lukács criticized in "Moses Hess".28 Thus, if possibility is defined narrowly it becomes closer to the facts, if more broadly closer to values. Since possibilities are perceived broadly in *History of Class Consciousness* this suggests that they are closer to values. This fits in with the stress of consciousness which also implies values. Furthermore the logical connection between the two is that it is heightened consciousness which sees revolutionary possibilities more clearly or posits them more strikingly.

In *History of Class Consciousness* Lukács does not achieve an ethics based on the denial of the autonomy of value. It is only with *The Young Hegel* that autonomous values become not so much overcome as rejected. In *The Young Hegel* there is first, less and less stress on consciousness and even on the teleological process both of which, according to *History of Class Consciousness*, were the primary antidotes to the reified world of capitalism. Second there is fuller development of those criticisms of Kant that are indeed crucial for constructing a Marxist ethic, for example critique of the scholasticism and legalism that pervades too much of the Kantian system. Third, combined with *History of Class Consciousness*, Lukács’ criticisms of (4) individuality, (5) lack of content, and finally (6) the excessively inner nature of ethics based on autonomous
value as opposed to an ethic based on outer *Sittlichkeit* are all stated more fully. I will now concentrate on these latter arguments both as they appear in *History of Class Consciousness* and *The Young Hegel*.

As early as *The Theory of the Novel* Lukács had seen ethics as implying excessive individualism. Yet he had not accepted the essential individualism of ethics in the essay on idealism; and in *The Young Hegel* he has to admit an inconsistent critique, namely that Kantian ethics does not stress the individual enough. Even in *The Theory of the Novel* he seems to suggest the possibility of a non individualistic ethics. In *The Young Hegel* Lukács continues the argument that the moral attitude is individualistic. However, more and more this point is made contradictory: e.g. when Lukács admits that at Berne Hegel was both a moralist and concerned with collectivity. Of course this charge of individualism had always been one of Lukács' weakest points against morality anyway. Indeed we find Lukács simultaneously criticizing Kantian ethics for excessive individualism and for not being individualistic enough, as for example when he accuses Kant and Fichte for erecting an absolutistic morality, which he sees as part of a "desensualization process".

However, the main problem with Lukács' account of individualism is that it simply mirrors the errors and confusions in Hegel's own account. Roughly, the problem is that. The deep problem that Hegel was dealing with in his writing on Kant concerned the relation between an ethics based on existing practice and one that is not. However, since Hegel found, in many formulations of autonomous ethics (a) ontological emphasis on the individual subject and (b) stress on interpretations of right, duty, justice, etc., which entailed elements of economic and political individualism, he therefore assumed for the most part that there was a necessary and not a contingent connection between an ethic not based on existing practices and individualism. This however ignores the possibility of a collective noninstitutional ethic. Furthermore, neither Hegel nor Lukács ever constructed an adequate argument for the essential individualism of autonomous ethics. However, a partial argument can be constructed for both (a) and (b). The closest thing to the former is found in the work of Lucien Goldmann and the closest thing to the latter in the debate over socialist ethics within and without Hegelian Marxism.

Lukács' critique of the lack of content of Kantian ethics is also only partially convincing. The problem, however, is that Kant himself sometimes did give his ethics a content and indeed different contents. This, of course, does not get Kant off the hook. One may say, with Hegel, that there is a problem with such an abstract notion of duty which can be interpreted so differently. In opposition to such abstraction, which has to utilize a content anyway, one might like to propose a philosophy like Hegel's which consciously thematizes the problem of content. The problem is that Lukács' and Hegel's principles of social reality, which they use to give a content to the abstract forms of duty, are themselves extremely variable. Thus, for Lukács, one year they center on the mass strike, another year on the Leninist Party, another year on the Popular Front. If Kant's ethical theories are too abstract and need a content, perhaps Hegel's and
Lukács' theories need some more abstraction in order to prevent them from just taking any moral content they want. Lukács' criticism, then, may be justified, but perhaps may be answered by anchoring Kant's moral philosophy somewhat more to the social world without thereby completely breaking down the dichotomy between facts and values.

Of all Lukács' criticisms, however, I do think that the lack of content argument has the most validity, next to the criticism of the excessively inner nature of Kant's ethics, and I will take up both in section three. For now I would just note that certainly in History of Class Consciousness Lukács does not attempt to resolve the question by taking the content of ethics simply from what is the case, but rather from what he thinks will, from a teleological perspective, be the case. Thus, the issue is displaced to the first one of teleology versus value. In contrast, in The Young Hegel he takes the content more from what is. This difference conforms to my basic logical reconstruction of Lukács' thought, whereby the first period presents a non-naturalistic ethic, History of Class Consciousness and the second period represent a non-naturalistic combined with a naturalistic ethic, and the third period, particularly The Young Hegel, opts for a more completely naturalistic ethic. The first is more conventionally left Hegelian, the second neither right nor left and the third tending toward a right Hegelianism in which the autonomy of value is gone.

This leads me to one of my central claims, which is that there is no easy answer to the issue of right, versus center, versus left Hegelianism as the basis of a Marxist ethic. It is not just a question of which is the best interpretation of Hegel, but rather that each option represents a tendency toward emphasizing an ethic based on the autonomy of value, or one based on a close intermingling of facts and values. There is no easy answer as to which is right, except that it seems obvious that it is almost impossible to simply adopt one or the other. They are two extremes of a spectrum, one of which tends to make ethics dependent on facts about human nature and human society, the other of which tends to make ethics more autonomous. In the Hegelian system the tension is represented by the directions of Moralität and Sittlichkeit. One problem, as we will see, is that Hegel often characterizes these two in such a way that it sounds like Sittlichkeit must be the solution, particularly by giving a narrowing reading to the concept of Moralität. However, I will argue against this narrow reading. Although Moralität, for example, often involves individuality, the moral does not, or at least he has not shown it to, and I will go on to hold that in fact it does not. Nor is the moral particularly tied to a narrow individualistic reading of duty. The moral and the sittlich can be seen as two modes of collective self development. I will also contend that the problem with many existing interpretations, including Lukács', is that they give no real decision procedure for choosing the right place between logically reconstructed notions of Sittlichkeit and Moralität, i.e., that none of the decision procedures work and, more strongly, that there are a number of reasons for why they cannot work unless a naturalistic and a non-naturalistic ethics are combined. The contrast between the practical results of History of Class Consciousness and The Young Hegel reveal this clearly.
All the new material on ethics in *The Young Hegel* basically leads Lukács to praise Hegel more and more for his political moderation, his middle political path. Much of the spirit of the book is encapsulated in Lukács’ comment that

> The outstanding feature of Hegel’s position was that even though he rejected the extreme left wing of the French Revolution right from the beginning, he nevertheless retained his faith in its *historical necessity* and to the very end of his life he regarded it as the very foundation of modern civil society.³⁴

Of course Lukács is aware that Hegel’s stress on necessity as opposed to Utopia can lead to reaction. Yet he seems unaware that the way in which he formulates Hegel’s problem would of necessity lead to a conflict between stress on necessity and a progressive attitude.³⁵ Lukács sees Hegel’s developing critique of the moral attitude, from 1799 to 1807 as leading to what he calls Hegel’s philosophy of renonciliation.

For the later Hegel ‘reconciliation’ is a category expressing the idea that the objective course of history is independent of the moral aspirations and evaluations of the men active within it. The various philosophies, ideologies, religions, etc., appear correspondingly as intellectual syntheses of a particular historical era. For this reason, Hegel rejects all purely moral evaluations of them. This is not to say that he abstains from any point of view. But his chief criterion is the progressive or reactionary nature of a particular period and not, as earlier on, its relation to an eternal, supra-historical morality. To this extent ‘reconciliation’ is an index of the great development in Hegel’s historical sense.

But the development is highly contradictory. For his use of the category also points to a reconciliation with the most regrograde tendencies of the past and present. In particular, it tacitly accepts the reactionary institutions of contemporary Germany and this leads to the abandonment of all conflict, and of all real criticism, especially with regard to Christianity. Hence, the historical and scientific advance on the moral indignation of his Berne Peirod exacts a great price in terms of his progressive outlook.³⁶

Thus, Lukács is aware of the problem that reconciliation can be reactionary and not just moderate. But he seems to be unaware that by emptying the concept of reconciliation with social reality of all ethical content, he makes it very difficult for Hegel or anyone else to clearly demarcate the line between simple reconciliation and actual reaction. Certainly, Lukács did have a political
demarcation in mind between the two but the very connection of that political demarcation with his own situation in Moscow raises with renewed vigor the need for a moral as well as a pragmatic political demarcation between the tendency to reconciliation and the move to reaction. This seems doubly imperative in light of the fact that in *The Young Hegel* the political demarcation is often placed so far to the right. Hegel, for example, is praised for accepting Thermidor, Fichte condemned for opposing it and accused of being naïve because he wanted to redistribute property. Although Lukács admits that Hegel may have been more conservative on this issue of property, still, for Lukács at this time, Hegel’s very conservatism shows his superiority to Fichte. Fichte is even criticized because, unlike Hegel, he upheld the right of human beings to rebel.

What happened? What is the relation between this version of Hegel and the version found in *History and Class Consciousness* and the relation of both to Lukács’ earlier critique of Hegel’s criticism of Kantian ethics. The usual flip way of treating this is just to say that Marx was a left Hegelian. However, Lukács and Goldmann have argued effectively against this standpoint. I would say that they have also shown that Marxism to be viable should not simply be left Hegelian, since this position leaves human activity in a vacuum and not adequately tied to historical reality. I would add that from an ethical perspective left Hegelianism defined in this way would lead to an extreme non-naturalism in ethics. However, in exposing this problem Lukács and Goldmann opened another which they were not adequately aware of, namely that if autonomous ethics is taken to be characteristic of left Hegelianism and if center Hegelianism completely rejects this position, then center Hegelianism of necessity becomes right Hegelianism. This can be taken as a dilemma or as a suggestion that Marxism must combine naturalistic and non-naturalistic ethics. Only the second approach allows us to understand the strengths and limits of Lukács’ sixth and final critique of autonomous ethics, that it is too inward oriented. In section three I turn to this issue.

It must be kept in mind, that *History and Class Consciousness* and *The Young Hegel*, not only represent different interpretations of Hegelian Marxism, but also different interpretations of cultural history, particularly German history, and I believe that the issue of uniting a non-natural and a natural ethics through uniting collective values and collective praxis, can benefit from both these elements of Lukács’ thought. Seen from a cultural standpoint and particularly in the light of Lukács’ role in the popular front as a defender of progressive aspects of German culture, *The Young Hegel* defends the enlightenment and those themes which see Marxism and Hegelianism as part of the enlightenment. It resolutely critiques romanticism and interpretations of Hegel and Marx that place them there. Although *History and Class Consciousness* is not a work of cultural history in the same sense, nevertheless in many ways it reflects Lukács’ earlier attitude...
to literature and culture, which, many scholars now agree, whether they defend this or not, placed Marxism within romanticism and utilized romantic themes. This opposition becomes more interesting if we add that the primary Hegelian and Marxist enlightenment theme that is picked out in The Young Hegel is philosophy of history and historical materialism. Indeed in his connection of Marx, Hegel, Smith and the earlier economists, Lukács develops an account of the historical continuity of historical materialism which, when added to his innovative work on the historical novel, produced around the same time as The Young Hegel, allow Lukács to be seen as one of the best delineators of the relation between the enlightenment as a whole and the tradition of materialist history, both economic and cultural. But there are striking anomalies in both of Lukács’ accounts and in the relation between the accounts. First, his treatment of Kant is very strange. It does, however, speak to the issue of combining a collective value orientation with a collective praxis orientation.

Second, although the reversal from defense of a romantic Marxism to defense of an enlightenment Marxism might suggest that Lukács only provides grounds for continuing to separate Marxism, along the lines of Gouldner, into romantic and scientific Marxism, the fact that both versions of Marx are defended through the same Hegelian categories, albeit with different results in History and Class Consciousness and The Young Hegel, might suggest that there is some synthesis possible between the Marxism of materialist history, enlightenment themes, and the Marx of romanticism, consciousness and radical potentialities. This perhaps lets the cat out of the bag for my ultimate aim. I believe that these two can be combined if the non-natural and the natural ethics of Marxism can be combined and that they must be combined for Marxist ethics to be viable. And combining them would mean combining the theory of base and superstructure, which leads in many of its formulations to a naturalistic ethic, with the theories of radical possibilities and the significance of consciousness for revolutionary change, which lead to a non-naturalistic ethic. The point is that they both lead to an ethic, whereas in most of the debates between the two camps the ethical dimension is not expressed. That is why, going back to my opening comments, E.P. Thompson can connect structuralism with Hegelian Marxism. In this connection there is nothing more important than the reassimilation of Kant and his concerns for collective social values and aspirations back into Hegel and Marx. Yet in both History and Class Consciousness and The Young Hegel, Kant is treated both inconsistently and shallowly: inconsistently because whereas in History and Class Consciousness he is seen as an enlightenment thinker who did not understand the revolution brought in by Hegelian philosophy with its stress on consciousness, in The Young Hegel the author of What is Enlightenment is treated either as a scholastic fogy or as a precursor to existentialism.

The shallowness of Lukács’ interpretation of Kant is shown by his basic presupposition that the inner in Kant is always individualistic. However, there is another way of talking about inner moral experience and I believe that Kant can also be approached in this way: namely that inner moral experience defines collective value aspirations which have not been manifested in the actually
existing structure of society, against collective values which have been. On this point Lucien Goldmann's discussion of Kant in *Immanuel Kant and the Hidden God* is immeasurably superior to Lukács (although Goldmann often falls back on Lukácsian formulation). For on Goldmann's account tragic thinkers like Kant are usually characterized precisely as moralists who are not individualists, but who uphold a collective value which has less chance of being manifested in the world than in the Marxian or Hegelian system where collective values are seen to be directly manifested in practice. But it does seem that the reasons I have given for why there is room in *History and Class Consciousness* for an autonomous ethics apply with equal force here. For it is precisely in those sections of *History and Class Consciousness*, i.e. in Lukács' defense of revolutionary consciousness and radical possibilities, in which Lukács seems to need a philosophy of the autonomy of value (even as he denies it) that he also needs a philosophy of collective inner value orientation to be conjoined with a collective praxis based on actuality. There the possibility is raised of combining a romantic and an enlightenment ethic.

In contrast to the view espoused in *The Young Hegel*, for the early, romantic Lukács, the philosopher of revolt, the primacy of ethics, as found in Fichte or Kant, was part of the tradition of revolt, i.e. according to one interpretation, part of the tradition of romanticism. For it seems as though the romantics, like the young Hegelians, try to create a self based on autonomy from facts and this is a revolt against existence as existence, but that then, romantics begin to worry about whether the self can develop in such a way or whether it has to be anchored to facts and tradition, a debate over what I have called the creation of the self versus the discovery of the self. This debate is carried on in many aspects of romanticism ranging from English poetry to French painting to German philosophy. In English poetry, for example, many of the romantics wound up by submerging revolt in some sense of tradition. There is a similar dialectic in French painting from David to Delacroix. Moving to German literature one also finds this theme in Schiller's concerns over whether the self should be more bound or more structured. It is Charles Taylor's thesis that a concern to find a median point between expressiveness and autonomy, i.e. what I would call naturalism and non-naturalism, is found in Hegel and Marx. I would like to suggest that the third ethical way offered by *History and Class Consciousness* combines expressiveness and autonomy by giving a new account of will and activity based on both value and *Sittlichkeit*. This synthesis was all the easier to make in that Hegel's nonvaluational theory of will and activity was originally an overreaction to Kant's overly valuational theory. On this account, both Kant's and Hegel's interpretation of will, activity, and ethics may be seen as part of the romantic debate over tradition and revolt. But obviously looked at this way enlightenment and romantic ethics combine, just as I would like to combine naturalism and non-naturalism, historical materialism and the theory of the self, collective social practice and collective social values. Lukács' attitude toward Kant is a key.

As we have seen, for the early Lukács Hegel was associated with
conservatism. The reason was that Kant and Fichte were seen to elevate the will, whereas Hegel had attempted on Lukács' view to reconcile the will with the facts, i.e. overcome the fact/value dichotomy. The young Lukács' analysis of Hegelianism and anti-Hegelianism is actually consolidated in The Young Hegel except that there Lukács' judgments of the two positions are reversed. Hegel is now praised for his antiromantic spirit of realism whereas Fichte is condemned for his romantic utopianism. In contrast History and Class Consciousness represents a third way between acceptance of a world of value absolutely set off against a world of facts and the total assimilation of facts and values.

Now it is certainly true that Kant radically separated fact from value and that Hegel attempted to bring them back together again. However, Hegel's attempt to overcome the fact/value dichotomy is partially a result of Kant's extreme overevaluation of it. Before Kant separated them so much who would have seen the urgency of getting them back together? The fact/value dichotomy would not be perceived as needing radical overcoming if someone had not given a sharp theoretical separation of facts and values in the first place.

What was unique in Kant's separation of fact from value? Here we must sharply separate what a neo-Kantian like Ernst Cassirer gets out of Kant and what a utopian Hegelian Marxist such as Ernst Bloch gets out of Kant.44 We must differentiate between the Kant who comes out of the enlightenment and the Kant who comes out of romanticism. What do I mean by this distinction? For those who see Kant as an enlightenment thinker there must be stress on his idea of universalization or duty. For those who see him as a romantic the stress must be more on self-creation, i.e. the spirit of revolt. On my view these two interpretations are not necessarily opposed, although particularly if one emphasizes duty rather than universalization, it is easy to overemphasize the rigid, legalistic, individualistic side of Kant's thought. On the enlightenment interpretation Kant is great because he stresses the moral law. On the romantic interpretation Kant is great because he stresses the self-creation of the moral law. According to this romantic reading Kant is the thinker who attempts to radically impose significance on a universe that is otherwise devoid of meaning; and he accomplishes this by elevating not simply the autonomy of the moral law, but also the power of the will, the power of human beings to achieve self-creation through moral norms. On this reading Kant is part of a whole tradition of thinkers who claim that values are no longer simply given, who insist that human beings must create new values through the will. This is the standpoint of Rousseau, of Nietzsche, of Sorel and of Gramsci. It is also the tradition of the Young Lukács.45

The comparison of Rousseau, Nietzsche, Kant may sound strange to some, but once it is seen how both Rousseau and Nietzsche are asking for a new human being rather than simply for a new morality, then we can see how Kant's creation of a new realm of value plays structurally the same role as Rousseau's call for the creation of a new social, "general" will; or Nietzsche's call for the creation of a new individual will. This leads to an analysis of Lukács' opposition between inner ethics and outer practice.
The creation of a new universal will in Kant involves extending the concept of the individual will to include its relation with other wills. This new general will of reason is social but not necessarily observable in existing societies. Furthermore, Hegel's attempt to overcome the fact/value dichotomy, which usually involves placing human beings within actual existing society, also involves extending the individual will and person to include their relations with others. This interpretation reconstructs the argument between Sittlichkeit and Moralität. On the one hand, there is the historical method of extending the human will beyond the individual by emphasizing collective praxis. On the other hand, there is the moral method of extending the human will beyond the individual so that a collective general will or will of reason is created which is not objectified in existing society. Put another way, there is opposition between Kant who usually extends the individual will in an inner but collective direction, and Hegel who usually extends it in an outer and collective direction.

I would suggest, however, that already in Hegel the concept of extending the individual will through practice, although it is different from the Kantian concept of extending the individual will through value, nevertheless, unless it is to fall into a positivistic identification with actually existing society, must keep some aspect of the concept of extending the will through value too. On this account the fact/value dichotomy is not entirely overcome: this is the third way represented by History and Class Consciousness. Furthermore, one way of seeing the continuity in the thought of Kant, Hegel and Lukács is to realize that for none of them, at least at their best, is it ever a question of extending the individual will simply through such collective notions as duty or historical praxis, both of which are primarily enlightenment concepts. For all of them the extension of the individual will has an element of romanticism and non-naturalism in it, i.e. an element of revolt and self creation. The extended human will, the new human nature is not only discovered in history, as the enlightenment and enlightenment Marxists emphasize, but also created as romanticism and romantic Marxism stress. This new human will thus allows the combination of enlightenment, naturalistic and romantic non-naturalistic ethics.

Kany may have been one of the first to suggest, along with Rousseau, that one can will to have a human nature. It contrast it seems to have been the view of Leo Strauss, the arch antiromantic, that such a thing is impossible: either one has a human nature or else one wills individuality. The young Lukács followed Kant. In History and Class Consciousness in contrast, Lukács seemed to follow Hegel in arguing that one does not simply will that one has a human nature, but rather that one appropriates a human nature created through existing social processes. For Lukács, willing to have a human nature was to accept the fact/value dichotomy, whereas appropriating a societally-created human nature was to overcome the distance between facts and values. One appropriates a human nature that has been externalized in society. According to this notion the foundation for growth of the self is already laid by the direction pointed to by reified human nature in society. What becomes important is to break that reification either by action or contemplation. But the telos toward change is
already present in the reification. And this puts limits on how far one can expand the inner collective will. For expansion of that will is limited by how much the inner collective will has already been objectified in existing society. However, it is precisely (a) in the theory of change and (b) in the question of how to come to consciousness of the relation between internal and external that Hegel fails or becomes ambiguous and where the Lukács of *History and Class Consciousness* has to add something which he later described in many ways, but basically was an actionistic element of a type not clearly found in Hegel. I hold that the process of change can only be illuminated by adding Kantian stress on the power of the inner collective will to the stress on the will's objectification in existing society, i.e. adding collective values to collective praxis.

According to the univocal expression of overcoming the fact/value dichotomy, liberation is simply the historical extension of the changing patterns of modern society at whatever pace these changes happen to take. To go beyond or to fall behind that pace is to fail to be in harmony with history, and thus, ultimately, with oneself. The problem with this account is that it is sometimes difficult to separate if from straightforward right-wing Hegelianism. In contrast, according to the commonly accepted dichotomy between facts and values, liberation is a moral demand located outside of society. This is the account of liberation that Goldmann attributes to Marcuse and the left Hegelians. The problem with this interpretation is that it is sometimes difficult to separate it from the straightforward utopianism, advocated by E.P. Thompson or, sometimes, by Ernst Bloch. Finally, according to the third way delineated in *History and Class Consciousness*, liberation is lodged in the depths of society, but can only be brought to the surface as the result of an active creation by the will.47

Naturalism and non-naturalism, enlightenment and romanticism, all these themes found their way into Marxism, particularly Hegelian Marxism, and indeed seem jumbled when they are not approached ethically. But it was this combination of elements that allowed 20th century Hegelian Marxists to usually in practice opt for a synthesis of naturalistic and non-naturalistic ethics, even though to later interpreters and indeed to Hegelian Marxists themselves it might seem that the autonomy of value was being completely denied. Labels often remain, however, long after concepts have expanded or been broken down. The idea of a Marxism without values has attained mythical status, but the myth of the severance of Hegelian Marxism from the world of values has been particularly unfortunate because it has tended to create a dichotomy between Hegelian Marxists and their most natural allies.

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Notes


8. Ibid., p. 304. This sharp contrast between inner and outer is denied both in HCC and in the more complete overcoming of fact/value found after 1926. Nevertheless, the claim that stress on the inner and on the outer can be brought together seems to anticipate the doctrine of HCC.

9. Ibid., p. 316. A comparison between this passage and the Gramsci of "The Revolution against Capital" is unavoidable. It also should be noted that Lukács refutes here the charge that Kantian ethics is formal by noting that its content is the free will (p. 306).


12. Löwy, Pour une sociologie, p. 167, sees the break between Lukács' November, 1918 article against Bolshevism and his January, 1918 article for Bolshevism as showing his rapid move against Kantianism. However, he also indicates that that very move to Bolshevism was ethical.

13. Löwy, Pour une sociologie, p. 228, sees the political shift beginning in 1926, whereas an antileninist might have located it in 1924 with Lenin or even in the final, party essays of HCC. Lukács talks of his recognition, after 1924, of political stabilization. See his preface to HCC, p. xxviii. Löwy's evidence for the leftism of HCC is partially indirect. He notes that it comes out more clearly in an article on literature, "Nathan und Tasso", written at the same time as HCC which contrasts Goethe's reconciliation with Lessing's opposition to empirical reality. Löwy contrasts this defense of Lessing against Goethe with Lukács' Moscow literary criticism when Goethe is defended for the very same thing for which he was condemned earlier (Löwy, p. 201-202). The ethics and the politics may have not have kept pace here. It may be that the third ethical way of HCC is more consistent with what Feher calls the ethical democracy of the 30's, than it is with the Syndicalism or Leninism of 1920-24. See Ferenc Feher, "Lukács in Weimar", Telos 39 (Spring, 1978).

14. HCC, pp. 5-10. See Löwy's discussion in Pour une sociologie, pp. 203-204 and James Schmidt, "Lukács' Concept of Proletarian Bildung", Telos 24 (Summer, 1975).

15. Against Althusser we can say that not all of Lukács' holistic method is teleological; in part his holistic method delineates the power of society over the individual independent of the question of goals.

16. Lukács, HCC, p. 123.

17. Ibid., pp. 123-124.


22. Ibid., pp. 197, 198.

23. See Note 11.

24. HCC, p. 177.


27. HCC, p. 162. We should add that the definition of attributed consciousness in terms of the reified whole deduces what the class feels without using empirical methods such as questionnaires, whereas the definition of attributed consciousness in terms of the teleological whole involves deducting what the class could feel if it could realize its potential.

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31. *Ibid.*, p. 286. Lukács also notes that it was not at Berne that Hegel criticized stress on inner experience. For there Hegel simple started with stress on the collective. It was only in Frankfurt with the *Spirit of Christianity*, that Hegel began to examine the inner moral experience more fully and in the process to criticize Kant's overemphasis on it (pp. 6, 7, 147).
40. Lucien Goldmann, *The Hidden God*.
41. The idea of romanticism as revolt is of course only one possible characterization of romanticism and is inevitably one-sided. Thus if, following Lukács in *The Young Hegel*, romanticism were characterized as individualism, and conservatism (p. 163 and throughout the book), then one is not likely to include Marxism within romanticism, at least not on the basis that both are traditions of revolt. Here the extreme conservatives are likely to help us. Did Irving Babbitt denounce romanticism because of its individualism and conservatism? Did Demaistre and Debonald? Rather they denounced it because is stressed that values were created rather than discovered, a position which can but does not have to lead away from conservatism. Leo Strauss' work is anti-romantic because he opposed the attempt to collectively recreate norms which, for him with the growth of Machiavellism and Hobbsism, could only be captured in an individualistic way. See Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).
42. See the Introduction to my *Economy and Self, Philosophy and Economics from the Mercantilists to Marx* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 1979).
43. See Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). For a discussion of Lukács' relation to romanticism see Paul Breines, "Marxism, Romanticism and the Case of Georg Lukács", *Studies in Romanticism*, vol. 16, 4 (Fall, 1977). Breines has also suggested a connection between recent work on Lukács and English historians such as E. P. Thompson. Michael Ferber has discussed the issue of Marxism and romanticism recently in a review of books by Terry Eagleton and Raymond Williams in *Socialist Review* 46 (July-August, 1979). For relevant accounts of English and French romanticism, respectively, in poetry and painting, see Walter Jackson Bate, *From Classic to Romantic* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961) and Frederick 137
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47. I believe that today a new such third way is being developed in, for example, Habermas’ attempt to link ethics and historical materialism and Gyorgy Markus’ linking of ethics and political economy. See Jürgen Habermas, Communication and the Evolution of Society (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979); Gyorgy Markus, "Die Welt Menschlicher Objecte. Zum Problem der Konstitution in Marxismus".
ELEMENTS OF A RADICAL THEORY OF PUBLIC LIFE:
FROM TÖNNIES TO HABERMAS AND BEYOND II

John Keane

IX.

The Hypothetical, Abstract Subject

This discussion of the political implications of Habermas' theory of universal pragmatics has so far proposed that it is weakened by two conceptual problems: first, its reliance upon an inappropriate analogy between psychoanalytic therapy and public-political action; and, secondly, the incompatibility between the premises of the theory of universal pragmatics and the Marxian theses on ideology. These difficulties, which Habermas himself has sensed, are threatening enough to the political implications of his project, the more so considering that they have in the meantime been reinforced and deepened by two additional problems.

Under pressure from the difficulties analyzed above, first, the theory of universal pragmatics has come more and more to suspend consideration of the problem of deformed communication. Of course, Habermas would not deny the ubiquity of systematically distorted communication under late capitalist conditions. Neither is he unaware of the empirical importance of organised lying, open and concealed discord, and strategic action—the "grey areas", as he calls them, in actually existing patterns of communication. Finally he is not unaware of the fact that the ability to competently speak and act is in part the outcome of a stage-like, crisis-ridden and extraordinarily dangerous process of ontogenesis, a learning process marked by the interplay of cognitive, linguistic and sexual-motivational elements. Under the impact of the above-mentioned difficulties, nevertheless, the idea of a communicatively-competent public—whose possibility of realisation of the communication theory initially aimed to justify—is installed as a premise of its concern with the general and unavoidable presuppositions of communicative action. Communicative action which is guided (implicitly or explicitly) by the common conviction that the various claims to validity are being honoured is analyzed as if it were the fundamental form of communicative and strategic action. The universal pragmatics comes

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to theoretically privilege "consensual action", communication in which speaking actors already co-operate on the mutually-acknowledged presupposition that their interactions are in accordance with the four validity claims. Habermas' explication of the logic of communicative action thereby presumes the existence of competently speaking and acting subjects who are (a) already in explicit agreement about the necessity to co-operatively reach mutual understanding; (b) already capable of distinguishing between the performative (i.e., illocutionary) and propositional aspects of their utterances; and who (c) already share a tradition and, therefore, a common "definition" of their situation. It is true that Habermas regularly denies that this presumption reinstates the Kantian concept of the hypothetical, transcendental subject—a subject which is removed from all experience and which, upon that basis, accomplishes certain synthses through its transcendental knowledge of concepts of objects in general. This denial is less than convincing. Contrary to its claims to overcome the classical separation of transcendental-formal and empirical analysis, the research programme of the universal pragmatics evidently reasserts a misleading dualism: that between the a priori knowledge of hypothetically competent public speakers and, on the other hand, the a posteriori knowledge which could only be generated through inquiries into actually existing speech and action, inquiries which would ask how the operations of the basic institutions of late capitalist society interface with, or promote, autonomous speech and action. As a direct consequence of this dualism, hypothetically competent speaking and acting subjects are made to serve as a "postulate" (in Kant's sense) of the critical theory of universal pragmatics. A revised version of Kant's transcendental subject reappears in a new, though admittedly less individualistic guise. The competent subjects who are the focus of Habermas' communication theory are merely hypothetical subjects. Actually existing communication is analyzed as if its participants were already communicatively competent. The objection (of Dewey and others) that communicative competence and autonomous public life are not yet, is scotched; autonomous public life appears no longer to be conditional upon the self-organisation and agitation of marginalised political forces, upon their will to break existing forms of power, privilege and opinion-formation.

This difficulty, which arguably restricts the political potential of the theory of universal pragmatics, is deepened, secondly, by the fact that Habermas' hypothetically competent subjects are devoid of many empirical and historical qualities. Theoretically speaking, these subjects are highly artificial beings. The theory of universal pragmatics brackets—or simply fails to consider—a number of properties of public-political experience. With the aim of helping to resuscitate the political implications of Habermas' work, the remaining sections of this essay will briefly sketch and analyse several of these dimensions. No claims are made for the exhaustiveness of the following discussion. It is argued only that each of these properties of public-political action must be seen as "elements" having a rightful place in a radical theory of public life. The elements discussed here are four in number, and include: the "embodied" character of communicative action; rhetoric; the aesthetic dimensions of communication; and, finally, the purposive-rational aspects of "consensual" forms of action.
Body Politics and Public Life

In the first place, it is evident that Habermas' communicatively competent subjects suffer from a definite analytic disembodiment. His account of communicative action misleadingly presumes that speaking actors are capable of raising themselves above and beyond their bodies. Bodily expressions and nonverbal actions are thought to play the role of silent, passive spectators in consensual action renewable through discussion oriented to reaching mutual agreement. It is forgotten that the capacity for genuine storytelling and convincing argumentation depends equally upon the expressive language of gestures. Public communication indeed always draws upon speaking actors' capacity to co-ordinate and interchange their speech-acts and bodily gestures. Within autonomous public spheres, this capacity is often developed to a very high degree. Communication is strikingly and sensuously "embodied". Through a kind of metacommunication, eyes, arms, noses, shoulders and fingers effectively serve as mutually-activating signaling stations, which in turn supplement or contradict their associated utterances in a highly evocative and meaningful manner.12 It is true that the universal pragmatics' failure to consider the bodily dimensions of communicative action is occasionally acknowledged by Habermas. What is not admitted, however, is that this obfuscation is an effect of the universal pragmatics' dependence upon the theory of speech acts, notably as it has been formulated by Austin, Searle and Wunderlich. In its present formulations, speech act theory suppresses questions concerning the language of gesture. It does this by virtue of its almost exclusive focus upon the performative or illocutionary aspects of speech, that is, upon speech acts such as promising, which do something in saying something to others. Under the influence of such formulations, Habermas' more recent writings suppress his earlier discussion of the bodily aspects of communicative action. Recognition of the embodiment of communication was evident, for example, in his early criticism of Dilthey's unsuccessful attempts to distinguish the logics of the natural and cultural sciences. While objecting to Dilthey's "monadological view of hermeneutics",124 Habermas nevertheless concurred with his description of two primary, and normally interwoven forms of communicative action. These forms were said to include, first, "immediate lived experience" (Erlebnis) oriented by norms and "practical" knowledge and, secondly, non-verbal, bodily action experiential expression such as laughter or anger—which signifies unstated or otherwise unstatable intentions which are more or less meaningful to their authors and addressees.125 Both forms of language-mediated activity, Habermas insisted, are marked by their "motivated", self-externalising capacities. The intercourse of everyday cultural life is therefore chronically dependent upon actors' learned abilities to make both their "immediate lived experience" and their bodily or "experiential" actions understandable to themselves and
others. In the case of relatively non-pathological communication at least, this intelligibility is enhanced by the fact that bodily actions are translatable into utterances, and utterances into bodily actions. Invoking the authority of the later Wittgenstein, Habermas argued that the language games of daily life cannot be analysed as if they obeyed the formally rigorous rules of a syntax or grammar. It is not only that intentional and gestural actions and utterances are mutually irreducible "elements" of all communicative action, that speech, for example, cannot be understood as a mere "reflection" of the life world of institutionalised action and expression. The more decisive point is that within all communicative action, gestures, actions and utterances mutually interpret each other. Communication between speaking and acting subjects ordinarily moves, as it were, between the boundaries of monologue and the delicate silence of mime. This fact lends communicative action a self-reflexive quality. Speakers are able to incorporate within their utterances allusions to non-verbal life expressions, through which their speech can in turn be interpreted by others as meaningful. The language of gestures and actions can interpret utterances, Habermas correctly remarked, at the same time that speakers can "talk about actions and describe them. We can name expressions and even make language itself the medium of experiential expression, whether phonetically, by exploiting the expressiveness of intonation, or stylistically, by representing in language itself the relation of the subject to its linguistic objectivations."

From the point of view of a theory of autonomous public life, it is regrettable that this early concern with the dialectic of body, utterance and action has largely receded from the horizons of Habermas' more recent accounts of communicative action. As has been suggested above, the universal pragmatics gives itself over to a numbed or disembodied account of the free and systematic communication of autonomous public life. There is a converse to this point, namely that the theory of universal pragmatics potentially misses the emancipatory potential of several social movements which have made the body, its symbolic representation and implication within late capitalist relations of power a theme of political action. Here mention can be made of (male) gay attempts at subverting patriarchal homophobia through the celebration of the male body as a love object, and feminist movements' concern with women's bodies as objects of patriarchal socialisation, adornment, surveillance and rape. These "body-political" movements can be interpreted as important attempts to reverse the contemporary bureaucratic administration and interrogation of the body. During the course of the modern civilising process, as Doerner and others have proposed, the bodies of the "unreasonable" ceased to be punished "in public" in the name of the Sovereign, as continued to be the case prior to the nineteenth century. This apparently "humane" reversal was achieved only insofar as bodies have come to be "policing" by networks of social and political institutions guided by expert professional knowledge. In the phase of late capitalism life itself has come to be mobilised and administered by bureaucratic-professional means. The powers that be even pride themselves on their ability to put this life in order, that is, to normalise, sustain and multiply it by means of archipelagos of "carceral" institu-
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tions. These archipelagos consist of prisons, factories, offices, asylums, schools and hospitals—each tending to resemble prisons in their mode of operation.

Whatever the plausibility of this thesis, concerning the normalising society, its implications are of fundamental importance to a theory of autonomous public life. In the classical past, it might be said, the species was conceived (by Aristotle, for example) as living beings endowed with the capacity to lead a political existence. The populations of late capitalist societies, by contrast, can be viewed as beings whose administered politics increasingly place their existence as living, embodied beings into question. The “progressive” effect of this interrogation and administration of bodies no doubt consists in its erosion of old assumptions about the body as a natural force external to influences of power and symbolically-mediated communication. This administration process nevertheless also calls into question populations’ capacities to freely and publicly exercise their powers of labour, speech and bodily action. Autonomous public life is jeopardised by the fact that bodies tend to fall—though unevenly and certainly not without opposition—under the watchful eye of normalising bureaucratic control mechanisms. A radical theory of public life needs to render problematic this normalisation of daily life through the policing of bodies. Habermas’ disembodied account of communicative action unfortunately leads away from this task.

XI.

The Problem of Rational Speech: Rhetoric

The restricted political potential of the theory of universal pragmatics is a consequence not only of its disembodied account of communication. The abstract-formalism of this account is also reinforced by Habermas’ strong tendency to presume that communicatively competent actors employ their utterances in no other mode than that of soberly reaching understanding through “rational speech”. Oriented to the achievement of a “rational consensus”, these competent actors seem to eschew rhetorical speech and, secondly, appreciate (and produce) neither film nor theatre nor literature nor music. These rhetorical and aesthetic forms of communication, Habermas seems to imply, together stand in a subordinate relationship with respect to consensual speech. The general significance of what he elsewhere calls “symbolic action”—non-propositional, symbolically expressive modes of speaking and acting—is seriously devalued. Symbolic action is understood as a derivative, parasitic form of consensual speech act; its presence within all forms of communication is thereby underestimated.

This point can be illustrated and defended with reference, firstly, to the rhetorical character of all communicative action. Habermas’ devaluation of questions pertaining to rhetoric, it seems clear, is an effect of his inadequate explication of the formal aspects of ordinary language communication. It is true
that he repeats Searle’s conviction that accounts of the formal dimensions of language are not incompatible with the analysis of communication as a rule-governed ensemble of speech acts. Habermas also sometimes hints that language has a reality sui generis, a reality which persistently makes its mark upon speech acts. His early work on language, for example, expressed this point through the metaphor of the spider’s web. Systems of linguistic representation, it was correctly argued, cannot be analysed as if they were the transparent and neutral product of resourceful, spider-like, monadic subjects. Language was rather viewed as “the web on whose threads the subjects hang and on which they first begin to make themselves into subjects.”

Habermas has more recently adopted the view that the formal-representational aspects of communication are always contingent upon their pragmatic employment in communication contexts. In his view, speaking actors learn the meaning of illocutionary speech acts through their role as participants within communicative action. They likewise learn the meaning of propositional sentences by adopting (again within an intersubjective context) the role of observers who report their experiences as propositions. Through this formula, Habermas questions the old Saussurean distinction between processes of speaking (parole) which are contingent upon language as structure (langue). Habermas openly denies the validity of this distinction. In the first place, communicative interaction cannot be interpreted as mere parole, as always subordinated to the compulsory structuring effects of systems of anonymous, collective codes. In Habermas’ view, subjects capable of speaking and acting can also deploy and transform the “formal-structural” properties of ordinary language in processes of communication. He insists, furthermore, that speech acts are not simply haphazard or contingent—as the parole-langue dualism presupposes. Their pragmatic aspects are rule-structured and are therefore not beyond the grasp of rigorous, formal analysis. Although performed by particular speakers concerned with particular states of affairs, acts of communication are nonetheless always structured immanently by validity claims. These validity rules are constitutive rules—they therefore exercise an “objective” influence over all speech acts.

This convincing censure of the langue-parole dualism nevertheless results in a considerable de-emphasis of the formal dimensions of language systems. The processes whereby meaningfully performed speech acts are systematically mediated or “preconstructed” by the formal relations between signifiers (images, sounds, utterances), processes which Saussure had sought to analyse through the category of langue, fall into obscurity. In the opinion of the theory of universal pragmatics, language is to be understood as a transparent and contingent system of signs. Language is a pellucid medium which facilitates speakers’ attempts to effect a coherent, usually demarcated relationship between the “external world” of nature, their “social worlds”, and their own particular “inner world”. Language, in this view, is a means through which “facts” can be represented, normatively-regulated communicative relations established, and the singularity of speakers’ subjectivity expressed. Language by no means displays a “productivity” of its own. Habermas follows Searle in assuming the primacy of the
principle of expressibility. Whatever can be meant, it is said, can be uttered. It is therefore concluded that rule-governed, explicit speech acts are the fundamental units of communication. For any and every speech act which a speaker wants to produce, a suitable performative or propositional expression can be made available and, in turn, uttered meaningfully. This not altogether unconvincing principle at the same time loses sight of the linguistic preconstruction of all subjective acts of communication. The crucial objection that the "objective form" of symbolic language always structures that which is "subjectively" spoken about is passed over in silence. The theory of universal pragmatics thus falls into a certain "subjectivism". It tends to analyse only the pragmatic aspects of communication. It thereby underemphasises what might be called the semantic productivity of any language of communicative action. This productivity (which is expressed in the commonplace distinction between what speakers mean and what they say) derives from those generative devices or "objective" rules which preside over processes of symbolic representation and, therefore, over both the performance of speech acts and their reception by audiences.

The rhetorical qualities of speech acts serve as a politically important illustration of this productivity. Contrary to Habermas' distinction between "symbolic action" and the "rational speech" of properly communicative action, rhetorical speech is a constitutive feature of all communicative action. Rhetoric is not restricted to expressive forms of speaking and acting, such as poetry or highly emotive forms of political oratory. With varying degrees of intensity, to be sure, all communication is marked by rhetorical characteristics which are generated by the play or tension within the chains of signs and utterances employed by speaking actors. No doubt, rhetoric is produced by speaking, sign-deploying actors, and only effects new meanings through the interpretive capacities of its addressees. Habermas correctly emphasises this point. The convincing "power" of rhetoric does not exist in itself, so to speak; a minimal hermeneutic must be exercised if rhetorical communication is to successfully effect meanings for speaking and acting subjects. The 'productivity' of rhetorical speech, its capacity of making the probable more attractive, nevertheless also derives from the "design" or representational form of this speech itself. The more classical accounts of rhetoric are rather misleading on this point. Contrary to Aristotle and others, rhetoric cannot be understood as "artificially stylised" or decorative speech which persuades (or repels) through its exaggerations and insincerities. Nor is the semantic productivity of rhetoric generated by the willful introduction into communication of substitute signifiers which serve to "adorn" that communication through the invocation of resemblances. Rhetoric, on the contrary, is genuinely productive of new meanings for its interpreting audiences. This semantic productivity is generated by processes of "metaphorical twist" (Beardsley), by the bringing together of two or more formerly unrelated signifiers into a new relationship of identity. The rhetorical quality of speech acts flows precisely from this play of equivalence and difference, synonymity and antonymity within its chains of uttered signifiers. The inventiveness of highly rhetorical speech acts is only a limit case of this play of identity and difference. Their capacity to
persuade is greatly enhanced by their juxtaposition of formerly incompatible signifiers, whose new resemblance not only appears credible but also produces novel, hitherto unrecognised meanings. The potential "impertinence" of juxtaposing two or more signifiers (e.g. "gay power" or "property is theft") is overcome, with the novel consequence that the routinised interpretations of normally functioning communication is reinforced or ruptured. The "semantic dissonance" within the chains of signification of this rhetoric is effectively resolved. The particular case of rhetoric discussed here serves to illustrate a point of more general interest to a radical theory of public life. Contrary to Habermas, it must be reiterated that the "formal" effects of language can never be expunged from communicative action. Certainly, as Habermas pointed out against Dilthey, language always serves as a key medium of public-political action. Language can indeed be described as the intersubjective ground upon which all speaking actors tread as they intentionally articulate themselves in words, bodily expressions and actions. Under conditions of autonomous public life, as Habermas also observes, this linguistic ground frequently comes to have a more distinct reality for its speaking and acting "authors". By virtue of its semantically productive or rhetorical qualities, however, this ground is better described as a drifting terrain. Even within autonomous spheres of "public, unrestricted discussion free from domination," speaking actors continue to move through chronically ambiguous and slippery linguistic terrains. The formal "density" of these terrains can never be reduced to zero, as Habermas' theoretical defence of "rational speech" implies. Democratic public life can never take the form of an ideal speech situation wherein competent intersubjective communication is liberated from the dangers of being overtaken by the unforeseen, and unhindered by the formal or "objective" structures of linguistic communication itself. Public actors can never self-consciously bind, gag and rationally control their language of interaction. They are never able, in short, to achieve fully a transparent, rational consensus purged of ambiguity.

XII.

The Problem of Rational Speech II: Aesthetics

The universal pragmatics' privileging of "rational speech" and the corresponding devaluation of "symbolic action" produces a third fetter upon its political potential, namely, its bracketing of questions concerning politics and the "aesthetic" dimension of communicative action. It is not true that Habermas entirely ignores or neglects such questions. In his more recent writings, he speaks occasionally of "aesthetic forms of expression." And especially in his reflections on Adorno and Benjamin's theses on "post-auratic" art [see essay two], he rightly observes that the administrative production of culture under late capital-
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ist conditions is continually marked with unintended consequences which may be rich in democratic potential. The bureaucratic manufacture and distribution of commercialised art also produces threatening artistic countercultures. Their quest for "meaningful" or novel aesthetic experiences oftentimes provokes open criticism of the culture industry and its implication within the late capitalist political economy.

Whether or not these countercultures can facilitate the growth of radical movements and autonomous public spheres remains a rather obscure theme in Habermas' writings. This obscurity concerning the political potential of "postauratic" art is not fortuitous, but is a consequence, rather, of the universal pragmatics' fetishism of rational, consensual speech. It can also be argued that this vagueness is an unforeseen consequence of the universal pragmatics'—admittedly justified—turn against Marcuse's "quantitative" model of repression and emancipation. Marcuse, it will be recalled, typically contrasts the vision of sensuous tranquillity with the aggressive efficiency of daily life under late capitalist conditions. In opposition to the performance principle of bureaucratic capitalism, Marcuse speaks of liberated human beings coming into their own through the expression of their passions.

He defends the possibility of democratic socialism with a "biological" foundation; an individuated, pacified existence, a world freed from surplus, unfree labour and dominated only by peaceful Eros, is anticipated. In support of this possibility of a new "rationality of gratification" in which reason and happiness merge, Marcuse insists that the poetic, erotic language of art has a privileged status. By defending (and preserving the memory of) desires which remain unfulfilled, the work of art flouts the immediacy of the existing reality principle. Both for its producers and its appreciative publics, art is the privileged medium of the sublimation of libidinal fantasies. Art is the formal expression of the imagination, of the psychic content of unconscious drives and wishes. It openly expresses the language of libidinal negations. It is the vehicle of The Great Refusal.

To be sure, Marcuse admits that much bourgeois art exercises an "affirmative", depoliticising function. For example, literature's positing of the freedom and beauty of a "soul" frequently facilitates its readers' surrender to the misery and enslavement of a bureaucratic existence. The potentially rebellious beauty of art tends to become the comforting narcotic of a vulgar daily life; the promesse de bonheur of art can only be experienced as an inner freedom. Marcuse nevertheless insists: neither great bourgeois art (such as that of Schiller or Goethe) nor certain tendencies within the avant-garde (e.g. surrealist art and literature of the two decades before World War II) can simply be indicted as apologies for established forms of existence. In spite of their ambivalent consequences, this kind of art remains a decisive moment in the struggle for the sensuous fulfilment of humanity and nature. The moment of truth of even so-called "bourgeois" art thus consists in its anticipation of a liberated future. The most important works of art and literature (Marcuse curiously ignores media such as film) promise a forthcoming era of instinctual gratification, whose possibility late capitalist society must either systematically suppress or "repressively desublimate". Col-
laborating with the subterranean longings and refusals of Eros, the aesthetic
dimension is secretly committed to the emancipation of sensibility, imagination
and anti-bureaucratic reason.

This defence of the aesthetic dimension, Habermas correctly surmises, is quite
compatible with Marcuse's concern to synthesise an "anthropological" perspec-
tive with Marxist-theoretical categories. His theory of art and liberation consist-
ently pre-supposes the existence of a species-instinctual "foundation" for peace-
ful solidarity among human beings. (This species-essence is specified by drawing
initially upon Heidegger's existential ontology and, later, upon Freudian meta-
psychology). Under late capitalist conditions, this foundation—an immanently
rebellious, unconscious nature—is hidden away, repressed or falsely sublimated.
The primary task of radical politics, according to Marcuse, must therefore be the
unfettering of sensuous nature. For this nature already strives for the pacification
of existence. Living antagonistically on the margins of the present system of
domination, and "older" than individual character structure and institutionalised
relations of power, this nature is the enemy of the present and the ally of
liberation. Habermas meets this provocative formulation with an equally bold
and politically relevant reply. Marcuse's ontological approach, he insists, con-
tains potentially authoritarian and anti-political implications. Certainly, these
are not intended by Marcuse. Especially within his last works, there is great
emphasis placed upon the importance of "political education" and "radical
enlightenment." Nevertheless, Marcuse's postulation of a "biological" founda-
tion which serves as the Archimedean point from which radical politics can take
its cue unwittingly leaves itself open to appropriation by self-appointed revolu-
tionary vanguards—whose claims to knowledge of this foundation could in turn
serve to justify action on behalf of others who are in the here and now evidently
less enlightened about their instinctual endowments. According to Habermas,
the doctrine of instincts shortcircuits the theoretical and political problem of
generating widespread public reflection upon existing patterns of distorted
communication. Marcuse's critical appropriation of Freud is burdened, at the
theoretical level, by a "chiliastic trust in a revitalising dynamic of instincts which
works through history, finally breaks with history and leaves it behind as what
then will appear as prehistory." This rather naive, chiliastic belief in a future
marked by great happiness, universal prosperity and harmonious self-
government derives from Marcuse's advocacy of a world governed by an Eros
that "naturally" seeks tranquility and delight divorced from all egoistic interest.
Habermas correctly insists that this formulation obscures the political insight
that the genuinely democratic determination of needs could only ever proceed
through public argumentation oriented to reaching consensus.

Habermas proceeds from this insistence to a more fundamental theoretical
point. Marcuse's presumption that libidinal energy is the avowed enemy of
existing relations of domination—his claim that "eros and power may well be
contraries"—forgets that such presumptions and even energy drives them-
selves are ab ovo formed within a communicative context. Within Marcuse's
theory of liberation (to paraphrase Wittgenstein) the problem of language and
communication goes on holiday. In the view of Habermas' universal pragmatics, Marcuse's metatheory of instincts therefore cannot consistently account for its own possibility. Such an account could only be generated discursively, that is, within a communicative, language-structured framework. This is a crucial point: pleasure and desire have no objective reality "in themselves". Desire and pleasure cannot be intuitively apprehended, quantified empirically (as Marcuse's references to "basic" and "surplus" repression imply) or somehow known in all their beautiful objectivity. The body and its drives assert themselves, perhaps, in setting limits, the ultimate of which is death. But these limits always and everywhere operate entirely through systems of communicative action. Habermas correctly withdraws his earlier claim against Gadamer: he insists that there is no knowable subterranean reality beyond the realm of communication and its systems of symbolic representation.

This critique of Marcuse's "naturalisation" of public-political reason is unexceptionable. From the point of view of a radical theory of public life, however, this critique does entail at least one serious unintended consequence. Simply, Marcuse's privileging of art as a medium of social and political criticism is displaced, and questions concerning the relationship between autonomous public life and art fall into abeyance. Artistic movements' power to subvert the normalising effects of daily life, their capacity to erotically express the vision of a political life of common involvements, is by implication declared null and void. A converse consequence is of equal seriousness: this bracketing of questions concerning the relationship between art and public life, it can be argued, also by implication draws our attention away from what can be called (following Walter Benjamin) the "aestheticisation" of politics under late capitalist conditions. Habermas' concentration upon consensual, rational communication, that is to say, seriously underestimates the "affirmative", depoliticising effects of the planned merger between "art" and late capitalist daily life.

It is precisely this merger of art and life which prompts the need to think simultaneously about questions of emancipatory art and autonomous public spheres. This need was of course first recognised by Benjamin. Echoing Tönnies' and Dewey's concern with the growth of state and corporate production of public opinion, Benjamin proposed that the defeat of pacifism and its revolutionary potential had been considerably aided by the state's strategies of manufacturing and deploying supplies of glory and militaristic idealism. It was Benjamin's thesis that post-World War I attempts to forget the lost war and its total "storms of steel" continued this celebration, even though no real enemy existed. The novelty of this celebration lay in its reliance upon the administrative harnessing of the "symbolic depths" of existence itself. This "post-war war effort" (Nachkrieg) by no means sustained itself upon the old-fashioned and withering phrases of rational-calculating militarism. In place of old-fashioned militarism, the imperialist forces of emergent Nazism now sought the administrative production and celebration of a more threatening heroism, one which claimed to express the vital inner impulses of solitary, responsible individuals. In Benjamin's view, this heroism could only serve to aesthetically legitimise the monstrous senselessness
of battles to come. Unless checked by revolution, strategies of war could permanently sustain themselves upon allegations about the colossal energies of life. War could be represented as sport, as "record-setting", as synonymous with taking a stance. German fascism, as Benjamin and others later stressed, did indeed develop this authoritarian merger of art and bureaucratic politics to the point of near technical perfection. Fascist "public life" became the site of official orchestrations of "heroic festivity" (Thomas Mann). In accordance with the Führer-principle, celebrations, artificially-created customs and folklore, staged ceremonies and party conventions formed a grandiosely erected stage—on the foundations of which the practice of systematic terror unfolded. Political life became a permanent and all-embracing work of art. Such administrative efforts to aestheticise political life continue right through to the present day. Certainly, the utilised means and the outcomes themselves are rather different. Under late capitalist conditions, nevertheless, it still cannot be admitted officially that politics has so few givens, so many dangerous possibilities and so few perfect situations, that no single leader or group of leaders has knowledge, skill and prudence sufficient for all situations. The heads of the body politic therefore continue to present themselves to their "publics" as characters charged with remedying the complexities and imperatives of political decision making. Relying upon new technologies of reproduction and drawing upon the pioneering efforts of those who manufacture the "beautiful illusions" of capitalist production and consumption, political authority typically casts itself as spotlighted performers. Mounting an elaborately-prepared stage, this authority seeks to transform politics into showbusiness, the art of seducing a public audience of spectators supposedly dispossessed of their critical faculties and collective power to speak and act. The dramatis personae appear in many and varied costumes. Their make-up is always expertly applied. They are at all times surrounded by a cast of thousands. Their lines are carefully rehearsed to elicit maximum audience approval (with perhaps an encore). The "populist" performers are reputed to lead down to earth, simple lives, or are known publicly to associate privately with hip media figures. Their more conservative counterparts present themselves as decent family men, or as stern nurses concerned only for the long-term health of their patients. One or two are even lucky enough to hail directly from Hollywood.

These examples of the aestheticisation of political life make it clear that nowadays the relationship between art and daily life is fundamentally a matter of politics. By contrast with earlier phases of the modern, bourgeois world, late capitalist systems integrate art and bureaucratic relations of power to an unprecedented degree. This development means that a theory of autonomous public life cannot simply bracket or ignore the importance of aesthetic modes of communication, as Habermas' universal pragmatics proposes. Nor can this theory sustain itself upon the old-fashioned demand to integrate or reunite art with everyday life. Forgetting that all late capitalist systems already effect this normalising integration, this demand may in fact unwittingly serve the existing conditions of depoliticisation. Accordingly, a theory of autonomous public life must acknowledge that "political art" cannot be conceived as the mere underling
of struggles for public life. Under late capitalist conditions, this theory must recognise that emancipatory art has been forced into more complex and subtle strategies. The indispensable functions of this art have evidently become many-sided, and especially include the "denaturalisation" of bureaucratic administration, the calling into question of the normalising art with which this administration collaborates and, even, finally, the criticism of autonomous public movements themselves.

XIII

Public Life as Consensual Communication?

It can be observed, finally, that Habermas' almost exclusive concern with consensual forms of communication also reinforces the abstract-formal character of the theory of universal pragmatics. This theoretical privileging of consensual action produces a deep silence about the possible relations, in public-political life at least, between consensual action and forms of purposive-rational action (such as civil disobedience) which are oriented to the successful attainment of political goals through the skilful organisation of appropriate means. This silence seems to be not entirely fortuitous. It evidently issues from three sources: the unsuccessful analogy Habermas attempted to draw between the psychoanalytic therapy situation and public speaking and acting; the critical theory's continuing dependence [discussed in essay three] upon the fundamental distinction between the realms of necessity (work as purposive-rational action) and potential freedom (communication as unconstrained mutual recognition); and, finally, the strong tendency within recent versions of the theory of universal pragmatics to assume—for the purposes of analysis—that controversy, conflict and purposive-rational action must be granted an ancillary status, that the latter forms of activity can in general be analysed as derivative of speech acts governed by a mutual will to reach consensus.149

As a consequence of these presumptions, the theory of universal pragmatics gives off the impression—certainly not directly intended by Habermas—that purposive-rational action is best represented as "pre-political". To be sure, this impression operates for the most part at the analytic level. In his political writings, Habermas is acutely aware of the ubiquity of power struggles and the difficulties of institutionally securing action oriented to reaching mutual agreement. Under pressure from these three presumptions, however, the concept of "public, unrestricted discussion, free from domination" tends to become identical with consensual interaction. By virtue of its assumptions and silences, the universal pragmatics implicitly revives a dualism familiar from the time of Greek antiquity: that which contrasts the peace, deliberation and persuasion of the polis...
with the extra-public realm, wherein "the strong did what they could, and the weak suffered what they must" (Thucydides). Unrestricted public discussion and action, it is inferred, does not properly extend beyond the boundaries of unbroken, intersubjective communication. This misleading inference carries two further implications, which are sometimes explicitly developed in Habermas' writings: first, that spheres of life properly guided by purposive-rational action (i.e. work) are to be permanently depoliticised [a strong prejudice of Habermas' early works, as argued in section five] and, conversely, that purposive-rational action has little rightful place within autonomous public spheres. To live a genuinely public life, according to this latter inference, consists in deciding everything exclusively through good-natured argument and deliberation oriented to reaching understanding. Not the skill and cunning of strategic and instrumental action, but words and persuasion is the distinguishing mark of public life.

Within his writings on ego development Habermas openly embraces this second inference. Amending Kohlberg's theory of the stages of moral consciousness, he proposes that at the level of a universal ethics of speech (Sprachethik)—a level of "complete reciprocity"—competently speaking actors would realise "a good and just life". Having reached this highest stage of ego development, they could distinguish between heteronomy and autonomy, differentiate and choose between particular and general ethical principles and interpretations of needs and, in general, respect the dignity of others as "individuated persons"—all through consensual practical discourse. From the standpoint of a radical theory of public life, this implied eschatology of non-violent, consensual forms of communication is most inadequate. This is because it brackets the insight that public-political action, to employ Apel's term, must also be centrally concerned with dialectic-strategic rationality. Public-political action is properly concerned with the strategies of reaching morally virtuous ends through processes of deliberation and action. In order to speak and act prudently, to engage in "good action", public beings must concern themselves with both means and ends. Habermas is no doubt aware of this point: but his failure to analyze this old (Aristotelean) insight deepens the abstractness of his account of communication, and thereby leaves untreated two crucial political problems.

In the first place, it cannot be presumed that the coordinated "instrumentalisation" of the opponents of genuine public life—their constitution as "objects" to be controlled—is always and everywhere inadmissible. As has already been proposed above (section seven), the defence of autonomous public life cannot consistently cling to the illusion that the resistance of ruling groups to radical social movements can be overcome through speech acts oriented to reaching understanding. Especially in the face of existing violations of public life (by military-political elites who threaten total annihilation through war, for instance), this presumption leaves itself open to the charge of naiveté. The emancipatory potential of the principle of modest reformism and restrained gradualism, it must be reaffirmed, cannot be assumed to apply everywhere and at all times. Post-modern public life will not necessarily be the cumulative result of...
progressive evolution, of the peaceful "determinate negation" of late capitalist society and its institutionalised depoliticisation. The historical appearance of democratic, public life cannot be represented as a largely consensual process. The struggle for autonomous public life, as many of its defenders already understand, is synonymous with the desire for a genuinely different political order; this struggle is in certain respects a demand for a radical (as distinct from a modestly "determinate") negation of the present. Oppressed groups' choice to employ forms of instrumental and strategic action from below against their oppressors is bound up with this concern to "jump out" of the present stream of the historical continuum. These groups must no doubt acknowledge the truth of the Weberian insight that those who rely upon force and other means of purposive-rational action necessarily contract with diabolical powers. They must also recognise the validity of Weber's supplementary maxim: "in numerous instances the attainment of 'good' ends is bound to the fact that one must be willing to pay the price of using morally dubious means or at least dangerous ones—and facing the possibility or even the probability of evil ramifications." From the vantage point of theoretical defences of autonomous public life, it is indeed not always true that "evil" follows only from "evil" and "good" only from "good". Under certain conditions, theoretically-informed instrumental and strategic action may be vindicable, providing it prudently prepares the way for the realisation of democratic forms of life committed to the overcoming of heteronomy.

This point highlights a second problem left untreated by the theory of universal pragmatics. Habermas' failure to analyse the relationship between purposive-rational action and consensual public life, it can be argued, suppresses the point that hybrid forms of purposive-rational action—especially political disobedience—are a necessary condition of autonomous public life. Under post-modern conditions, no doubt, the defenders of public life would seek to maximise friendly argumentation. This public life would presuppose, on a vastly expanded scale, that speaking and acting subjects collectively recognise political life as a process of construction of mutual agreements and self-imposed obligations. In respect of this mutuality, as Hannah Arendt emphasises, public life enhances the sheer joy of politicking. Public life can be a community-enhancing process, whose participants can experience a certain joie de vivre (and, of course, its opposite: tragedy). Mirth is not an embarrassing, diversionary path leading away from the royal road of rational politics. To act politically is not to adopt the posture of a Schwindelfrei. Political beings are not those whose sober maturity and communicative competence frees them from all spontaneity, eroticism and giddiness. Political action within autonomous public spheres can neither be described as a joyless sacrifice for higher "private" ends, nor as a solemn obligation due from every individual.

Thriving upon the playfulness of argumentation, public life deepens the joys (and disappointments) of persuading and being persuaded, of acting together through words and deeds. Under post-modern conditions, in sum, the freedom of publics, who would be from all walks of life, would consist in their self-gratifying determination to speak and act, to listen and be heard. Assured of their capacity
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to share in public business and therefore to change or preserve the world through their own efforts, publics would develop a taste for this freedom, and could not be subjectively "happy" without it.

It is nevertheless true that autonomous public life could never be identical with joyful speech and action oriented to reaching mutual understanding. As Habermas' consensus theory of truth itself implies, the democratic formation and administration of public policy presupposes that agreements among publics can always legitimately be reinterpreted, called into question or unconditionally revoked. In respect of this negotiability condition, autonomous public life so to speak prepares itself against the semantic ambiguity (section X) and unintended consequences chronically associated with existing agreements. These agreements must always be understood as open-ended, as re-negotiable.

In cases of unsuccessful re-negotiation or simple disagreement, minorities might well temporarily agree to consent to majoritarian arguments. Yet minorities might also justly insist that their refusal to consent is a condition of the maintenance of the "good government" of public life itself. Especially under pressure from resistant and dogmatic majorities, their disobedient action might provide a legitimate challenge to long-standing agreements and institutions now deemed obsolete or restrictive upon public life. Such dissident action constitutes a mode of collective action which defied the distinction between consensual and purposive-rational forms of action. Issuing from a group's prior and mutual agreement about the need to change, restore or preserve the status quo, non-violent direct action can be seen as a form of voluntary association which is in turn directed instrumentally against the action of others. This purposive-rational moment of disobedience—participants' switching to strategic action or their attempt to totally break off communication with others—cannot be deemed marginal within a theory of public life. Contrary to much contemporary liberal-democratic discourse, disobedience can neither be analysed as an unthreatening symbolic act addressed merely to the "sense of justice" (Rawls) of others, nor as a militant, obstructive action which, by virtue of its threats to the polity must always be punished.

The theory and practice of disobedience, it must be stressed, remains crucial to any defence of public life. This is not merely or even primarily because skillfully organised campaigns of obstruction are capable of effectively securing changes in public policy. There is a more important, counterfactually-deduced reason. A political life structured through the principle of negotiated consent implies disobedience. The "right to disobey" constitutes a necessary condition of any voluntary political association. Any deviation from this maxim (and, indeed, any "disobedience" in favour of its subversion) would otherwise generate the possibility of authoritarian restrictions upon public discussion and association. Dissidence would be relegated to a merely hypothetical possibility, or to the status of a virtual prerogative, to be exercised by particular interests only on the condition that their disobedient actions would result naturally and properly in their punishment.
To the aforegoing discussion of several quandaries and silences within the theory of universal pragmatics can be added, finally, a few concluding remarks on its increasingly abstract-formal character. This abstract-formalism, which seriously thwarts the political potential of the theory is sensed by a growing number of commentators. These critics have nevertheless usually failed to grasp that this abstract-formalism does not simply issue from Habermas' "insufficient" treatment of "concrete" political questions. As this essay has attempted to show in some detail, rather, the political impotence of the theory of universal pragmatics is a necessary effect of difficulties internal to its priorities and strategies of argumentation—its initially misleading comparison of therapy and political enlightenment; its inability to explicate a theory of distorted communication; and its conceptual privileging of abstractly-conceived, "consensual action".

Consequent upon these difficulties, or so it can be argued, the theory of universal pragmatics has been compelled to rely increasingly upon the strategy of "rational reconstruction". Habermas explains that this strategy is neither identical with formal logic analysis nor empirical-analytic observation of the behaviour of law-like, "natural" events. By virtue of its self-reference to the domain of communication, rational reconstruction is a species of understanding [cf. Habermas' fundamental distinction between observation and understanding, outlined in section three]. To "rationally reconstruct" communicative action is to systematically analyse and explicate its underlying presuppositions. This involves defending the distinction between "deep" and "surface" structures of communication. Guided by this distinction, reconstructive understanding seeks to penetrate the surface phenomena of communicative activity. It seeks to discover the rules that actually determine the production of these surface communicative phenomena. It therefore directs its enquiries toward the intuitive, patterned competencies of speaking and acting subjects. It seeks to mimitically describe and then explicate the deeper meaning and implications of the fact that speaking actors are always embedded within a rule-governed universe of symbolically-mediated communications.

Of course, as this essay has proposed, a central difficulty within such reconstructive interrogation is that it tends to presume that actually existing forms of communication are synonymous with abstractly-conceived, consensual action! It misleadingly supposes that it can articulate, in the form of "objective and explicit knowledge", that which hypothetically competent subjects are assumed to already intuitively know how to do. As Apel has also pointed out, Habermas' version of communication theory seriously overlooks the possibility of subjects' refusal or inability to enter into action oriented to reaching understanding. In
view of this oversight, it is not surprising that the communication theory's quest for knowledge of the "rule consciousness of competent speakers" assumes the position of a will-o'-the-wisp. It holds fast to the unconvincing belief that it can gradually and successively discover what it is about by first developing exact arguments only with reference to hypothetical, "clear cases" of communicative action which are assumed to be typical of everyday life under late capitalist conditions. Misleadingly suspending consideration of all actually existing deviations from its "clear case" principles, it mistakenly believes these can later be cumulatively extended to so-called "borderline cases".

Under the strain of this illusory reconstructivism, the political potential of the theory of universal pragmatics is seriously eroded. Habermas' long-standing insistence that the ultimate goal of critical theory is the political enlightenment of its addressees—the analysis and clarification of their needs and the positions they occupy within the contradictory systems of late capitalism—begins to languish. The "advocacy" role of his project is crippled. This is true in two interrelated senses. In the first place, the theories of universal pragmatics and late capitalism become disconnected from each other. This separation results in a suppression of Tönnies' and Dewey's earlier thesis that a critique of public life must be centrally concerned with the tendency for contemporary public life and opinion to be manufactured by organised powers bent on promoting their own particular interests. This disconnection of the theories of universal pragmatics and late capitalism also has the consequence of bracketing some earlier suggestive theses [analyzed in section two] concerning the political potential of the administrative and cultural contradiction of late capitalist systems. Caught up in its reconstructivism, the theory of universal pragmatics places such theses to one side. Questions about the extent to which the crisis tendencies of late capitalism serve as a precondition of the emergence of alternative public spheres fall into obscurity.

There is a second sense in which the reliance on rational reconstruction undermines Habermas' earlier advocacy of free and systematic communication. The theory of universal pragmatics, to speak plainly, tends more and more to express itself over the heads of its potential adherents. Problems pertinent to the struggle for autonomous public life are subjected to a request: exeunt omne. The theory of universal pragmatics offers few insights into questions of practical struggle. Its account of the concept of communicative competence is vague and ungrounded. There is little consideration of concrete strategies which might facilitate a synthesis of existing opposition movements' sensed needs with new forms of public institutions. There is not even a clear indication of the groups to which the critical theory of communication is addressed.

All late capitalist societies, it is true, are currently marked by the absence of powerful, unified and highly articulate opposition movements. These social formations nevertheless evidence, indeed generate, an array of important autonomous movements. In its present reconstructivist form, Habermas' theory of universal pragmatics seems far removed from these day to day concerns. This estrangement is only exacerbated by this theory's more recent penchant for
analysing three distinct “levels” of the relationship between theory and practice. These levels are said to include: first, researchers’ elaboration of ideology-critical truth claims through discursive argumentation guided by the strategy of “rational reconstruction”; second, efforts at extending the “boundaries” of this argumentation, so as to include additional oppositional groups; and, third, attempts to deploy “in practice” or to “institutionalise” such discourse through prudent political struggle. This typology no doubt has a certain analytic plausibility and political value. Under the weight of the critical theory’s reconstructivism and abstract-formal concerns, however, its distinctions also obscure—to speak in old-fashioned terms—the possible mediations between theory and practice. As a consequence, Habermas’ political prescriptions frequently rely on unhelpful truisms. “The enlightenment which produces radical understanding”, Habermas typically observes, “is always political.” Under pressure from the critical theory’s several internal difficulties, such prescriptions assume the status of a moralising imperative. Their efforts to defend the principle of discussion, free from domination as possible and desirable are considerably weakened.

It is true that the argumentation of the universal pragmatics turns our attention away from factually imposed, pseudo-consensuses to the possibility of genuine political agreements. It correctly emphasises that the authenticity of political agreements and compromises reached without violence depends upon both the competency of those who decide and the conditions under which their agreements and compromises are reached. The theory of universal pragmatics therefore heightens our awareness of the patterns of bureaucratic exploitation and pseudo-communication within the contemporary situation. It reminds us also that politics is not necessarily synonymous with struggles between partial and conflicting interests oriented only by the logic of ruthlessness and profit, partisanship and the lust for dominion. Like the earlier arguments of Tönnies and Dewey, it strengthens hopes for a qualitatively different and better political order. Negatively speaking, it prompts further reflection upon the possibility of challenging heteronomous forms of power preserved through monopolies of the means of assertion, disputation and persuasion; more positively, it anticipates pluralistic and self-interrogating forms of life, through whose free and systematic communication speaking and acting subjects could enter into mutually binding commitments. Above all, its formulations serve to clarify and focus a range of difficult distinctions and problems pertaining to public life. The communication theory rightly emphasises, for example, that discussions of autonomous public life must seek to develop a theory of those mechanisms of “pseudo-communication” which serve to induce the servile dependency of speaking actors upon each other.

Granted these achievements, it is nonetheless evident that the excessively abstract-formal claims of the universal pragmatics are couched in the language of tragedy: they are beyond the reach of ordinary actors within the present. It is implied that these participants must act as if the conditions of autonomous public life had already been established. Those who struggle for public life seem no
longer to be engaged in discretionary action, in processes of self-invention through discussion, risk-taking and action within particular power situations. What is more, these actors are supposed to speak and interact in highly artificial ways: it is inferred that autonomous public spheres are properly devoid of body politics, art, rhetoric, festivity, and disobedience. In short, a range of substantive theoretical and political questions—from ideology and disobedience to those concerning art and rhetoric—remain undiscussed. It is to these kinds of central political questions that future discussions of the theory of public life must and will no doubt attend.

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Notes

117. CES, p. 3.


119. According to Habermas’ more recent (and somewhat hyper-analytic) formulations (cf. CES, pp. 209-210, n.2), consensual action, in which interacting speakers explicitly and agreeably acknowledge the structuring of their communications by the four validity claims, is only one form of social action, which also includes (a) communicative action which is explicitly oriented to reaching understanding (verständigungsorientierten Handelns); (b) discourse, in which such agreement is temporarily suspended, even though participants retain their co-operative disposition toward each other; (c) strategic action, in which actors openly and explicitly adopt an unco-operative, instrumental orientation towards others; (d) manipulative action, through which the manipulators deliberately deceive others about their apparently communicative conduct; and (e) systematically distorted communication, in which participants typically deceive each other about their interactions.

120. Ibid., pp. 4, 35-41, and 208, note 1.

121. Ibid., pp. 24-5.

122. Of great relevance here is Walter Benjamin’s allegation about the threatened art of embodied storytelling in “The Storyteller”, Illuminations (London, 1973), p. 108, and his references (with Asja Lacis) to the “fastidiously specialized eroticism” of the Neapolitans, in “Naples”,

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124. KHI, p. 146, and, more generally, chs. 7-8.

125. Ibid., pp. 163ff. Note that Dilthey (following Nietzsche and Bergson) speaks of "experience" as "lived experience". This meaning is not identical with the empiricist sense of experience as Erfahrung.

126. KHI, p. 168; cf. also his discussions of Wittgenstein in ZL, pp. 220ff., and in PPP, pp. 141-6.


129. CES, p. 41.


132. Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics (New York, 1966). According to Saussure, particular speakers produce utterances or messages (parole), but only inasmuch as they are already embedded within a primordial linguistic code or set of codes (language). Especially when extended to entities larger than the sentence, this dualism had the effect (among others) of bracketing speech act events in favour of a concern with synchronically co-ordinated systems of linguistic structures. By no means conceived as coterminous with "forms of life" (Wittgenstein), language is analysed as if it were a self-sufficient ensemble of inner relationships between signs.


139. Eros and Civilisation, op. cit., p. 205.
140. "Preface", Reason and Revolution (Boston, 1960), p. x. This thesis first appears in his earliest work (on novels whose favoured protagonists are rebellious artists), Der Deutsche Künstlerroman (1922), in Schriften 1 (Frankfurt am Main, 1978). It is repeated in many others, including Eros and Civilisation, op. cit.; Counterrevolution and Revolt (Boston, 1972), ch. 3; and The Aesthetic Dimension (Boston, 1978). In these works, Marcuse radicalises the thesis presented by Freud in "Formulations Regarding the Two Principles in Mental Functioning" [1911], in A General Selection from the Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. J. Rickman (Garden City, 1957), pp. 38-45. According to Freud, there exists a biological and psychological tie between the repressed instinctual energies, the pleasure principle (which, in the face of the dominant reality principle, continues to rule the repressed instincts), phantasy (the wish for immediate gratification), and art, which allows for the full play of erotic fantasies.
141. This is the (somewhat exceptional) theme of "The Affirmative Character of Culture", in Negations, op. cit., pp. 88-103.
142. Cf. Counterrevolution and Revolt, op. cit., p. 132, and "Theorie und Praxis", in Zeit-Messungen (Frankfurt, 1975), pp. 32-33: "When ideology itself, reason itself become means of domination which are reproduced by the individuals themselves, then the necessity exists for a counter-psychology, a counter-sociology, a counter-rationality, a counter-education."
143. This allegation informs the amusing exchange with Marcuse on the problem of environmental pollution in GHM, pp. 32-3, and underpins Habermas' more critical assessment of the student movement (and its alleged inclination to "free political activism from the painful hesitations of moral-practical reasoning" [Psychic Thermidor and the Rebirth of Rebellious Subjectivity", op. cit., pp. 10-11]); cf. also PH, and the student response to his allegations about their "left-fascist" tendencies in Die Linke antwortet Jürgen Habermas (Frankfurt am Main, 1968).
144. "Psychic Thermidor and the Rebirth of Rebellious Subjectivity", op. cit., p. 9. This chiasm is evident in "Art as a Form of Reality", New Left Review, 74 (July-August, 1972), pp. 51-8, where Marcuse defends the Kantian concept of interesseloses Wohlgefallen (i.e., delight or pleasure divorced from all interest, desire, inclination).
146. Cf. "Habermas Talking", p. 53, and "Psychic Thermidor and the Rebirth of Rebellious Subjectivity", op. cit., p. 10: "If rebellious subjectivity had to owe its rebirth to something that is beyond—a too deeply corrupted—reason, it is hard to explain why some of us should at all be in a position to recognize this fact and to give reasons in defence of it." The trajectory of this argument parallels Michel Foucault's critique of the "repressive hypothesis" in A History of Sexuality, op. cit.
147. Walter Benjamin, "Theorien des deutschen Faschismus" (1930), in Gesammelte Schriften, vol. 3 (Frankfurt am Main, 1972), pp. 238-250.


149. CFS, p. 1.

150. Ibid., pp. 78ff, and LC, p. 95.


153. Ibid., p. 121. Compare Bertolt Brecht's well-known advice on the political complexities of the means-end relationship:

"You who will emerge from the flood
To which we have gone under
Remember
When you speak of our failings
The dark time too
Which you have escaped

For we went, changing countries oftener than our shoes
Through the wars of classes, despairing
When, there was injustice only, and no rebellion.

And yet we know:
Hatred, even of meanness
Contorts the features.
Anger, even against injustice
Makes the voice hoarse. Oh we
Who wanted to prepare the ground for friendliness
Could not ourselves be friendly"


154. On Revolution (Harmondsworth, 1973), chs. 3, 6, and Crises of the Republic (New York, 1972), p. 203. This theme of "public joy" is also emphasised in Rousseau's account of public festivals in Politics and the Arts, Letter to M. D'Alembert on the Theatre (Ithaca, 1973), section xi. Free publics—Rousseau here offered his own Geneva as a paragon—could only flourish in a truly festive atmosphere. The public would assemble often, forming among themselves sweet, communicative bonds of pleasure. Public carnivals would thereby resemble the gathering of a big family (replete with the patriarchalism which Rousseau continually defended, thereby contradicting his claims on behalf of this public's universal accessibility). Before the eyes of the public, the young could fall in love and all could enter into cordial and passionate dalliances.
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Authentic joy, Rousseau urged, could only ever be achieved as public joy: "Plant a stake crowned with flowers in the middle of a square; gather the people together there, and you will have a festival. Do better yet; let the spectators become an entertainment to themselves; make them actors themselves; do it so that each sees and loves himself in the others so that all will be better united" (p. 126). Stripped of its patriarchalism and romantic identitarianism, this old Rousseauian insight remains crucial: genuine political action always contains a moment of mirth.


158. This strategy explicitly draws upon the account of explicative discourse presented by H. Schnädelbach, *Reflexion und Diskurs* (Frankfurt am Main, 1977), pp. 277-336.

159. Cf. *CES*, pp. 24, 12 and 16, where rational reconstructions are said to "correspond precisely to the rules that are operatively effective in the object domain [of communication]—that is, to the rules that actually determine the production of surface structures".


164. "Summation and Response", p. 128; cf., "Der Universalitätsanspruch der Hermeneutik", p. 158, and *TP*, p. 40: "in a process of enlightenment there can only be participants."