ELEMENTS OF A RADICAL THEORY OF PUBLIC LIFE:
FROM TÖNNIES TO HABERMAS AND BEYOND II

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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 incompatability 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.[117] 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.[118] 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.[119] 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 traditon and, therefore, a common "definition" of their situation.[120] 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 syntheses 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,[121] 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.

X.

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 metacommunciation, 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.[122] It is true that the universal pragmatics' failure to consider the bodily dimensions of communicative action is occasionally acknowledged by Habermas.[123] 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 represses 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 supress 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.[126] 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."[127]

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 "policed" by networks of social and political institutions guided by expert professional knowledge.[128] 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-

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 neverthe- less 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' disem- bodied 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 ten- dency to presume that communicatively competent actors employ their utteran- ces 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[129]—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

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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.[130] 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."[131]

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*).[132] 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.[133] 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.[134] 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.[135] 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 wilful 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."[136] 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-

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 "post-auratic" 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.[137] 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.[138] He defends the possibility of demo-cratic socialism with a "biological" foundation; an individuated, pacified exist-ence, 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"[139] in which reason and happiness merge, Marcuse insists that the poetic, erotic language of art has a privileged status. By defending (and preserv-ing 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.[140]

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.[141] Marcuse neverthe-less 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" perspective with Marxist-theoretical categories. His theory of art and liberation consistently pre-supposes the existence of a species-instinctual "foundation" for peaceful solidarity among human beings. (This species-essence is specified by drawing initially upon Heidegger's existential ontology and, later, upon Freudian metapsychology). 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, contains 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."[142] Nevertheless, Marcuse's postulation of a "biological" foundation which serves as the Archimedean point from which radical politics can take its cue unwittingly leaves itself open to appropriation by self-appointed revolutionary 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.[143] 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."[144] This rather naïve, 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"[145]—forgets that such presumptions and even energy drives themselves 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 possiblity. Such an account could only be generated discursively, that is, within a communicative, language-structured framework.[146] 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[147]) 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 collossal 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 techncial perfection.[148] 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 unsucessful 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.[150] 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.[151] 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 acount 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 reching 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 *naïveté*. 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 tuth of the Weberian insight that those who rely upon force and other means of purposive-rational action necessarily contract with diabolical powers.[152] 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 lest dangerous ones—and facing the possibility or even the probability of evil ramifications."[153] 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,[154] 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

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[155] 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,[156] 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.

XIV

Conclusion

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.[157] 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".[158] 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.[159] 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 mimetically 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"[160], 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".[161].

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 omnes*. 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.[162]

All late capitalist socities, 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.[163] This typology no doubt has a certain analytic plausibility and political value. Under the weight of the critical theory's recon-structivism 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 fre-quently rely on unhelpful truisms. "The enlightenment which produces radical understanding", Habermas typically observes, "is always political."[164] 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 compromsies 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 assertation, disputation and persuasion; more positively, it anticipates pluralistic and self-interrogating forms of life, through whose free and sys-tematic 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 com-munication theory rightly emphasises, for example, that discussions of auton-omous 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.

118. *KK*, pp. 118-231; *CES*, pp. 69-94; "Zur Einführing" in Jürgen Habermas et. al., *Entwicklung des Ichs* (Köln, 1977), pp. 9-30.

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",

Reflections (New York and London, 1978), p. 173.

123. "Toward a Theory of Communicative Competence", pp. 121-22; cf. *CES*, pp. 1 and 38 (a reference to propositionally differentiated gestures).

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.

127. *KHI*, p. 168; cf. pp. 171, 172 and "Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence", p. 121. A similar point has been stressed by Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, 1959), p. 2.

128. See especially: Klaus Doerner, *Madmen and the Bourgeoisie* (Oxford, 1981); Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (New York, 1978); *Discipline and Punish* (London, 1977); *Power/Knowledge* (Brighton, 1980); "Governmentality", *I and C*, 6 (Autumn, 1979), pp. 5-21; "War in the Filigree of Peace", *The Oxford Literary Review*, vol. 4, 2, pp. 15-19; and Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (New York, 1979).

129. *CES*, p. 41.

130. John R. Searle, *Speech Acts, op. cit.*, pp 17-18; *CES*, pp. 5-6, 30-1, 46.

131. *ZL*, p. 220; cf. *CES*, pp. 67-8 and *KHI*, p. 157.

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.

133. Cf. *CES*, pp. 5, 67-8.

134. *Ibid.*, p. 40; cf. John R. Searle, *Speech Acts, op. cit.*, pp. 19-21, 68, 87-8.

135. Aristotle, "De Poetica", in *Introduction to Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (Chicago and London, 1973), section 21. The movement to radically transform the classical tradition of theories of metonymy and rhetoric can be dated from the work of I.A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Oxford, 1936). Subsequent works include those of Max Black, *Models and Metaphors* (Ithaca, 1962); Monroe Beardsley, "Metaphor", *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York, 1967), vol. 5, pp. 284-289; Colin Turbayne, *The Myth of Metaphor* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1970). I have drawn especially upon the "tension" theory of metaphor proposed by Paul Ricoeur in *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth, 1976), ch. 3 and *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-Disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language* (London, 1978).

136. Cf. *CES*, p. 93; "A Reply to My Critics", p. 270.

137. See Herbert Marcuse, "On Hedonism", in *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston, 1968); *Eros and Civilisation* (Boston, 1955); *GHM*, pp. 9-62; *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston, 1969), ch. 2; and "Psychic Thermidor and the Rebirth of Rebellious Subjectivity", *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, vol. xxv (1980).

138. "Some Social Implications of Modern Technology" in *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, vol. 9 (1941), p. 438; cf. *An Essay on Liberation, op. cit.*, ch. 2.

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 Künstler-roman* (1922), in *Schriften, I* (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 phantasies.

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 chiliasm 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).

145. *One Dimensional Man* (Boston, 1964), p. 235.

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.

148. "Epilogue: The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", in *Illuminations, op. cit.*, 243-244. Compare Brecht's analysis of the theatrical aspects of the relationship between Hitler and the masses ("Über die Theatralik des Faschismus" in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. xvi, [Frankfurt am Main, 1967], pp. 558-568) and, more recently: Martin Jürgens, "Der Staat als Kunstwerk. Bemerkungen zur Ästhetisierung der Politik", *Kursbuch*, 20 (1970), pp. 119-139, and Rainer Stollmann, "Fascist Politics as a Total Work of Art: Tendencies of the Aesthetization of Political Life in National Socialism", *New German Critique*, 14 (Spring, 1978), pp. 41-60.

149. *CES*, p. 1.

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

151. Karl-Otto Apel, "Types of Rationality Today", in Theodore F. Geraets (ed.) *Rationality Today* (Ottawa, 1979), pp. 336ff.

152. *From Max Weber*, p. 123.

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"

"To Those Born Later", *Brecht: Poems 1913-1956.*

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.

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 Rousseauean insight remains crucial: genuine political action always contains a moment of mirth.

155. Hannah Arendt, *Crises of the Republic, op. cit.*, pp. 49-102.

156. Cf John Rawls (*A Theory of Justice* [London, 1973], secs. 55, 57, 59), for whom civil disobedience, unlike "organized forcible resistance", serves merely to "warn and admonish" the sense of justice of the majority, who nevertheless retain the powers of inflicting legal/penal consequences upon those who dissent. For criticisms of contemporary liberalism as a self-contradictory discourse which analyses disobedience as both justified and punishable, see: Carole Pateman, *The Problem of Political Obligation* (Chichester, 1979), especially pp. 55-60, 161-2; Brian Barry, *The Liberal Theory of Justice* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 151-3; and G. J. Schochet, "The Morality of Resisting the Penalty", in V. Held et. al. (eds.), *Philosophy and Political Action* (Oxford, 1972).

157. Cf. the pertinent comments of David Held in "Crisis Tendencies Legitimation and the State", in John B. Thompson and David Held (eds.), *Habermas: Critical Debates* (London and Basingstoke, 1982), pp. 181-195.

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".

160. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

161. *Cf. Ibid.*, pp. 13, 19, 213, note 41, and "A Reply to My Critics", p. 235. Habermas' adoption of the "clear case" principle draws upon D. Wunderlich, *Grundlagen der Linguistik* (Hamburg, 1974), p. 209, and John R. Searle, *Speech Acts, op. cit.*, pp. 55-56. K.O. Apel's reservations about this principle are expressed in "The *a priori* of the communication community and the foundations of ethics", in *Towards a Transformation of Philosophy*, trans. Glyn Adey and David Frisby (London, Boston and Henley, 1980), pp. 274-5, 296-7. Mary Hesse has similarly argued that the theory of universal pragmatics cannot generalise its propositions beyond its highly restricted and normatively chosen "clear case" examples, in *Revolutions and Reconstructions in the Philosophy of Science*, (Brighton, 1980), ch. 9.

162. Habermas indirectly acknowledges these aforementioned difficulties in "Neve soziale Bewegungen. Ein Exkurs", *Aesthetik und Kommunikation*, 45-6, 12 (1981) pp. 158-161.

163. *TP*, p. 32; *CES*, p. 209, note 2.

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."