HABERMAS AND
THE POLITICS OF DISCOURSE*

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The attitude of critical theory toward tradition has been dictated by the understanding that theoretical knowledge in sociology, as distinct from ideology, must necessarily reflect the practical intention to effect social change. To anyone claiming to be radical, such an attitude appears to be beyond reproach. In one sense, it belongs to the Marxist heritage, where the critique of ideology was first elaborated as part of a larger programme of human emancipation. But the roots of this attitude also go deeper, tapping the intellectual resources of the Enlightenment, where reason was a weapon against unreasoning tradition and the institutions of the past were irredeemably discredited through a history of oppression and unjustifiable domination. Critical theory has since scrutinized the legacy of the Enlightenment and found in the ideological misrepresentation of science and technology as potent an obstacle to liberation as past tradition. Nevertheless, it has retained an abiding distrust of tradition in all of its guises. Similarly, an extensive critique of Marxism itself has identified elements of reification inherent in the Marxist vision. In this regard, the reconsolidation of state and civil society in both late capitalism and contemporary socialism, with the attendant problem of renewed politicization of the public realm, shares several features in common with traditional forms of domination. But a return to tradition has certainly never been suggested as a counter-weight to technocracy by critical theorists — as it has, for instance, by conservative critics of technological society like Ellul, Illich, and Nisbet.[1] As a political stance in the contemporary world, however, this view of tradition has several weaknesses. The destruction of traditional culture has become a rallying-point for much of the opposition to technocratic hegemony. In certain cases, tradition has come to symbolize such radical values as diversity and personal and group autonomy. Demands by groups for various kinds of cultural and political independence, minority rights, and decentralization of government, and the preservation of traditional means of livelihood have become commonplace. Such demands appeal in one way or another to tradition as a basis for community — though obviously in a highly reconstructed form. These appeals are political realities. To write off movements of this kind as merely "reactionary", as Marxism often does, is to carry the modernist critique of tradition to the point where its very rigidity belies any remaining emancipatory scope.

There are problems on the theoretical plane as well with the wholesale

rejection of tradition by critical theory. The limits to purely negative dialectics grounded in Marxism are surely apparent. Even where the Frankfurt School offered a mediated return to "bourgeois tradition," it did so in a way that precluded recognition of an emancipatory subject. On the other hand, the search for a positive basis for a theory of emancipation has led writers like Habermas into a theory of language which in turn forces a reconsideration of the whole field of social "meaning." Habermas, in particular, has expanded the theoretical base of critical theory to include the communicative dimension to society specifically as a means of countering what he sees as the positivist misunderstanding of social theory. In doing so, he has returned — albeit in a novel way — to Weber's classic distinction between "understanding" and "explanation." But Habermas has also remained true to the critical attitude toward tradition inherited from the Enlightenment — presumably as the only alternative to an uncritical relativism.

The political implications of Habermas's reformulation of critical theory are not entirely clear, particularly as they relate to the political trends I have mentioned. Does Habermas's version of critical theory allow for the same critical certainty *vis à vis* specific cultural traditions? Can the outcome of processes of emancipation in this new formulation be anticipated in a manner comparable to the old Marxist framework? Habermas does not address these questions directly. But to the extent that he has embedded his communication theory in a larger theory of social evolution and moral development, he has severely limited the organization and content of an emancipated society. Does Habermas present the only possible interpretation of a linguistically-derived critical theory? In this paper I will attempt to establish a basis for a theoretically coherent answer to this question. While I accept the major significance of Habermas's focus on "discourse," I believe that the contingent nature of some of the other elements of the theory can be demonstrated. I would like to review the theoretical foundations of Habermas's conception of critical theory with the aim of showing how his resolution of theoretical problems closes off discussion of possible alternatives. By at least demonstrating the plausibility of these alternatives, I hope to open the way to further discussion and empirical investigation.

I should emphasize that it is not my intention to defend tradition for its own sake. For a critical theory of society such a move is plainly nonsensical. Whether or not the reconstruction of tradition serves emancipatory ends is always an empirical question. Thus, it is important to ascertain the conditions under which this development occurs so that it may be anticipated and fostered. Also, an appeal to tradition is not the only basis for an emancipatory movement of the type I am considering, nor can it serve the needs of everyone. A variety of contemporary movements link diversity and liberation — environmentalism, feminism, gay liberation, local political alliances of

various kinds. A discursive model of politics is no less applicable to these movements. In every case, it is the responsibility of the activist to present his claims in a form amenable to discourse. Having done so, the extent to which obstacles to free and unconstrained communication can be attributed to the structure of society itself may then be ascertained. If, as I am suggesting here, the relationship between discursive redemption and changing social structures is truly dialectical, then it is impossible in principle to determine once and for all the meaning and scope of social emancipation.[2]

There are some puzzling — indeed, paradoxical — aspects to Habermas's theory of communicative competence.[3] By isolating a utopian component in ordinary understanding, Habermas attacks the certainty we normally uphold *vis-à-vis* social life and the world of communicated meanings. On the one hand, every normal utterance presumes communicative competence — that is, mastery of an ideal speech situation absolutely necessary for the maintenance of intersubjectivity. The ideal speech situation expresses the potential in every speech act for unconstrained dialogue. On the other hand, there is no guarantee that any actual act of communication realizes this potential. To the contrary, the likelihood is that a given utterance represents systematically distorted communication — a form of communication which preserves asymmetries in the social roles of respective participants and thus correspondingly deforms the achievement of intersubjectivity. To the extent that this is the case, the conventional model of hermeneutic understanding taken from phenomenological sociology is inapplicable, since it would apply only to a normally unrealized pure intersubjectivity. The counter-factual presumption of dialogue in fact serves only to legitimate distorted communication.

Thus, rather than being able to take hermeneutic understanding for granted, that understanding is rendered problematic and must be redeemed. For Habermas, the mode of redemption is discourse, and accessibility to discourse becomes, in the last instance, the standard by which ordinary understanding is to be judged. But for this capability of discourse to come into play, the normal constraints of action on communication must be suspended. Where ordinary communicative action is embedded in on-going social processes, which in turn provide a basis for speakers' claims to validity, discourse requires that both private motives and commonly held views be opened to examination and criticism. Once validity claims have been questioned, ordinary communication is possible again only following a successful outcome to discourse. Thus, the occasion of discourse is, for Habermas, the only means of securing the validity-claims on which ordinary understanding is based. Discourse is, then, both an empirically demonstrable event and a logical premise in the theory of communicative competence. Whether or not established norms are justifiable hinges on whether they can

47

withstand discursive examination. But it is unlikely that most existing norms can withstand this sort of criticism and thus it must be concluded that their continuing efficacy requires that discussion and criticism be prohibited.

This is the basic insight underlying Habermas's concept of systematically distorted communication. Without pursuing all of the ramifications of Habermas's theory, suffice it to say that "ideology" plays a crucial role in preventing the transition from communicative action to discourse. The function of ideology is to present a fictitious resolution of problems of justification, thereby preserving asymmetries in communication and behaviour that could not otherwise withstand discourse. Habermas claims, however, that what marks ideologies as distorted communication is not their ostensible semantic content, but their capacity to block free passage into the discursive mode. The apparent symbolization of ideologies is only a subterfuge. Following Freud, Habermas argues that ideologies mobilize pre-symbolic motives (the level of paleo-symbolism) and thus systematic distortion has the character of neurosis, which is the private counterpart to what is collectively ideology.

Emancipation is likewise modelled on psychoanalysis, since "it enables simultaneous hermeneutic understanding and causal explanation in a unique manner."[4] Psychoanalytical "reconstruction leads to an understanding of the meaning of a deformed language game and simultaneously explains the origin of the deformation itself."[5] The "cure," so to speak, eliminates the influence of an ideology precisely by explaining it away. The analytic method is one of dissolution through recourse to reason. But here the question arises, what will be the result if this procedure is systematically applied in every possible case and all existing norms are simultaneously challenged? Will anything at all be left over? It is precisely because ideology has no authentic semantic value that it can be dealt with in this manner. Yet the unmasking of ideology is carried out with the intention of ultimately achieving unconstrained discourse.

This is the paradox: what can that discourse possibly be about? We have arrived finally at pure hermeneutic understanding — exactly what we set out originally to escape from. I suggest that recognition of this paradox has motivated much of Habermas's work subsequent to the theory of communicative competence. That discourse should prepare the ground for a pure hermeneutic understanding immune to criticism is untenable. Somehow a parallelism must be established between the purely formal criteria for unrestricted discourse and the semantic content of traditions. Discourse cannot *a priori* appear to favour any particular outlook, yet somehow these outlooks — or "world-views" — must be shown to conform to an inner logic. I believe that this is why Habermas has chosen to embed his theory of communicative competence and his ideas about the emancipatory significance of discourse in a larger theory of social evolution and moral development.

The problem, then, is how to guarantee the outcome of discursive processes once they have been initiated. It is unacceptable to Habermas that the outcome should be indeterminate, since this would imply that historical transformations of institutional norms need not necessarily be preparing the way for still further progress. If the possibility of historical "dead ends" is to be denied, then a theory of social evolution — or what Habermas calls a developmental logic of world-views is required.[6] In this way, a hierarchy of motives can be validated, and linked, in turn, to lower and higher forms of consciousness. The initiation of discourse at every stage can only be terminated with the transition to a higher stage (though the dangers of a lapse back into unconsciousness are not thereby necessarily lessened, as Habermas is the first to recognize).

Habermas is well aware of the Hegelian origins of this conception. The modern ego, cut loose from the naive understanding of traditional society, must try to find a new basis for a secure identity. To accomplish this, it must somehow "explain" the course of its own history. However, this explanation must proceed retrospectively from the vantage-point of newly-acquired freedom. Satisfying these conditions for a formula for the retrospective explanation of history has led to a model of social evolution that specifically identifies larger and more universal collective entities as the embodiment of a social identity through which an increasingly autonomous ego reflects on its own past. Thus, to the extent that ego-activity is bound up with universalistic structures, social identity may no longer be tied to particular communities, but requires a commensurately universal collectivity as a stage on which to act.

For Hegel, this collectivity was the state. But Habermas has himself pointed out a number of reasons why the modern state, as Hegel conceived it, can no longer be "the plane within which societies form their identity."[7] For the state may very well be a "bad state," a false assertion of unity that does not embody the "generalizable interests of the total population."[8] Even if this condition were met, "the sovereignty of the national state has in any event become an anachronism."[9] The global society that is increasingly an economic and social reality demands nothing less than a global framework for social identity. The difficulty is that this same global system is sufficiently complex that an identity conceived along lines of a universal symbolic system is highly implausible. On the other hand, Habermas specifically rejects nationalism, which in our own time is no longer linked to universalistic structures and thus, in Habermas's eyes, represents a "dangerous phenomenon of regression on the part of highly developed societies, as in fascism . . ."[10] The same criticism presumably applies to attempts at a substitute programme organized around artificial versions of a universal symbolic system as well (for instance, synthetic religions of various kinds).

These are the dimensions of the problem of finding secure grounds for a social identity under modern conditions. These grounds may exclude no one and thus must include all of mankind. But, writes Habermas,

> the whole of mankind is an abstraction; it is not just another group which on a global scale could form its identity, similarly as did tribes or states, until such time as mankind were again to coalesce into a particular entity, let us say, in defence against other populations in outer space. But what else except the whole of mankind or a world society can take the place of an all-embracing collective identity from which individualistic ego identities could be formed?[11]

The answer for Habermas requires shifting the basis for securing an identity away from identification with specific groups and instead focusing on the process of collective will-formation itself. Discourse can be shown to be a present and recognized element in a wide range of political activities. And, where discourse is present, there is full and active participation in the interpretation of needs by those concerned — as distinct from the mere authority of existing institutions, however benignly inspired. Habermas argues that an identity formed on this basis can satisfy the conditions of a global society precisely because

> such an identity no longer requires fixed contents. Those interpretations which make man's situation in today's world comprehensible are distinguished from the traditional world images not so much in that they are more limited in scope, but in that their status is open to counter-arguments and revisions at any time.[12]

Finally, Habermas has tried to establish an empirical basis for this new concept of identity by linking its development to Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral consciousness.[13] Where Kohlberg claims to have documented the ontogenetic sequence of the development of morality in the individual, Habermas describes the stages of the historical institutionalization of discourse. The increasing depth and scope of interpersonal reciprocity goes hand in hand with an increasingly more universalistic conception of morality, culminating finally in a "universal speech ethic," where discourse ultimately disconnects from particular principles and becomes itself the independent basis for the further selection and expansion of principles. For Habermas, this

represents a seventh stage beyond Kohlberg's six: "The model of an unconstrained ego identity is more exact and richer than an automony model that is developed exclusively out of a moral perspective."[14] Yet Habermas appears here again to be straddling what was pointed out early as the paradox of a pure intersubjectivity. What in fact does it mean to say "that interpretations of needs are no longer assumed as given, but are embedded in the discursive formation of the will?"[15] Habermas recognizes that this assertion can only mean that "inner nature is shifted into a utopian perspective."[16] Thus, the raw material of cultural traditions undergoes a kind of transvaluation, so that it ceases to be something with which the ego struggles in its attempt to secure an identity, and instead becomes something both fully open to reflection and, at the same time, able to function as a basis for committed action — in effect, a medium for pure hermeneutic understanding. Or, as Habermas writes in a rare attempt to describe utopian cultural conditions:

> The inner nature is made communicatively clear and transparent to the extent that needs can be linguistically preserved through aesthetic forms of expression or released from their paleosymbolic, prelinguistic state. That means, however, that the inner nature in its provisional, prior cultural preformation . . . maintains itself through a free access to interpretation possibilities of the cultural tradition. In the medium of value and norm building communication, in which aesthetic experiences enter, traditional, cultural contents would not be any longer simply patterns according to which needs could seek and find their appropriate interpretations.[17]

But if this argument is not to be taken to mean some sort of post-modern aesthetic dilettantism, then it must refer to the emancipatory reconstruction of real traditions. And real traditions must be embodied in and through the everyday life of particular individuals and groups: absolute equivalence is prohibited by the laws of logic alone. In this regard, Kohlberg's stages of moral development only make sense so far as they refer to real moral conflict, which excludes compromise and demands that parties accept and institute principles consensually secured, even at the price of injury or loss to some of the parties. Thus, if Habermas's seventh stage of a universal speech ethic is to have a basis in fact, it must refer to real choices with real consequences enacted within a framework of discourse that recognizes a rational basis for

differences among men and constrains them to act accordingly. Otherwise, one only has aestheticism masquerading as ethics.

This notion of an identity formed directly in and through discourse is, as Habermas admits, thoroughly utopian. Nevertheless, why Habermas subscribes to such a notion is not difficult to see; it appears to be the only alternative in contemporary society to abandoning identity formation entirely. Unlike Hegel, Habermas cannot depend on the historical elaboration of the political state as a stage for the moral life of the individual. Furthermore, the modern state has become predominantly an instrument of administration oriented toward the solution of problems occurring in the economic and technological sectors. Habermas's claim of universality for a model of identity based on rational discourse thus must come to terms with the expansion of systems of power with centralizing and totalizing consequences. The threat is that the final triumph of technocracy will lead to the dissolution of social identity entirely by "transposing the integration of inner nature *in toto* to another mode of socialization, that is, by uncoupling it from norms that need justification."[18] Here, Habermas is referring to the prospect of the cybernetic stabilization of societies through techniques like behavioural conditioning. Against such a development, he can only observe that "with growing individuation, the immunization of socialized individuals against decisions of the differentiated control center seems to gain in strength."[19] Having disallowed a moral basis to the state, Habermas now depends on the expansion of systems of power to eradicate tradition — and then pulls the autonomous individual out of a hat, so to speak, to engage in discourse.

It is not surprising that Habermas suspects the political motives of defenders of tradition and accuses them of advocating in one way or another uncritical submission to repressive authority. On the other hand, the pursuit of particular traditions can have relativising consequences that in fact only further the triumph of their declared opponent — namely, technocratic society. Habermas has uncovered some of the underlying political issues in his critique of the claim to universality of hermeneutic understanding advanced by writers like Gadamer, who affirms the ontological priority of cultural traditions over and against all forms of scientific understanding, including critical social science. The terms of reference of this debate require a closer examination, for it is by way of contrast with Gadamer's position that Habermas develops his own conception of critical reflection. But in securing his position *vis-à-vis* the claim to universality of hermeneutics, Habermas in fact closes off a whole range of possibilities for a dialectical understanding of the relationship between the hermeneutic appropriation of tradition and its rational reconstruction.[20]

Habermas acknowledges the sophistication of Gadamer's version of

hermeneutics. Gadamer has abandoned the inadequate formulation of hermeneutic understanding as essentially monological — that is, as a passive reconstruction of experience in the manner of historicism. For Gadamer, the interpretation of tradition is active and on-going, better conceived as a dialogue between past and present in which tradition may speak in unexpected ways. Hermeneutic understanding always proceeds from the practical intention to establish the relevance of tradition to the situation of the present. Hermeneutic understanding thus does not preclude critical reflection; rather, criticism moves within the circle of hermeneutic understanding. Tradition may reveal unrecognized possibilities, new principles, or guides to action. At the same time, however, the capacity to disclose the significance of tradition requires the recognition that reflecting consciousness is itself a product of history (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein*). This concept is Gadamer's restatement of the "hermeneutic circle," which becomes now a decisive feature of the movement of consciousness in history.

But historical consciousness so conceived resigns itself to its own finitude. There is no invisible hand of the Absolute guiding the movement of consciousness in history as, for instance, there was for Hegel. In principle, Gadamer's position does not preclude revolution and the radical restructuring of social relations, since these too belong to the tradition of the West. In practice, however, the revelation of finitude imposes its own bias. Scientifically-motivated distantiation (*Verfremdung*) also moves within a circle prescribed by the community's own self-understanding. To designate certain thoughts and actions as incomprehensible or meaningless — e.g., the pathological symptoms of the psychoanalytic patient — is an activity that only makes sense in relation to a consensus already attained within a pre-existing community. Gadamer denies that a whole society can be made up of patients: "The emancipatory power of reflection, which the psychoanalyst claims, must therefore find its limits in the social consciousness which the analyst as well as his patient understands along with everyone else."[21] As an instrument of politics, distantiation is highly suspect. Are fellow social beings to be regarded as partners or as patients; is their behaviour evidence of pathology, or is it meaningful action? If our intention is finally to attain a practical consensus, how can this aim be accomplished on the basis of an activity which systematically denies people membership in the community? He who "sees through" his partners in the game of social life on a regular basis is, in Gadamer's words, a "spoilsport."[22] This tendency is precisely the stance of ideology criticism, but, if we accept the priority of hermeneutic understanding, where do we draw the line? Gadamer's own bias is clear:

> The inescapable consequence appears to be that, on
> principle, emancipatory consciousness really aims at the

dissolution of all constraints of authority — and this
means that its ultimate guiding image is an anarchistic
utopia. This certainly appears to be a hermeneutically
false consciousness.[23]

Having established the limits to criticism as the limits of the tradition of
criticism within the language community, Gadamer's hermeneutic circle
becomes a kind of narrowing spiral. Habermas judges:

In Gadamer's view, on-going tradition and hermeneutic
inquiry merge to a single point. Opposed to this is the
insight that the reflected appropriation of tradition
breaks down the nature-like substance of tradition and
alters the position of the subject in it.[24]

At this point, however, Habermas clearly means something different by
critical reflection. For to suggest that the character of tradition is irrevocably
altered through reflection is to introduce a feature into consciousness that lies,
so to speak, outside the hermeneutic circle, and thus offers a view of the
content of tradition as something other than self-disclosing. As we have
already seen, psychoanalysis is here the model for a critical social theory
precisely because it rejects the ordinary presumption of hermeneutic
understanding and searches through the "symptoms" (e.g., actions
themselves) for another order of meaning. What prompts our inquiry in the
first place is the apparent discrepancy between thought and action. For
Habermas, the totality of social relations is larger than the sublimation of
social processes within linguistic tradition (Gadamer's universe of
Sprachlichkeit) — and therefore uncovering this totality through analysis is
the starting point for Habermas's "depth hermeneutics": "Language is also a
medium of domination and social power. It serves to legitimate relations of
organized force."[25] Language is conceived as a form of deception, which
requires not hermeneutic understanding but ideological criticism, and
proceeds on the basis of a systematic comparison of the immanent meaning of
situations with an account of their extrinsic significance. The outcome of such
an analysis is not merely another interpretation, but a causal explanation: one
produces testable hypotheses, not only interpretive judgements.

Habermas's notion of emancipatory theory rests on the possibility of such
an enterprise. What remains theoretically ambiguous in Habermas's
formulation of critical theory is the exact nature of the movement from the
former back to the latter, for social-scientific explanation must finally provide
a basis for new hermeneutic understanding. This ambiguity is precisely

Habermas's point: if the explanation makes *more* sense than previous immanent interpretations, then in some sense the subject is irrevocably altered. Thus, after the Marxist critique of political economy, we are no longer able to view economic relations and their corresponding justifications without suspicion. Similarly, in the wake of the Freudian account of sexuality, the family and relations of authority in general must be seen in terms of their dependence on psychosexual repression and the mobilization of unconscious and infantile motives.

Gadamer's position can also be considered as an attack on the claim to a privileged vantage-point on society made by social science. Social-scientific knowledge may contribute to a hermeneutically false separation of the social engineer from the society that he manipulated by using rational techniques in the service of unspecified interests (a danger to which Habermas is equally sensitive). Gadamer claims that Habermas's alternative of emancipatory science is dangerously unanchored. To what community do the critical theorists finally belong? Or, as Gadamer observes, does criticism finally arrive at its own Nietzschean apotheosis? But Habermas, of course, would never accept this characterization of critical theory as disembodied ideological criticism. Emancipatory science ultimately originates with the pressure of suffering experienced within life itself. The objectivity of institutionally-imposed suffering, of oppression and exploitation, is also part of everyday life. Transcendence of suffering is expressed not only through scientific reflection, but also in art; through jokes, through linguistic usages that openly or secretly rebel against the hegemony of prevailing authority; through countless efforts to create and protect liberated spaces within daily life where the pressure of domination is suspended, if only temporarily. Furthermore, in answer to Gadamer, the range of this anti-authoritarian appropriation of the linguistic and symbolic content of tradition can be shown to coincide with the social-structural bases of domination, the explanation of which is the intention of critical social science. But to divorce the explanation of objective social conditions from the motivation of ameliorating unnecessary suffering is a mistake. Social-scientific knowledge, by identifying the causes for present suffering, also exposes the realistic potential for the utopian reconstruction of society.

This more open-ended conception of the relationship between emancipatory reflection and the suppressed interest in social change is still visible in Habermas's early formulation of the knowledge-constitutive interests in *Knowledge and Human Interests*. There he speaks of the course of history in terms of "traces of violence that deform repeated attempts at dialogue and recurrently close off the path to unconstrained communication" and therefore he can conceive of emancipation in terms of "a dialectic that takes the historical traces of suppressed dialogue and reconstructs what has

been suppressed."[26] Though the actual status of the "quasi-transcendental" cognitive interests remains unclear, the supposition of their logical independence introduces a lateral dimension to history. The actual deformation of communication by institutions of domination closes off utopian possibilities that might otherwise have been realized. But as Habermas has attemped to clarify the status of the knowledge-constitutive interests through his reconstruction of historical materialism, this open-ended statement of emancipatory reflection has given way to another framework in which the course of history takes on the appearance of necessity. In this framework, the progression of societies from primitive to advanced in terms of functional complexity, and in particular with regard to the elaboration of systems of power, takes place through "evolutionary learning processes" that enable new forms of social integration to be developed in response to problems that "overload" existing systems. Where this same historical progression for Marx was driven by the revolutionizing of the forces of production in a context of conflict-ridden relations between classes, the logic of technical development is now matched by a parallel logic of development for forms of social integration. Power thus loses its contingent character; it is now a functionally necessary element in the evolution of societies. Faced with the problem of explaining how exploitation and oppression can objectively increase in scope while society is presumably moving to a higher stage of moral development, Habermas insists:

> I see an explanation in the fact that new levels of learning
> mean not only expanded ranges of options but also new
> problem situations. A higher stage of development of
> productive forces and of social integration does bring
> relief from problems of superseded social formation. But
> the problems that arise at the new stage of development
> — insofar as they are at all comparable with the old ones
> — increase in intensity.[27]

But this dialectic of self-generating problems and solutions envisioned as the *a priori* logic of social evolution exactly reproduces the institutional history of Western societies. Its ultimate justification is teleological — the principle of communicative competence, posited through every act of communication, is progressively transformed into the organizational content of institutions.

Increasingly more adequate communication, in which problems can become themes, becomes the basis for a new institutional order. This teleological framework, in which formal properties of social systems are

translated into institutional features of advanced societies, is typical of functionalist theories of social evolution. Parsons's theory, for instance, to which Habermas is in many ways analogous, depends on the functional prerequisites of social systems in general to act as a master pattern for differentiation and the growth of specialized institutions.[28] The empirical reality to which both theories refer is undeniable. In Parsons's case, this reality is role-differentiation and bureaucratic specialization (what Durkheim identified as organic solidarity); for Habermas, it is the institutionalization of discourse and the growing primacy of science and education in modern societies. But does the appearance and development of these institutional features of Western societies, whatever their ultimate moral significance, justify hypostatizing in retrospect the history of their occurrence as the necessary logic of social evolution? The earlier conception of knowledge-constitutive interests, however uncertain their status, leaves open the alternative that the institutionalization of discourse in the course of a history linked to technical and economic development may, in the final analysis, be merely fortuitous and not in some sense an absolute necessity. The later teleological reconstruction of historical materialism, with its equation of ontogenetic socialization processes and the history of societies, closes off this possibility. This conclusion would seem to imply that to avail themselves of the full range of communicative resources, all societies must reproduce the institutional history of the West.

Habermas is the first to admit that his reconstruction of historical materialism is only tentative and rests finally on the empirical evidence of anthropology. I would suggest, however, that he has carried over the monolithic conception of tradition of thinkers like Gadamer into the area of comparative cultural studies. This transfer necessitates some kind of functional mechanism (analogous to, for instance, Parsons's "adaptive upgrading") as a guarantee of social dynamics. An alternative hypothesis might emphasize instead the multiplex organization of culture, with disjunct spheres more or less receptive to criticism and rational reconstruction. That utopian possibilities have only partially and incompletely been realized in the past and in other cultures can, to be sure, be explained in terms of objective constraints on the institutionalization of discourse. Again, this is a problem for anthropological research — though the alternative I am proposing is also more in keeping with Weber's methodology.

But an important question — and the decisive one in political terms — concerns the *future* of discourse. Once argumentative justification in Habermas's sense has been discovered and utilized in one social setting (our own), it profoundly alters both the internal relation between spheres of cultural tradition within various societies, as well as the relationships between societies, regardless of their location in a general scheme of stages of historical

development. Otherwise, one would have to conclude that the capacity to appreciate discourse ultimately requires the precise technical and economic arrangements of industrial society as it is presently constituted. But this conclusion reduces practical questions to technical imperatives. In a universal debate about practical questions, discursive validation can be used not only by us and *for* us, but also *against* us; such argument about practical questions cannot be prematurely halted by pointing to the inevitability and necessity of the prevailing technical apparatus. At the same time, discourse can be envisioned within a variety of cultural contexts in which the diverse elements of cultural traditions are creatively reappropriated and reorganized according to communicative standards and thus are able to participate in the same universal debate.

At this point, all I am suggesting is that the above alternative to Habermas's conception of the institutionalization of discourse has a certain plausibility, and that it is a more accurate statement of what is likely to ensue as increasingly more diverse groups are brought into a world-wide communicative universe. Like Habermas's reconstruction of historical materialism, its empirical realization requires verification. Habermas's limited theory of emancipation, it appears, precludes further practical and theoretical exploration in two directions. First, the evolutionary logic of world-views obscures the practical question of *utopia* through its insistence on a pre-established harmony with the course of historical development.[29] In the alternative framework I am proposing, utopias take the place of world-views and are given themes thematized as subjects of discourse. Utopia signifies here concrete attempts to reconstruct cultural traditions, constituting them into a "way of life" capable of withstanding discursive examination and thereby worth preserving and promoting. The claim to such a way of life is on a different plane from pursuit of economic gain; in a sense, it is non-negotiable. In hermeneutic terms, comprehension and validation are aspects of the same process. This point does not signify surrender to tradition, as Gadamer indicates — for there is no guarantee that an appeal to tradition is always made with emancipatory intentions. But only through free access to discourse can the difference be determined, for the emancipatory use of cultural tradition not only withstands discursive criticism, but is thereby strengthened and clarified, while the repressive mobilization of tradition must prevent discourse at all costs. Discourse thus becomes a means for mediating between self-reflection as an aspect of the immanent appropriation of tradition and the larger communicative universe.

The concept of utopia suggests an approach to the emancipatory reconstruction of the cultural life of social groups without at the same time submitting to the unquestioned authority of tradition. In this way, it provides an answer to the dilemma of tradition and emancipation addressed in the

Habermas-Gadamer debate. At the same time, this approach does not extricate us from the hermeneutic circle in quite the manner proposed by Habermas, for the content of an emancipated society cannot be derived simply through the application of the theory of communicative competence. Utopia requires hermeneutics in a different and special sense, since it uses hermeneutic understanding to construct a counter-image of reality free of domination and repression — one that may be validated through rational discourse. This solution also places a special responsibility on social groups making a claim to the validity of a way of life. They must be prepared to define, in terms amenable to discourse, exactly what they mean by the "good life." Ultimately, if discourse is to find a secure place in modern life (which is equally Habermas's aim), it must be able to resist pressures toward administrative efficiency. As Habermas has shown, the dominant strategy and principle means of social control in late capitalist society is the capacity to translate claims issuing from diverse groups into economic terms — higher wages, more consumer goods, jobs, compensation for injuries, and so on. Alternatives to prevailing arrangements can then be dismissed on grounds of economic efficiency, the will of the majority, or the requirements of technological progress. The extension of discourse within modern societies thus hinges on the recognition of non-economic motives. Here, the utopian reconstruction of traditions and claims by diverse groups to the validity of ways of life offer one source of support for discourse itself.

The second area in which Habermas's theory closes off further exploration has to do with the nature of rationality itself. In the earlier work of the Frankfurt school the ambivalent character of reason was acknowledged: reason served as a medium for reflection and emancipation, but also as a means of extending control over both nature and man, as an instrument of domination. One avenue of response to this conception of rationality has been to envision an alternative that overcomes the interest in domination and achieves simultaneously a new relationship with both nature and man. This view has been the direction pursued by Herbert Marcuse, guided primarily by considerations of aesthetic experience. In Habermas's words, Marcuse intends that the "viewpoint of possible technical control would be replaced by one of preserving, fostering, and releasing the potentialities of nature . . .".[30] Habermas has rejected this attempt to establish an intersubjective relationship with nature on the grounds that it attempts to apply a form of rationality appropriate to symbolic interaction to the wrong object-domain, that of work and instrumental action. This exclusion of scientific rationality from thematic construction is central to the further development of a theory of communicative rationality. In effect, the project of accumulating scientific knowledge now has a status independent of the development of world-views, a fairly traditional and objectivist view of science. Recent work in the

philosophy of science has, in fact, undermined Habermas's position and stressed instead the role of world-views even in defining the interaction of man and nature, which can no longer be assumed to be an historically invariant relation.[31]

What Habermas is attempting to secure by the distinction between instrumental action and symbolic interaction is likewise a conception of communicative rationality independent of the development of world-views. Thus he defines "truth" as the "peculiar compulsion (*Zwang*) to unconstrained *(zwangloser)* universal recognition."[32] But this "compulsion" cannot be received in a context-free manner; it represents the progressive embedding of self-reflection within historical institutions. Thus, precisely its character as compulsion cannot be overlooked, for the institutionalization of discourse within particular contexts does not so easily shed its own burden of violence, conflict, and partiality. Adorno and Horkheimer were guided by this insight in their study of the "Dialectic of Enlightenment." That discourse here continues to be used as a weapon in defense of particular institutions, and a particular conception of maturity and social identity, narrows the range of human possibilities. In the alternative framework I am proposing, the full scope of rationality is yet to be disclosed — but will include areas of experience and elements of wisdom that go beyond the bounds of any single tradition. Empirically speaking, it is necessary to show that self-reflection has been realized in a variety of cultural settings and has been variously anchored in different institutions with different purposes. A full account must construct themes for all of these forms of rationality.

At the same time, this revision implies that theories of cognitive development — like those of Piaget and Kohlberg — must be seen in a different light. As scientific theories they remain subject to the canons of scientific methodology and empirical verification. But their metatheoretical status as universal guides to the formation of a social identity is less certain. They refer precisely to those aspects of identity-formation which have been rendered problematic in one particular setting in which discourse has been institutionalized. Kohlberg's stages of moral development, as Habermas employs them, signify role-orientations and motivations that have become pathological from the point of view of a society organized along communicative lines. Their status is not that of universal stages of historical development, but of identifiable locations within contemporary social structures — locations linked to the pathological deformation of communication. The theory, then, is an attempt to secure an emancipatory outcome against other possibilities. It holds up a model of "ideal" development leading to a mature identity able to fully realize its communicative potential. This model seems to me to describe the general predicament of any critical-emancipatory science — Marx and Freud

included. Aspects of social experience that have become problematic and which are perceived symptomatically become the basis for a rational reconstruction which projects an image of restored integrity and unity. Thus the constructive and creative side of emancipatory theory, through which an image of "personhood" is effectively conveyed, deserves emphasis. These considerations also cast some doubt on Habermas's formula that, in a setting of unconstrained discourse, the outcome will be determined only by the force of the better argument. How, indeed, are we to recognize the better argument? If we do not wish to fall back on the consensus model of hermeneutic understanding, the acknowledgement of an imaginative, visionary, and mythopoeic dimension to communication and experience seems unavoidable.

Perhaps the best illustration of the rational reconstruction of tradition along these lines is Habermas's own attempts to restore the tradition of bourgeois individualism within a discursive framework. On this point the earlier theorizing of the Frankfurt School foundered. They had rejected the Marxian conception of a revolutionary subject because it submerged the dialectic of subjectivity in a necessitarian logic that reproduced the irrationality of the whole; but, at the same time, the potential of the bourgeois individual for unitary experience remained entombed within its own uncriticized practice. Horkheimer and Adorno aptly describe this quandary:

> The independence and incomparability of the individual crystallize resistance to the blind, repressive force of the irrational whole. But, historically, this resistance was only made possible by the blindness and irrationality of each indepedent and incomparable individual.[33]

For Habermas, however, the bourgeois individual can become an emancipatory subject in a practical sense precisely because he recognizes a form of practice — i.e., institutionalized discourse — in which this unfulfilled potential for wholeness and integrity may be realized. Thus: "With the historical form of the bourgeois individual, there appeared those (still unfulfilled) claims to autonomous ego-organization within the framework of an independent — that is, rationally founded — practice."[34]

But Habermas is proposing this reconstruction of bourgeois tradition precisely at a time in history when its original sources in the family, religion, and vocations have been largely eroded through the development of late-capitalist social structures. In effect, the tradition of the bourgeois individual has lost its institutional footing and it is possible to imagine a post-capitalist society in which the bourgeois form of reproduction has altogether disappeared. At the same time, as long as socialization in terms of "norms that

require justification" persists — that is, as long as institutionalized discourse retains its precarious hold — one can anticipate a variety of crises concerning legitimation, motivation, and identity-formation. In this fateful setting, Habermas's reconstruction of the bourgeois individual is a utopian effort in the sense discussed earlier; it offers a renewed image of social identity, where crises are overcome through the achievement of a new kind of integration of the personality, as an alternative to the sacrifice of social identity entirely in the face of system imperatives. Achieving this identity depends on access to discourse for its concrete elaboration — while, at the same time, it offers the hope of securing discourse against the threat of its dissolution. The constructive and imaginative elements in the return to bourgeois tradition cannot be explained away.

Habermas's appeal to a universal logic of moral development in fact obscures the specific discursive context in which a reconstructed conception of the individual is concretly realized in contemporary society. In its original form, the category of the individual functioned as ideology. As Habermas has shown, this ideological mode of justification is no longer necessary — but neither is this the principal use to which the concept of the individual is put at present. The "rights of the individual" is in reality a constitutive theme in a social movement with emancipatory aims: the movement which opposes politically-motivated murder, torture, imprisonment, and other forms of degradation and oppression of individuals and groups. In this context, the suppression of the individual is synonymous with the suppression of discourse, while the appropriation of tradition supports social relations in which discourse may be realized. The category of the individual does in this case specify an emancipatory subject and, through practical organization for collective action along these lines, the conditions for an emancipated society are brought closer to fruition. This use of the concept of the individual in the contemporary world, probably its most decisive, seems to me to be fundamentally transformed from the original bourgeois conception. To be sure, it is not inconsistent with Habermas's own formulation, but to the extent that he has merely replaced the abstract category from bourgeois ideology with the formal properties of communication, he seems to have largely overlooked its real emancipatory potential.[35]

I have so far attempted to point to some problematic aspects of Habermas's version of critical theory and to speculate on the reasons why he has followed this particular course in his theorizing. In general, Habermas's position, I believe, represents a "convergent" image of emancipation, in which different viewpoints and cultural traditions converge on a single, definitive understanding of the meaning of emancipation — presumably reflecting a single world society with a single extensive culture. This image is projected as the hypothetical outcome of the increasing institutionalization of discourse in

every sphere of society. An alternative image of emancipation is a "divergent" one, which does not assume that the outcome of discursive processes is everywhere necessarily identical. In concrete terms, a divergent understanding of emancipation posits many diverse groups engaged in emancipatory activity with different starting-and end-points.

Such a divergent view of emancipation is, I think, directly implied in the conditions Habermas spells out for authentic discourse. First, discourse does not signify the reduction of subjects to a unity. Indeed, the concept only makes sense while subjects remain different, even as they achieve mutual understanding. Otherwise, understanding could be recreated monologically, without recourse to respective subjectivities. The inherent "fairness" of discourse as true dialogue, in which power and interest considerations are suspended, requires that the participants will not be constrained to come away more alike than when they began. Second, this requirement implies that social meanings in the hermeneutic sense must remain irreducible and primitive elements of theory. Meanings may be mutually understood without necessarily being reduced to commonality. Third, the origin within historical traditions and the order in which norms are discursively examined is important. Everything cannot be equally questionable to everyone — certainly not at the same time. And finally, practical discourse only makes sense to the extent that it is concretely embedded in the fabric of everyday life. The transition to discourse begins with pressures originating in everyday life, just as emancipatory outcomes provide everyday life with a renewed basis. This point is perhaps best illustrated by considering the opposite of embedded discourse — namely, the disembedded language of systems theory, where system imperatives overshadow practical considerations (Habermas's own example of the only form of "reason" which can treat cultural contexts naturalistically and manipulate them at will).

What I have called here a "divergent" image of emancipation may at first appear to bear some resemblance to the notion of "pluralism." Pluralist politics, however, are not discursive — or are only fortuitously so. Pluralism presupposes an adversary relationship among parties and aims merely at a balance among competing interests. If it furthers emancipatory ends, it does so unconsciously, since it does not require the institutionalization of discourse in the sense discussed. Habermas has documented a number of illusory forms of discourse, including various kinds of negotiation and arbitration in which special interests are represented. In these cases, discourse is a matter of social convention. In reality, decisions are being made on the basis of the distribution of power and the implicit threat of sanctions. Particularly interesting in this context are parliamentary debates, where the format for argument is clearly discursive and the participants attempt as much as possible to disguise the exercise of power and thus maintain the appearance of

discourse. The boundary-line between parliamentary behaviour and authentic discouse is not easily drawn. On the one hand, there is the question of whether it is the intention of the participants to arrive at mutual understanding. On the other hand, if it is possible to imagine the outcome changing simply by altering the structure and composition of parliamentary representation, then discourse is to that extent correspondingly absent. The outcome of authentic discourse would be invariant under this kind of structural transformation. Or, in Habermas's words: "communication will not be hindered by constraints arising from its own structure."[36]

A politics based on discourse would have a wholly different character. Not subject to power constraints, it could not successfully ignore or suppress claims originating from the relatively powerless. So far as such groups are admitted into discourse, and are willing to engage along with other parties in discursive examination, outcomes can only reflect the inherent fairness and reasonableness of demands. Discourse may here function as the only means through which the weak can find a voice. To the extent that we apply notions like "justice" and "freedom" to situations, we already recognize this point intuitively. Habermas has provided a definition in terms of discourse of the concepts of truth, freedom, and justice as they are realized under conditions of pure intersubjectivity. These terms refer to symmetries in the "distribution of assertion and disputation, revelation and hiding, prescription and following among the partners of communication."[37] Thus the achievement of truth requires "unrestricted discussion,"; freedom requires that "based on the mutuality of unimpaired self-representation . . . it is possible to achieve subtle nearness along with inviolable distance among the partners,"; and justice requires that "universal understanding exists as well as the necessity of universalized norms."[38] Under the conditions defined by these three symmetries it ought to be possible for interpretations of the "good life" based on cultural traditions to be brought into public view, fully understood by all parties, and then enacted according to standards of justice. Yet the requirement that these three symmetries be simultaneously realized — that is, not one at the expense of another — would certainly seem to exclude a convergent solution. Speaking practically, discourse must allow for a variety of interpretations of exactly what the good life means.

Where Habermas has himself faltered is in applying the discursive model of politics in a class-divided industrial society. Marxism could be certain of the unity of theory and practice since both were aspects of the universality of the proletariat's status as a group. This insight meant initially as assured harmony between processes of enlightenment and the realization of proletarian interests. But to the extent that the practical realization of those interests came to be associated with the organization of the Communist Party, strategic considerations in mobilizing the masses took precedence over the attainment of truth, and thus theory divides into, on the one hand, organizational

questions, and, on the other, ideological orthodoxy. Habermas's commitment, however, it not to the proletariat as a group, but to discourse as both a means of validating truth claims and an arena for collective will-formation. In this regard, the Party solution ruthlessly suppresses discourse. Yet a number of problems arise in applying to relations between classes a therapeutic model borrowed from psychoanalysis. The ruling class and the ruled class are in no sense presumed equals. The existence of both groups as opponents is explained in terms of prevailing structures of domination. The working class can hardly expect the ruling class to engage willingly in a dialogue the suppression of which is absolutely essential to the maintenance of its own privileges. But more importantly, the working class must likewise see its own existence as a pathological symptom due to conditions of domination, and thus must argue for its own abolition as a group with a social identity. This position is very different from Marxism, where the universality of the proletariat was assured and naturalistically grounded in Marxist theory.

Regardless of these difficulties, it may nevertheless still be possible to apply a discursive model of politics to relations between classes.[39] The institutionalization of discourse, however, has the effect of opening society to discussion of what are ultimately "classless" issues — namely, real democratic participation in collective decisions as well as full access for everyone to the society-wide interpretation of needs. What I would like to point out is a fundamental difference between class politics and a politics of diversity. For the latter does not require a pathological self-identification. Quite to the contrary, pathology in this instance assumes the form of the loss of the capacity to speak for oneself, while discourse provides an occasion for the revelation of differences. This distinction also resolves, I think, Habermas's problem of relating struggle and enlightenment, which in a class context appear to be mutually exclusive. Struggle signifies an assertion of will grounded in already effective discourse, while enlightenment takes the form of a "therapeutic" discourse that must assume that prevailing conditions are pathological and that action is therefore impossible until a new understanding has been achieved. But for a group attempting to restore its integrity and autonomy, the situation is radically different. Recognition and understanding of one's plight — i.e., processes of enlightenment — serve to reveal bases for an identity rather than acting to undermine it. At the same time, struggle itself aims at securing conditions for unrestricted discourse.

To whom is Habermas's critical theory addressed? His own answer is highly ambiguous — in part because there is no reference to the actual groups implicated by the theory or to their concrete potential. Instead, Habermas advocates waiting until the "institutional preconditions for practical discourse among the general public are fulfilled."[40] Yet the cynicism prevailing in modern societies seems to dismiss any possibility for the practical realization of discourse in politics. Habermas writes:

RONALD SCHWARTZ

> ... a tendency has set in to reject as illusion the claim that
> political and practical questions may be clarified
> discursively . . . In the mass democracies of the advanced
> capitalistic social systems, the bourgeois ideas of freedom
> and self-determination are being constricted and have
> yielded to the "realistic" interpretation that political
> discourse in public, in political parties and organizations,
> is in any case mere appearance and will remain such under
> all conceivable circumstances.[41]

In the end, Habermas's political recommendations are remarkably tame. Without fundamentally questioning the organization of industrial society, he speaks of ways of extending the range of public participation in decision-making. Administrative exclusiveness and technocratic ideology are to give way to a greater responsiveness to informed collective consciousness. Given the radical claims made for discourse itself, the moderation of Habermas's utopian vision is at the very least somewhat suspect. The extent to which the existing political, economic, and technological organization can withstand full discursive examination remains an absolutely crucial question. To assume that it will be left largely unaltered just because it is essential to human survival is to admit to a cynical realism not compatible with Habermas's expressed intentions. On the other hand, perhaps Habermas's unwillingness to directly consider this question is linked to his insistence on the theory of social evolution.

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Notes

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1. For the critique of the Enlightenment, see Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, New York: Seabury Press, 1972; for the critique of Marxism, see Albrecht Wellmer, *Critical Theory of Society*, New York: Herder and Herder, 1971; the problem of technocracy is discussed in Habermas's essay "Technology and Science as 'Ideology'" in Jürgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1970; the relationship of state and civil society in late capitalism is discussed in Habermas's *Legitimation Crisis*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1973; for the conservative response to technological society see Robert Nisbet, *Community and Power*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1962, Jacques Ellul, *The*

66

Technological Society, New York: Random House, 1964, or any of the numerous works of Ivan Illich.

2. In general, it has remained for Habermas's North American interpreters to stress the potential of his theory for informing decentralist and anti-institutional radicalism: community action and cooperative movements, "people-oriented" alternate technology, the rights of women, minorities, etc. See Trent Schroyer's discussion and critique of Habermas in the *Critique of Domination*, New York: George Braziller, 1973.

3. This discussion of Habermas's theory of communicative competence is partly based on material from the Christian Gauss lectures at Princeton in the Spring of 1971 graciously provided by Jeremy Shapiro.

4. "Toward a Theory of Communicative Competence" in Hans Peter Dreitzel, *Recent Sociology No. 2*, London: Collier-MacMillan, 1970, p. 129.

5. *Ibid.*

6. See the essays collected in *Zur Rekonstruktion des Historischen Materialismus*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976. Two of these have been translated into English and published in *Telos* as "On Social Identity" (No. 19, 1974) and "Moral Development and Ego Identity" (No. 24, 1975). Quotations are from the English sources.

7. Habermas, "On Social Identity", *op. cit.*, p. 96.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

13. Habermas, "Moral Development and Ego Identity".

14. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

15. *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 94.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

20. See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, New York: Seabury Press, 1975 for the claim to universality of hermeneutics. The hermeneutic controversy, including arguments from both Habermas and Gadamer, is contained in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971. Also see a restatement of the controversy that emphasizes some of the progressive implications of hermeneutics for Critical Theory by Dieter Misgeld, "Critical Theory and Hermeneutics", in John O'Neill, *Critical Theory*, New York: Seabury Press, 1976.

21. Gadamer, "Rhetorik, Hermeneutik and Ideologiekritik", in *Hermeneutik und Ideologie-kritik*, pp. 81-82 (translations from these essays are mine).

22. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

24. Habermas, *Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften*, Beiheft 5 of *Philosophische Rundschau*, Tübingen, 1967, p. 173.

25. Habermas, "Zu Gadamers 'Wahrheit und Methode'" in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik*, p. 53.

26. *Knowledge and Human Interests*, London: Heinemann, 1972, p. 315.

27. "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" (originally appearing in *Zur Rekonstruktion des Historischen Materialismus*, and republished in English), *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1979, pp. 163-164.

28. Talcott Parsons, *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1966.

29. For an investigation of the concept of utopia as a means of understanding the "lost" possibilities of history, see my *Utopia and Critical Theory*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: University of Toronto, 1977.

30. Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, p. 86.

31. I am thinking here of Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method*, London: NLB, 1975; also David Bohm, *Fragmentation and Wholeness*, Jerusalem: Van Leer Foundation, 1976. The controversy in the sociology of knowledge over the status of scientific knowledge is reviewed in Michael Mulkay, *Science and the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979.

32. Habermas, "Der Universalitätsanspruch der Hermeneutik," in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik*, p. 154.

33. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 241.

34. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 125.

35. An equally compelling case can be made for the reconstruction of working-class tradition along the lines of Habermas's communication theory. Francis Hearn, in *Domination, Legitimation, and Resistance*, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978 has documented the important function of historical remembrance in England for the formation of working-class opposition to capitalist society. It was precisely the basic humanity and essential wholeness of this working-class recollection of the past that needed to be systematically denied in order to effectively assimilate the workers into their industrial role. Examples from outside European history are perhaps the most graphic — opposition to colonialism and imperialism. Here, the very possibility of opposition requires first establishing a *voice* distinct from the ruling powers.

36. Dreitzel, p. 143.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

39. Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, London: Heinemann, 1974, pp. 28-37, for a discussion of the applicability of a model of therapeutic discourse to class relations.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.