

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

A CONFLICT MODEL OF SOCIAL THEORY

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## ABSTRACT

### A Conflict Model of Social Theory

The following thesis attempted to develop a conflict model of social theory. The method employed to develop a conflict model was a historical dialogue between the opposing forces in social theory.

It was found that the major forces in social theory which are in operation today stem from the Enlightenment and from Karl Marx. Therefore, the development of the model occurred through a hypothetical dialogue between Karl Marx and a major opponent, Karl Mannheim.

The major issues were abstracted from the debate and generalized into the following categories.

1. Ontological Category
2. Natural Science Methodology
3. Natural Change
4. Human Nature
5. Social Science Methodology
6. Social Structure
7. Social Change
8. Political Ramifications
9. Social Class

The debate also demonstrates that there are very definite relationships which exist between the different categories.

1. Categories of theories can be arranged in a hierarchy according to their level of generality.

2. The more general the category, the more primacy the category has in causal terms.

3. The ontological category is the most general, and therefore, it is the most critical for understanding causal relations within a theory.

4. The nature of science categories follow directly from the ontological category.

5. The nature of science categories are the next most import-

ant categories, for they transfer the premise state of the ontological category throughout the theory. In this way a continuity is established in a theory.

The model was tested in two ways. In the first place, it was tested in relation to Merton's middle range theory. It was found that all the categories hypothesized as being necessary to a social theory were in fact contained within Merton's so-called middle range perspective.

In the second place, the model was tested out in an analysis of Max Weber. The model's predictive abilities proved valuable in the determination of Weber's social and political position.

The model can be further tested by applying it to a larger number of theorists over different historical periods. It is expected that the societal categories would alter, but that the remaining categories would remain quite adequate.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

The basic aim of this thesis is to develop an analytical model for social theory.

The approach employed involves relating perspectives in the sociology of knowledge to positions held concerning the function and nature of social theory.

It will be shown that the contemporary situation in social theory fails to relate social thought and its structure to social history and its structure. The sociology of knowledge attempts to understand the nature of knowledge in general, and its relationship to the surrounding social environment.

Its significance for sociologists lies in the fact that it addresses issues which are outside the disciplinary domain of sociology. By questioning its own philosophy, history, and political economy, sociology becomes conscious of itself in the same way that sociology becomes conscious of other elements within society.

In the process of becoming more conscious of itself, alternative directions become elucidated, allowing sociologists the possibility of choosing their future.

#### Rationale

Literature in the area of social theory is very diverse. Broadly speaking, two general categories are observed; the descriptive and the analytical.

It will be argued that social theory is substantive and can be treated as data for the development of a model. Description is a necessary element of social theory but it is insufficient in relation to the functions of theory. The treatment of theory as substantive data must be analytically oriented if theory is to function as a generalizing and organizing tool, to aid in the comprehension of social environments. Abstract empiricism in the treatment of theory results from pure description.

The first exposure a sociology student has in social theory is to a theory text such as Martindale's The Nature and Types of Sociological Theory (1960). These are primarily descriptive works with unfenced classificatory schemes.

Even more descriptive are books of selected writings such as Ruitenbeek's Varieties of Classic Social Theory (1963) and Bottomore and Reubel's Karl Marx (1956). For the novice, they are often confusing or misleading; for the more erudite, they are insufficient.

Biographical monographs such as Freund's Max Weber (1966) are less descriptive. They attempt to make a loose relationship between the life of a theorist and his or her work.

More critical material in social theory also takes on a variety of forms, some biographical and others purely critical. Aron's Main Currents in Sociological Thought (1965) examines only what Merton calls the "systematics" or structure of social thinkers. Boudin, in The Theoretical System of Karl Marx (1907), combines a critical and biographical approach.

Another method involves a general analysis of systematics which



are common to several theorists. Rex's Key Problems in Sociological Theory (1961), Stark's Fundamental Forms in Social Thought (1962), and Gross's Symposium on Sociological Theory (1959) make critical analysis of the structure of thought. To some extent, both Rex and Stark relate the structure of thought to its time and place, i.e., its social history.

There is a body of literature which is highly critical of all existing thought but which does not align itself with any particular theoretical framework. In economic thought these writers are known as "Institutionalists" (Roll, 1939; pp. 453-4). This term covers authors in sociology such as Veblen and Myrdal.

While Veblen's The Higher Learning in America (1918) is not a critique of theory itself, it attacks the strong affiliation which Universities have with big business. In some ways C.W. Mills can also be seen in this light. The Sociological Imagination (1959) is more of a critique of abstract empiricism than it is a theoretical alternative.

The alternatives of Mills are implied through some form of synthesis of diverse elements. In the introduction of From Max Weber (1946), for example, Mills considers Weber's work as merely rounding out the Marxian perspective.

Gouldner's The Coming Crisis in Western Sociology (1970) is another example of the institutionalist mode of thought. The title of the book belies the fact that its major point is to demonstrate a converging trend between the major opposing elements of sociology; Functionalism and Marxism.

Horowitz has probably been far more critical about both the

structure of social thought and the institutional structure within which it exists than most critical thinkers. In "Consensus, Conflict and Co-operation: A Sociological Inventory" (1962), Horowitz makes it clear that the strategy of consensus is merely a form of mass persuasion (p.186).

In Philosophy, Science and The Sociology of Knowledge (1961)

He relates the structure and the content of thought to its social origins. But, like Mills, he stops short of an alternative which is not merely a pragmatic synthesis of components from competing theories.

Zeitlin's Ideology and The Development of Sociological Theory (1968) is an historical approach which sees the roots of modern sociology in the enlightenment. Zeitlin's thesis is that sociology after Marx, up to early twentieth century European thought, is a dialogue with Marx's ghost, i.e., he is not explicitly acknowledged as the prime antagonist but the issues revolve around his writings.

However, this wasn't an original thesis. In 1941, Marcuse published Reason and Revolution, in which he traced the development of social theory from Hegel through Marx. Marx carried on the dialectical and negative philosophy of Hegel, whereas mainstream sociology followed from Comte's positive method. Historically, Marcuse sees Comte's work as a conservative reaction to negative philosophy, i.e., a reaction to its tendency toward radical social change.

Marcuse is the only writer mentioned above who has been willing to see the contemporary debate as a structural and political conflict arising from objective social conditions. While Zeitlin, Gouldner and Horowitz have all been willing to see Marx as an important figure in the debate, they attempted to eliminate the debate itself, often in

the most subtle ways.

An accurate description and analysis of the debate is very important since the debate is the mechanism by which a model can best be developed. The position to be demonstrated here is: that a debate exists in social theory between Marx and those who followed him; this debate has several interpretations; Marcuse's interpretation is the most accurate.

### Method

Brodbeck in "Models, Meaning, and Theories" (1959), defines a model for theory as an isomorphic theory. Isomorphic theories require two conditions: they must have parallel components; they must have the same kind of relationships existing between these components (p.374; p. 379).

The construction of a model for social theory would involve the isolation of the basic components and relationships between components. The only way to achieve such a goal would be through the comparative analysis of several theories.

The development of a model could be very valuable for sociology: a model could provide a mechanism for the comprehension of any single theory; a model can allow for the comparative analysis of different theories, thus facilitating a greater comprehension of the interrelationship of theories; a model can aid the researcher in the construction of a project in which alternate theories can be tested within the same area and possibly within the same data, permitting a more valid verification (Frideres and Taylor, 1972).

There is a considerable amount of agreement about what a theory is in a general sense. It is made up of a set of variables related by propositions, which in turn are interrelated by a set of rules of logic. Beyond this level there are a number of important disagreements.

One disagreement occurs over the level of the categories which go into making up the variables. Merton's Social Theory and Social Structure (1949) argues for a middle range theory, i.e., middle levels of generality. Glaser and Strauss in The Discovery of Grounded Theory (1967) argue for an even lower level of generality.

Karl Deiter-Opp in "Theories of the Middle Range as a Strategy for the Construction of a General Sociological Theory" (1970), takes the position that higher levels of generality are both possible and necessary for a social theory.

It will be argued that the substance for the formation of a model in social theory is the analysis of social theory itself over time; an accurate model cannot be constructed unless major alternatives are represented, and represented accurately in the debate; the sociology of knowledge applied to social theory will help to determine the major opponents of this debate.

The attempt to develop an analytical model will proceed through three broad stages: 1) Through a debate over two competing theories in the sociology of knowledge; 2) Through a debate with the main currents in contemporary sociological theory; 3) The construction of a theoretical model through a selection of factors in the two debates.

Stage 1. The two theories selected for the debate in the sociology of knowledge are Marx and Mannheim. The reason for selecting

Marx is that he is the major dissent theorist in Sociology (Marcuse, 1941; p. 253). Marx was the only individual to seriously develop the dialectical thinking of Hegel, or what is sometimes called "negative" philosophy (Marcuse; p. 26). Negative philosophy refers to the critical aspect of the dialectic which insists that the destruction of the old is necessary for the development of the new. It was the destruction of the old social order which even Hegel eventually opposed. Only Marx adopted this element into his thesis.

In contradistinction to Marx, and in debate with Marx's ghost (Zeitlin, 1968; p. 281), Mannheim developed what is considered here as a major alternative to the dialectical approach (Mannheim, 1929).

Stage 2. Warshay's "The Current State of Sociological Theory: Diversity, Polarity, Empiricism, and Small Theories" (1971) indicates that, "Modern sociology is dominated by small theories and empiricism rather than by a single integrating theory or even by a few large theories or schools" (p. 23).

Merton's middle range theory is selected as a representative example of this modern trend. Merton's position, as it is stated in the above cited work, is critically examined in the light of the above debate with Marx and Mannheim.

Stage 3. The final stage involves the selection of the important issues brought out in the debate between Mannheim and Marx, and Mannheim, Marx and Merton. These issues are then generalized into categories which constitute a model for social theory. They include; an ontological category, a nature of science category, a human nature category, and societal categories. A particular position adopted with-

in a category is referred to as a premise or a premise state.

A definite relationship exists between the various premise states of categories. The categories are hierarchically ordered according to their level of generality. The ontological category is the most basic and therefore, it has a primacy in causal terms.

The ontological category expresses itself through the nature of science category, which in turn acts upon the succeeding categories. The relationships are not strictly deterministic. A premise state adopted in the ontological category merely sets limits on the premise states of, for example, a societal category.

## Chapter 2

### THE ORIGIN AND METHOD OF DEBATE IN SOCIAL THEORY

Historically, the debate in social theory is between Marx and those writers who followed him. Three questions will be addressed in this chapter: what is involved in the debate? how is it carried on? what are some of the social and historical factors which influence questions 1 and 2?

#### Mode of Debate: Consensus and Conflict

The most effective form of debating an issue is to structure out the major alternative to one's position. In this way, no one knows the debate is occurring, which means that a decision has been made without a conscious dialogue. This form of debating will be called the consensus approach.

Horowitz (1962) points out that "Consensus theory.....tends to become a metaphysical representation of the dominant ideological matrix" (p. 180). Both consensus and conflict, however, are attempting to achieve the same goal: cooperation. Yet, consensus tends to be associated with cooperation and conflict becomes its opposite.

Horowitz demonstrates how consensus differs from cooperation in three ways: consensus demands both uniformity in roles as well as in rules or procedure, whereas cooperation only requires the latter; "consensus is agreement on the content of behavior, while cooperation necessitates agreement only on the form of behavior" (p. 187). "cooperation concerns toleration of differences while consensus demands abolition of these same differences" (p. 187 ).

There are two major weaknesses to Horowitz's discussion. In the first place, he intimates that the form and the content of debate can be universally separated. This can be seen as the outgrowth of a more critical weakness; an a-historical position concerning the development of social thought.

Besides the fact that form is likely to set parameters upon the content (thus making this part of his argument spurious), cooperation can not always be a priori imposed upon a situation without considering the limiting circumstances. Most important of all, the units of conflict, cooperation or consensus must be considered. To what extent, for example, can two classes cooperate?

The introduction of the historical unit "class" into the discussion helps to clarify both the basis of the argument and the content of the argument itself.

#### Content of the Debate: Class Versus Status

The consensus definition of class tends to accentuate the subjective component of status (Horowitz, 1962; pp. 182-5). Dahrendorf in Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (1970) refers to Weber's definition of class when he is rejecting Marx's conception of objective social class (p.24 and pp. 136-7).

Weber's difference with Marx is based upon two major factors. The first involves the narrow translation of the term 'economic' as a pure component. Unlike Marx, Weber held a subjective theory of value which began to become prominent around Weber's birth. At the time that Jevons, Walras, Menger and Gossen were formulating marginal utility theory (Roll, 1939; p.374), economics as a discipline came into existence, differentiating itself from political economy, which had



long held a labour theory of value (Meek, 1958). Consequently, Weber separated economics into a distinct category which he labelled rather pejoratively as a 'rational' element, and which was to be distinguished from the irrational component of human culture (Weber, 1947; pp.92 and 185).

The consequence of such a division was to separate every social concept into its rational and irrational components, or into its formally rational and substantively rational aspects (Weber; p.185). This applied in particular to the content of social class, which Weber split into its economic or formally rational state and its substantively rational class status (Weber; p.424). The two are not necessarily related. This is the theme that ran through The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1930): Economic (defined objectively) and social factors (defined subjectively) cause each other and neither can be given precedence over the other in any general sense.

Dahrendorf's criticism of Marx and Marx's definition of class is predicated upon Weber's position. Hazelrigg, in "Class, Property, and Authority: Dahrendorf's Critique of Marx's Theory of Class" (1972), demonstrates that Dahrendorf misinterpreted Marx on both the meaning of class as well as the foundation of classes. He also points out that Dahrendorf's usage of authority as a replacement for property is poorly defined and lacks any explanation of its origins.

However, through his association with Weber, it can be demonstrated that Dahrendorf's conception of authority is likely to be subjectively founded. The consensual approach, as it was pointed out earlier, is basically subjective. Class, then, defined subjectively

will usually be seen in terms of authority and status. On the other hand, the conflict approach tends to define class both subjectively and objectively, in terms of social relations to the means of production.

The comparative validity of the alternate theories on class and its interpretation cannot be examined here. The above discussion is merely attempting to define the differences between those theorists who claim to be conflict oriented. The significance of such a distinction is especially important for the examination of social theory as data. It allows for a debate with fundamental alternatives to develop, as opposed to a false debate, or a consensual approach.

#### Varieties of Consensus in the Examination of Social Theory

It is not always easy to separate consensus theories of society from conflict ones. Occasionally, the distinctions are exceptionally subtle. Because it is so important for the development of a model to define actual alternatives in social theory, the following section will deal with what are considered to be the major consensus modes of debate.

There will be three types of consensus examined in the analysis of social theory: the first is called the non-acknowledging tradition; next, there is the distorting tradition; finally, there is the convergence thesis (Gouldner, 1970).

The non-acknowledging tradition. Zeitlin (1968), among others, developed the thesis that social theorists following Marx never acknowledged him as their main antagonist, but continued to deal with the

issues which he raised. This Zeitlin called the debate with Marx's ghost.

At least two possible consequences follow from the above thesis: Marx's work was never subjected to serious criticism; secondly, social theory began to lose its historical character, thus making it more difficult to comprehend.

The distorting tradition. Zeitlin was referring to European thinkers following Marx until the early part of the twentieth century. Gouldner pointed out that it was during the depression of the 1930's in America that American sociologists began to look for alternatives to Marx.

There is little question but that the crisis of the 1930's intensified American academic interest in European social theory and brought it to the center of intellectual controversy. In particular, the crisis of the 1930's led some American academicians to look to European academic sociology as a defense against Marxism that was recently penetrating American campuses, for Europeans had far longer experience with it. .... It was such ideologically shaped expectations that a group of Harvard scholars, which centered on L.J. Henderson and included Parsons, George Homans, and Crane Brinton, formed a seminar on Vilfredo Pareto. .... Also attending were R.K. Merton, Henry Murray, and Clyde Kluckhohn (Gouldner, 1970; pp. 148-9).

American sociologists, and in particular the two theorists who were to shape American social theory more than any others (Parsons and Merton), adopted rather consciously the non-acknowledging tradition. However, the internal crisis in American society "ended" in world war two, and so apparently, did any internal threat.

Externally, America was being threatened not so much by Fascism, but rather by the growth of Marxist revolutions. Kolko notes that the Americans, along with the British, were extremely concerned with

the growth of the communist parties in both eastern and central Europe during and just after the war.

At a minimum, the communist parties trip led their popular support, while in some cases it grew by leaps and bounds (Kolko, 1968; p.32). Their concern grew to the point that upon liberation, the popular underground movements, which were basically left oriented, were disarmed and often imprisoned. Military dictatorshipships were imposed by the Americans as in the case of Italy (p.60), while in France, the Americans supported the Vichy government, which Kolko shows "was right wing and anti-British, and so anti-Soviet as quickly to become pro-German" (Kolko; p.64).

The cold war which was to follow was motivated by what Baran and Sweezy called the surplus absorption problem of Capitalism ( Baran and Sweezy, 1966). As the first U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union stated in 1946,

Every time the Soviet Union extends its power over another area or state, the United States and Great Britian lose another normal market (Horowitz, 1969; p.84).

Whatever its motivation, the cold war also had its internal effects upon American society, namely McCarthyism. This resulted in an offensive against left wing ideology in every sphere of American culture, including academia. In 1953, Webster noted that "In the past several months the newspapers have carried, almost daily accounts of teachers and professors being dismissed from their positions because they refused to answer, under compulsion and oath, questions concerning their beliefs and associations, past and present" (1953; p.121).

The combination of the political pressures from within and

the history of the non-acknowledging tradition in American sociology, led to a distorting tradition of Marx. Coulson and Riddell point out that there is a considerable amount of distortion built into introductory texts. They note that Marx ".... is not even given the dignity of a section in Barne's 1,000 page Introduction to the History of Sociology, and hardly, if at all mentioned in most American introductory texts (Barnes, 1961)" (Coulson and Riddell, 1970; p.2).

The convergence thesis. Aronson and Cowley have observed that, "Organized capitalism is, fundamentally, a society without opposition on the political level, and without alternatives at the individual level" (1967; p.78). While the above statement is overly general, there is considerable amount of historical evidence to support such a position: the rise of fascism in Germany, Italy, Spain and now Greece; the unwillingness of the American government to allow a democratic election in South Viet Nam in 1956 because of the certainty of a communist victory; McCarthyism within American society.

Marcuse's One Dimensional Man (1964) demonstrates the pervasiveness of the vast cultural monolith which has engulfed American society. Davis also notes the collapse of any oppositional forces in America after the fall of Gene Debs and the socialist party. In 1912 they managed to get 6.3% of the popular vote for the presidency (1971; p.20).

It is important to see Gouldner's position on social theory in this light. First of all, Gouldner's convergence thesis will be explicated and then it will be criticized.

i) Convergence of functionalism. In The Coming Crisis in Western Sociology (1970) Gouldner conceives of the development of social theory and sociology in general as the dialogue between two distinct lines of thought. One of them is conservatism which runs from Plato, to Comte's positive sociology, through to Durkheim's functionalism and Parson's structural functionalism. Gouldner calls this "academic" sociology.

The second alternative comes from Marx, and this he calls "radical" sociology. Gouldner's thesis is that American sociological thinking has been dominated by Parsonian functionalism and functionalism in general. However, functionalism is waning and bending towards Marxism.

The two dominant themes of functionalism are social order and system autonomy (Individualism). This Gouldner calls "pre-Keynesian" sociology. There are two interrelated forces which have transformed Parsons and American sociology in general. In the first place, functionalism did not fit the social reality of discord and strife that began in the 1930's and reappeared in the 1960's. As a consequence of both social and economic difficulties, government involvement on the side of order and system maintenance forced the autonomy premise (government non involvement) to be abandoned. Consequently,

.... there has occurred a world wide and unprecedented growth in social science funding based largely on vast new resources supplied by government (Gouldner, 1970; p.345).

The more that sociologists become involved in practical application, the more they are forced to abandon their non causal

functionalist premise.<sup>1</sup>

Such a conclusion must be seriously questioned. Why is it more reasonable to assume that an increase in government expenditure in social science research will cause functionalism to bend towards Marxism than it is to assume that it will have the opposite effect, i.e., to keep social science away from Marxism? Governments do not give money away without expecting concrete returns. If it became apparent that government research was radicalizing social scientists then governments would either reduce research or find means of ensuring safe returns.

It is clear that government expenditures for research, whether in the social or natural sciences, is politically motivated. As A.K. Davis points out, "....the basic issue in the relations of government and science is not simply government control, but government control for what ends? and by what means?"(1957; p.207).

In 1954 B.J. Stern indicated that 90% of all American research expenditure went for military and commercial purposes (pp.110-16). Capitalist governments, then, use research to explore and develop means for maintaining and extending their position. Socialist governments obviously do the same.

However, social science is crucially different from pure science in this regard. It is more directly involved in the political

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<sup>1</sup> Government Research Expenditure For Social Science

	<u>United States</u>	<u>Belgium</u>
1962	\$118 million	\$2.9 million
1963	\$139 million	
1964	\$200 million	\$4.8 million

Source: Gouldner, 1971; p.

goals and means of governments. The very report which Gouldner cited for his above figures also indicated that very close relations were required between social scientists and government officials for the successful operation of social science research. It then becomes even more difficult to conceive of functionalism moving toward Marxism (O.E.C.D., 1966; p.42).

Another point which Gouldner overlooks in this part of his argument is the relationship between theory and practice. A.K. Davis noted that, "A widening cleavage between social theory and the study of concrete social problems has been a prominent feature of academic social science - especially sociology - for some time" (1957; p.90).

Nor is this an isolated condition of the 1950's and 60's. Warshay (1971) observes that there are few large theories and a preponderance of empiricism and small theories, which is just another way of stating the problem.

The effect of such a separation means that the people involved in research are not likely to be major functional theorists, while the major functional theorists are not likely to be involved in research. Even if Gouldner were correct about the effect of government research upon social science, the division of theory and practice would mitigate any significant effects.

If Gouldner could now demonstrate that all of these criticisms were in some way invalid, his argument is still wanting. The principal problem with his approach to theory is that he fails to see it as an integrated whole. The mere fact that functionalists become causally oriented does not mean that they become Marxists or that they



necessarily move closer to Marxism. While causation is a necessary element of Marxism, it is by no means sufficient. It is incumbent upon Gouldner to demonstrate what the other factors are, where they come from, and how they operate. As long as these factors remain below the surface, it is just as reasonable to argue that functionalists who become causally oriented are simply becoming more realistic and thus, more capable of countering Marxism.

ii Convergence of Marxism. The argument even becomes weaker when it is examined from the other direction; Marxism is converging toward functionalism. The major crisis, then, is not in western sociology, which is merely adjusting its dominant theoretical perspectives to the changing political realities. The real crisis is with Marxism and radical sociology, as Martin Shaw points out in a critique of Gouldner's book (1971).

It is important to understand that there is a major split in the interpretation of Marx's work. The split occurred after the publication of Marx's early works into English, because the early works of Marx contain what appears to be a more philosophic strain, one which Eric Fromm among others, has chosen to develop.

Ernst Bloch's Karl Marx (1970) breaks Marx's works up into three periods: pre 1843 left Hegelianism; 1843-46 early dialectical materialism; 1847-83. Nicalous's article "The Unknown Marx" (1968) gives a certain amount of support to this division. Nicalous states;

When he assessed his intellectual career in 1859, Karl Marx condemned to deserved obscurity all of his previous works but four (p.41).

The four works were The Poverty of Philosophy (1847), Manifesto of the Communist Party (1848), Speech on Free Trade (1848) and Wage-Labour and Capital (1849). Thus the work between 1843-46 was largely abandoned by Marx or at least severely criticized (Marx, 1859; p.14).

It is however, precisely these earlier works that constitute the base for the dissenting Marxists. Often this group has been labeled "philosophic" as opposed to the "economic" school (Nicalous, 1968). Gouldner's conceptualization of Marx places him in the "philosophic" group, for he sees Marx as a metaphysician.

In distinguishing the two major protagonists of developing sociology, Gouldner states;

The comtian formula was: Scientific Method x Hierarchical Metaphysics = Positive sociology; the Marxian formula was: Scientific Method x Romantic Metaphysics = Scientific Socialism (1971; p.112).

Here the implication is that Marx, Comte and Positive sociology were all in agreement about the nature of science and that they distinguish themselves from each other only in terms of their metaphysics. However, there are a number of grounds for disagreeing with this interpretation of Marx and with the Marxian part of the convergence thesis.

In the first place, there is a profound disagreement between what positive philosophy and the negative philosophy mean by science.

.... positive philosophy studied the social realities after the pattern of nature and under the aspect of objective necessity. The independence of matter of fact was to be preserved, and reasoning was to be directed to an acceptance of the given. .... Positive philosophy was going to affirm the existing order against those who asserted the need for 'negating' it (Marcuse, 1969; pp.327-8).

Marx followed directly from this negative tradition of Hegel

and according to Marcuse, he was the only one to carry it on.

The historical heritage of Hegel's philosophy, for instance, did not pass to the 'Hegelians' (neither the right nor the left) - they were not the ones who kept alive the true content of this philosophy. The critical tendencies of the Hegelian philosophy, rather, were taken over by, and continued in, the Marxian social theory, while in all other aspects, the history of Hegelianism became the history of the struggle against Hegel in which he was used as a symbol for all that the new intellectual (and to a considerable extent even the practical political) efforts opposed (1969; p.252).

In the second place, the application of the two terms "Romantic" and "Metaphysician" appear to be completely incorrect in their association with Marx. It is only apparent because Gouldner does not go into extensive detail as to the meaning and justification for his position. In so far as Romanticism is concerned, he sees it as a reaction to the utilitarianism of the eighteenth century, and as such he believes it is not inherently conservative (1970; pp.115-7).

As Zeitlin points out, "In general, the enlightenment conception of a rational, mechanistic universe is now rejected. .... an effort was made to free the emotions from the austere rules and conventions imposed during the eighteenth century" (1968; p.38). Hegel attempted to synthesize the elements of the enlightenment (reason) and of the romantic reaction (history). In this way a link can be established between romanticism and Marx. However, it is a tenuous link and it does not establish pure romanticism as an element of Marxism.

Romanticism was primarily a reaction against reason in general and the scientific developments occurring during that period. It was more of a response of the dying Aristocracy against the rising Bour-

geois class of Industrial capitalists. Besides, romanticism was thoroughly idealist and utopian, hardly a Marxian characteristic. The common element in the enlightenment, the romantic reaction and in Marxism, appears to be the dissatisfaction with existing conditions. However, the reason for dissatisfaction, the solution and even their view of science and its role in society, all differ radically from each other.

The use of the term "Metaphysic" by Gouldner earlier in his book indicates that it is the basis of his concept of "Background Assumptions" (1970; p.31). However, he does not define clearly what he means by the term "Metaphysic". In the Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Ed. P. Edwards, 1967) the term is traced across its development by R. Hancock.

In medieval and modern philosophy "metaphysics" has ..... been taken to mean the study of things transcending nature - that is, existing separately from nature and having more intrinsic reality and value than the things of nature ..... Especially since Kant "metaphysics" has often meant a priori speculation on questions that cannot be answered by scientific observation and experiment (p.289).

In spite of its common usage, Gouldner may mean something other than what is stated above. Yet, Marx himself uses the term in this way in The Poverty of Philosophy (1963) he spends over one half of the work criticizing Proudhon's application of metaphysical premises to what Marx considers scientific problems in political economy.

The convergence of Marxism toward functionalism then, is predicated upon the misinterpretation of Marx. What Gouldner fails to see is that this misinterpretation of Marx is also part of the very

ideological process he discusses in his book. In his reply to Shaw's criticism Gouldner states;

The problem of transcending this ambivalence [ within positivistic sociology] without surrendering its liberative potential boils down to the problem of how, on the one hand, sociology can be made to surrender its objective false consciousness as value free and openly adopt a commitment to the values of emancipation and human fulfillment - without becoming another appendage instrumental to the practical politics of socialism (1972; p.93).

What does it mean to be value-free? It means to Gouldner that one should openly espouse metaphysical desires of freedom and human fulfillment without attaching oneself to any organized political party. Aronson and Cowley have observed that this is precisely the weakness of the new left in America.

If the new left has grown up in relation to neither party nor worker's movement, then it has not been able to shape itself in terms of a coherent theory and organizing strategy, and it has not been able to shape itself in terms of an ongoing movement whose experience permitted insight into the underlying socio-economic structure. Neither theory nor first hand insight into the systems underlying contradictions have been available to it (p.80-1).

Gouldner has theory. What Gouldner does not have is a major and systematic theoretical alternative. He merges, in an eclectic style, the supposed romanticism of Marx, with the empiricism of positivism and his convergence thesis results in the reaffirmation of the existing state of affairs; American liberalism.

### Summary

The above discussion has attempted to demonstrate the nature of the consensus approach, its various forms and the significance it has for systematic alternatives to the dominant ideological matrix of

American sociology.

It is apparent that the consensual mode of debate operates by eliminating, distorting or converging in an eclectic manner, major historical alternatives. By and large, these alternatives have either been Marx himself or some variation upon a Marxian theme.

Since the development of a model for social theory is predicated upon the dialogue of actual alternatives, Marx becomes an obvious choice for the role as the major antagonist of Capitalist ideology.

## Chapter 3

KARL MARX <sup>1</sup>

The primary purpose of beginning with an analysis of various perspectives in the sociology of knowledge is to examine social thinking within a social context and to become self conscious about the inevitable process of selection of units and categories of analysis in the development of theory. Social scientists are also part of the social order which they study and therefore, they must also consider themselves as being influenced by similar forces.

Beyond this most general and basic point, there is a considerable amount of diversity in interpreting the nature of the relationship between empirical reality as a whole and knowledge as a part of it. The following two chapters will deal with Marx's and one of his foremost critics, Mannheim's, theories of knowledge. The works of other theorists will be used to support the position adopted here, as well as to demonstrate the existence of other alternatives in this area.

The nature of the relationship of knowledge to empirical reality as a whole for Marx was a scientific and historical problem. However, merely to state that it was a scientific and historical problem does not aid in the comprehension of his position. What did

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<sup>1</sup>In dealing with Marx, we will also deal with the works of Engels. It should be noted however, that Jordon's The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism (1967) argues against such a position, maintaining that there was a profound difference between the two authors.

these terms mean to Marx and Engels and how do they relate to their theory of knowledge?

### Marx's Concept of Science: Dialectical Materialism

Science, for Marx and Engels, was essentially dialectical materialism. Engels, more than Marx, outlines the meaning of dialectical thinking in Dialectics of Nature (1960) and in Anti - Duhring (1966). Marx, on the other hand, develops materialism through an attack on classical German idealism in German Ideology (1970) and French utopian socialism in The Poverty of Philosophy (1963).

Dialectical thinking was the product of Hegel. According to Marcuse, one of the essential elements of Hegel's dialectic was its rediscovery of " ... the extremely dynamic character of the Aristotelian metaphysics, which treats all being as process and movement .." (1969; p.42).

What was the nature of this pervasive movement?

Dialectic in its entirety is linked to the conception that all forms of being are permeated by an essential negativity, and that this negativity determines their content and movement (1969; p.27).

What does it mean to say that motion and process are achieved through negation? It means simply that within every being there exists two opposing elements or forces and that in the ensuing interaction one force always destroys the other. In the course, a new element or force hitherto unobservable in direct terms, is released. For example, the moth has within itself the potential to be a butterfly, but it cannot become a butterfly until it has destroyed itself as a moth. Thus, the core of negation is contradiction, which in turn



necessitates skepticism, speculation and reason. In terms of human behavior, the dialectic became the force of reason through which the unity of object and subject was achieved (Marcuse, 1969; p.23). The ultimate goal for Hegel was the elimination of alienation (the fragmentation of subject and object).

According to Engels, there are three laws of dialectics.

The law of the transformation of quantity into quality;  
The law of the interpenetration of opposites; The law  
of the negation of the negation (Engels, 1960; p.26);

First law. In the transformation of quantity into quality, two forms of change are distinguished.

The movement of all things assumes two forms: the form of relative rest and the form of conspicuous change (Mao Tse Tung, 1952; p.57).

The form of relative rest refers to quantitative change. It is called relative rest because on the surface there may be no apparent changes occurring, although in fact a gradual quantitative change is occurring. For example, the social and economic structure of Feudalism did not change per se, but the power of the rising Bourgeois class was growing constantly. However, at a critical point in the development, the Bourgeois became the most powerful class and then the structure of Feudalism became metamorphosed into the structure of Capitalism. This was a conspicuous change, i.e., a qualitative change. It is important to realize that quantitative change is a NECESSARY condition for the occurrence of qualitative transformation.

Second law. The interpenetration of opposites is predicated upon two additional factors.

... each of the two aspects of every contradiction in the process of development of a thing finds the presupposition of its existence in the other aspect and [secondly] both aspects co-exist in an entity (Mao Tse Tung, 1952; p.48).

Both of these considerations involve a common element; the fundamental unity or identity of any comprehensible reality. Any object or organism, no matter how broadly or how narrowly it is delimited, is never so simple as to be constructed of only one element. No such thing is ever homogeneous in its composition. The resultant heterogeneity invariably involves differences which are potentially and inevitably contradictory.

This inevitability of contradiction is only possible due to a fundamental commonality, such that, in pure logic, A (whatever it is) is also  $\bar{A}$  (non A whatever it is) (Novack, 1969). By this three things are meant: identity can only be defined in terms of some opposite, for example, night in relation to day or life in relation to death; then, as it was stated above, nothing is homogeneous and therefore, the potential for A and its negation  $\bar{A}$  to occur simultaneously in one object is possible; finally, in order for this interaction between aspects to occur, there has to be a common medium of exchange or communication.

It is not that Marx is merely saying that this is possible, but rather that it is universal and therefore, the process, in whatever form it may take, is inevitable. This realization is what prompted Marx to say; "The only immutable thing is the abstraction of movement ..." (Marx, 1963; p.110).

It has not yet been demonstrated that there is interpenetration of opposites. In order to do so, it is also necessary to maintain

that both  $A$  and  $\bar{A}$  are mutually exclusive. This is the traditional position adopted in formal logic (Novack, 1969). Dialectical reasoning does not exclude such a proposition, but it maintains that both this simple identity postulate and the diversity postulate apply to empirical reality.

Their application varies according to the stage of development of any object under consideration. For example, in social change, the internal mechanism of change, i.e., the nature of the contradiction lies in class and class conflict. In the early stages of Capitalism, the ruling class (Bourgeois) was a progressive force because it usurped power by destroying the old ruling class, which was a regressive force. Simultaneously, the new rulers created severe social conditions of oppression. Thus, Capitalism was both  $A$  (progressive) and  $\bar{A}$  (oppressive), but its progressiveness had negated the older system of Feudalism which was even more oppressive.

According to Marx, as Capitalism developed, the contradiction would become greater (quantitative change). In the process, the working classes would be forced into changing the structure of their society, to negate a contradiction, and transform it into socialism (qualitative change).

Third law. The law of the negation of the negation should already be apparent in the above discussion. In order for the negative force of oppression to be stopped, it must be negated in its particular form. However, there are different levels of generality such that the negation of class relationships in general would not necessarily be

negated by the negation of any particular expression of class relationships. The negation of the Aristocracy did not negate class relationships in general. The critical point in human history would be the negation of class relationships in general. Negation, then, brings about change through the destruction of a particular expression and the release of new force which is more positive.

What Marx and Engels were most concerned about was change. It was the most pervasive phenomena, occurring prior to conscious human existence and within conscious human existence.

#### Materialism Versus Idealism

The above discussion does not make sufficiently clear the differences between Marx and Hegel. Dialectics for Hegel was the ultimate form of idealism and philosophy, whereas for Marx, dialectics was vacuous without its obvious materialist premise.

For Hegel, the totality was the totality of reason, a closed ontological system, finally identical with the rational system of history. Hegel's dialectical process was thus a universal ontological one in which history was patterned on the metaphysical process of being. Marx, on the other hand, detached dialectic from this ontological base. .... the negativity of reality becomes a historical condition which cannot be hypostatized as a metaphysical state of affairs (Marcuse, 1969; p.314).

The application of the philosophical concepts of materialism and idealism apply at the most fundamental level of analysis. In other words, to the broadest level of generality, to the very nature of life itself.

Idealism. What is meant by the term "idealism"?

Idealism, in its philosophical sense, is the view that

mind and spiritual values are fundamental in the world as a whole. Thus, idealism is opposed to naturalism, that is, to the view that mind and spiritual values have emerged from or are reducible to material things and processes. Philosophical idealism is also opposed to realism and is thus the denial of the common sense realist view that material things exist independently of being perceived (Acton, 1967; p.110).

There are few if any theorists who would openly maintain the simple and erroneous view that we are all merely products of our time and place and that such a relationship is universal. On the other hand, beliefs in religion and God(s) are commonly held attitudes which are highly deterministic. However, everyday religion is simply a crude form of idealism.

More sophisticated philosophical idealists merely develop the theme in accordance with certain empirical realities so that their doctrine takes on a superficial plausability. What is more, they substitute esoteric terms, which often turn out to be euphemisms, for the concept of eternal being or God.

Idealism then, is prone to an alienated form of determinism where causation is placed beyond the control of the human realm. It contains within itself a built in contradiction; it cannot and often refuses to explain its own origin, for its initial premise, that reality is fundamental spiritual, is an a priori postulate (Williamson, 1967).

Mechanical materialism. Both materialism and idealism have more than one form. These forms are often sufficiently divergent that the two perspectives can overlap. Consequently the term materialism in itself does not represent the views of Marx as the following defin-

ition demonstrates.

Materialism is the name given to a family of doctrines concerning the nature of the world which give to matter a primary position and accord to mind a secondary, dependent reality or even none at all (Campbell, 1967; p. 179).

The form of materialism expressed in the above quote is a crude type that is often called mechanical materialism. Marx and Engels both spent as much time criticizing it as they did idealism, as the following two quotes demonstrate.

Here it becomes palpably evident which is the most certain path from natural science to mysticism. It is not the extravagant theorising of the philosophy of nature, but the shallowist empiricism that spurns all theory and distrusts all thought (Engels, 1960; p.308).

and now Marx;

The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism - that of Feuerbach included - is that the thing, reality, sensuousness is conceived only in the form of the object or of contemplation, but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively (Marx and Engels, 1969; p.13).

Mechanical materialism is also prone to the problem of determinism, although for different reasons than idealism. According to Cornforth, the mechanical social analogy involves three basic statements: a mechanism consists of permanent parts which fit together; the process is externally motivated; finally, once in operation, the process is exact and can be formulated in terms of laws (Cornforth, 1971 ; p.34).

The principal problem, although not the only one, is the fact change is externally induced and does not stem from within the social order. Therefore, it cannot explain genesis except as the act of some independent force. By the same token, it cannot explain process

except in terms of external and independent forces.

Further, mechanical change involves only the rearrangement of the parts, only the quantitative growth of things without any qualitative changes. Finally, the exactness or preciseness of such a system is close to the idea of perfection or equilibrium. As Engels points out in a letter to Schmidt,

From the moment we accept the theory of evolution all our concepts of organic life correspond only approximately to reality. Otherwise there would be no change; on the day that concept and reality absolutely coincide in the organic world, development is at an end (From Cornforth, 1971a;p.65)

Dialectical materialism. For Marx and Engels, it was only dialectical materialism which could avoid the pitfalls of both idealism and mechanical materialism.

Dialectical materialism could be consistently scientific without alluding to any a priori postulates which both the secular and religious forms of idealism were forced to do.

By the same token, Marx also thought that the mechanical analogy failed to consider the subjective or sensuous aspect of human behavior.

The dialectic allowed for the existence of both the subjective and objective elements without creating a dualism at this most fundamental level of empirical reality.

It is the monism of dialectical materialism at this level which distinguishes it from other interpretations. Therefore, ideas are seen as material products and material realities.

All people's conscious and intelligent activities can be

traced back to material causes, so that far from such activities being exclusive products of the mind, mind itself is a product - the highest product - of matter (Cornforth, 1971c; p.10).

### The Application of Dialectical Materialism

What is the nature of the relationship between socio-economic reality and the knowledge within our minds? Are Marx and Engels, as we have often been told, economic determinists?

It has been claimed that the Marxian super-structure (culture) is the simple result of the economic substructure. On this issue there can be little uncertainty. It is quite clear that neither Marx nor Engels make any such a simple and false assertion. As they state in Theses on Feuerbach ,

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances and that the educator himself needs educating ( Marx and Engels, 1969; p.13).

However, a pure organic analogy is not the solution either. In fact, while Stark claims that a solution lies in the synthesizing of mechanical and organic analogies (1962; p.250), Rex points out that the problem consists of using analogies in place of theories, which simply obscures many premises (1961;p.50).

Engels does not make any simple analogy in which he reduces human behavior to that of an organ. He clearly differentiates between the varying forms of life, distinguishing the human from other forms, and delineating both the similarities and the differences among them (1960; chapter "On the Transformation of Ape into Man").



Dialectics of human development. The distinguishing features of humans for Engels were very similar to those of contemporary physical Anthropologists (Campbell, 1968; Alland, 1967). This amounts to specifying biological differences which yield what Anthropologists call culture. Unlike Sociologists, Anthropologists tend to define culture as both the concrete and material as well as the attitudinal. The critical aspect of this more broadly defined concept of culture is its emphasis upon tool manipulation and tool construction. Humans are the first living organisms to be systematically active in the transformation of their physical and social environments.

The second critical aspect is fundamentally related to the first and it is the use of language as a systematic tool. The interaction of these two aspects results in the creation of culture by humans. Because humans are qualitatively different from other life forms, are we still able to subject ourselves to scientific scrutiny? This is similar to the traditional problem of knowledge; how objective can the social sciences be considering they involve a highly subjective component? (Williamson, 1967).

As historical dialecticians, Marx and Engels do not answer the problem with a universal yes or no. However, they do not see any necessary antagonism between the objective and subjective components. We can clearly see the origin of this position in Hegel.

Subject and object are not sundered by an impassable gulf, because the object is in itself a kind of subject and because all types of being culminate in the free 'comprehensive' subject who is able to realize reason (Marcuse, 1969; p.10).

For Marx, this manifests itself in the idea of alienation, as

it did for Hegel, but in a more historically specific setting. In Capitalism, the alienation of the subject, the worker, from the objects, the means of production and the commodities (objects produced for exchange), reaches a peak and culminates in the alienation of the subjects from subjects, or humans from humans.

Dialectics of means of production. The separation of object and subject and the subsequent distortion of both objects and subjects is a consequence of the relationship to the means of production. Much of the difficulty in interpreting Marx lies in this phrase. What exactly does he mean by the "means of production"? Is it an economic, sociological or historical expression?

The answer is that it is a dialectical expression and as such it is all of them put together but none of them separately. As Hobsbawm points out in his introduction to Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations (1971), Marx did not separate his mind into academic categories so that contemporary thinkers often encounter difficulties with his writings (pp.14-15). They often tend to see the means of production as an economic category, which leads them to label Marx as an economic determinist (Williamson, 1967; p.124).

The means of production are primarily social and this Marx builds into his system of thought through the labour theory of value, whereby labour, a social concept, is the criteria for relationships of exchange. In addition, it is apparent that the means of production are not only referring to technical means (which are the product of social labour), but they also refer to social organization of the

of relations of production.

Dialectics of history. This is, so far, only an elaboration of an abstract dialectic. For Marx, the process must be seen historically because it involves variables in the literal sense of the term. According to Marx, the first premise of all human history was,...

.. the existence of living human individuals. Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature. .... They [humans] themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organization (From German Ideology, 1969; p.20).

There is, of course, some determinism, i.e., a necessary cause or physical preconditions for the existence and expression of humans. Simultaneously, there is also the element of self creation, of freedom in the phrases "they themselves" and "distinguish themselves". Causation is not seen in any necessary relationship to oppression. In fact, the idea of necessity is thought to be an essential and complementary aspect of freedom by some contemporary Marxists, such as Cornforth. As he states in The Theory of Knowledge (1971);

Freedom does not consist in cutting loose from the operations of causality but in understanding them. It does not depend on getting rid of necessity but of getting knowledge of it (p.187).

In so far as reality is comprehensible and manipulatable, there is the possibility of free action and expression. In so far as reality is comprehensible and random, it destroys the possibility of creative freedom. In Marx's own terms,

Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under circumstances

directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the living (From The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonapart, 1969; p.398).

Thus, labour is the means of liberation<sup>n</sup> and historical inheritance of prior social labour (accumulated surplus) is the foundation upon which freedom is created.

Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production, in changing the way of earning a living, they change all their social relations. The handmill gives you society with a feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial Capitalist (1963; p.109).

#### Dialectics of Consciousness

Marx, then, combines the above premises, taking the dialectic as the tool, and formulates his position on the relationship between consciousness and material productivity.

The same men who establish their social relations in conformity with their material productivity, produce also principles, ideas, and categories in conformity with their social relations (1963; p.109).

This is the most general possible of statements on the subject. It clearly is attempting to elucidate two principal points: in the first place, humans actively create both their social relations and their consciousness; secondly, the relationship is always carefully stated so that there can be no mono-causal inferences drawn from it. It undoubtedly means that prediction is probabilistic, that decisions are made within certain inherited parameters. Engels summarizes the position put forward here and also demonstrates the dialectical process in operation.

With men we enter history. Animals also have a history, that of their derivation and gradual evolution to their present position. This history, however, is made for them, and in so far as they themselves take part in it, this occurs without their knowledge or desire. On the other hand, the more that human beings become removed from animals in the narrower sense of the word, the more they make their own history consciously, the less become the influence of unforeseen effects and uncontrolled forces on this history, and the more accurately does the historical result correspond to the aim laid down in advance(1960; p.18).

Here it becomes apparent that Marx and Engels see the active role of consciousness or ideas in the development of both social relations and their intimate partner, the relations of production. Ideas are not merely the result of socio-economic factors, but are also instruments in the creation of socio-economic factors which in turn effect them. It is clearly a dialectical relationship in the full sense of the term, and it is therefore constantly changing.

Thus these ideas, these categories, are as little eternal as the relations they express. They are historical and transitory products.

There is a continual movement of growth in productive forces, a destruction in social relations, of formation in ideas; the only immutable thing is the abstraction of movement (1963; p.110).

The critical nexus in the relations of production is the position and organization of the means of production. As Mandel points out in Marxist Economic Theory (1970), the means of production are critical in so far as they relate to Marx's concept of surplus. Now surplus is that which remains after the socially necessary costs of production have been met. For Marx, surplus is a social concept since it is the result of human technology and human cooperation in production, or human labour.

According to Mandel, there are two types of surplus; a temporary kind and a permanent kind. As an example of the temporary surplus, the Bushman of the Kalahari demonstrate the meaning of the phrase through their use of plant fauna in particular. This temporary surplus comes from a plant known as the Mongongo nut. It becomes a surplus because it remains eatable up to one year after it has been harvested. Of course, this is an accidental surplus and it does not stem from any technological innovation in food preservation. This is the distinctive feature of a permanent surplus, i.e., that it is a conscious development in human technology.

Class and consciousness. The significance of surplus lies in its ability to further the division of labour. Simultaneously, it allows for the social inequalities of class relationships. In some sense, the development of classes, i.e., of groups in different and often antagonistic relations to the means of production, in a form of the division of labour.

It is in effect a social division of labour which Marx sees as being necessary at certain points, but nonetheless, oppressive.

If, therefore, on the one hand, it [division of labour] presents itself historically as a process and as a necessary phase in the economic development of a society, on the other hand, it is a refined and civilized method of exploitation (Marx, 1970; vol. 1, p.364).

The exploitation which Marx is referring to is the exploitation of one class by another through the appropriation of the social surplus. This is demonstrated in Marx's equation known as the "rate

of exploitation" ( $s/c+v$ ) where exploitation is measured according to the amount of surplus that is derived from total investment of labour (Marx, 1970; vol.1, pp.212-20).

Quite clearly the relationship is one of power and control. The class which owns or controls the means of production controls that society relative to other groups in the society and relative to the potential for control at that time and place. In addition, by controlling the surplus of that society, it controls the future direction of the development of that society.

Control is pervasive. It extends to the control of consciousness as much as to any other sphere.

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas; i.e., the class which is ruling the material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force (Marx, 1970; p.47).

However, societies are not always class societies and as a consequence, ideas did not always have the same significance. In German Ideology (1970), Marx indicates two interesting points. In the first place he states that, "Division of labour only becomes truly such from the moment when a division of material and mental labour appears" (p.32). Here he is referring to the fundamental nature of humans, i.e., their capacity to be conscious, self conscious and to plan their activities. It is their consciousness which allows them to make themselves and it is necessary for any other social developments.

Not only is there a separation of action and the conception of action, which allows for these developments, but there must also

be a surplus such that there can be a truly social division of mental and physical labour. This leads to the second point. Under what concrete historical circumstances does this social division and development of this human fact occur? "The greatest division of material and mental labour is the separation of town and country" (p.52).

Not only is it necessary to have a quantitative surplus developed, but it is also necessary to have a qualitative change in the environment, the development of the city, before the intellectual capacities can be tapped to their fullest extent. Interestingly enough, the same factors that yield a class structure also produce the environment for concentrated intellectual maturation. It is the production of a contradiction of the highest order. As Cornforth says;

A condition for the development of abstract ideas is the separation of mental from material labour. And it contains within itself contradictory potentialities. On the one hand, it permits the acquisition of profounder knowledge of the real connection of things and of conditions of human existence than is contained in immediate perceptual consciousness. On the other hand, it permits the growth of all kinds of fantasies and illusions (1971c; p. 64).

In order for this contradiction to be possible there is a more fundamental contradiction; the nature of abstract thought itself and the possibility to conceptualize incorrectly or falsely. The very liberating mechanism of humanness, i.e., consciousness, is also the mechanism by which humans can be oppressed.

Ideology. The class association of intellectual development is probably the hypothesis for which Marx is best known. His conceptualization has been expressed in terms of the concept "Ideology".



There is the problem of separating Marx's meaning from the original usage and these in turn from the myriad of usages that have been developed after Marx.

J.W. Stein, in his article entitled "Beginnings of Ideology" (1956), traced the original use of the term to the French enlightenment, in particular to Tracy and Cabanis.

Those who subscribed to the materialism and sensationism of enlightenment philosophy felt that they had to rescue it from the traditional position of the church and Royalty. In the milieu of this defensive position, the philosophy of ideology was developed (p.165).

The philosophy of ideology was the philosophy of reason and sensate materialism.

In a more contemporary vein, Harris' Beliefs in Society (1971) deals with several meanings of the term. These include: ideology as deviation from social science objectivity (Parsons); ideology "is full of distrust, is aggressive, undermines existing political institutions, is dogmatic, doctrinaire, totalistic, and futuristic" (p.14 on Shils); "ideology is an unconscious tendency underlying religion and scientific as well as political thought" (p.14 on Erikson); ideology as radical intellectual depravity (p.14 on Geertz); ideology as the conversion of ideas into social levers by cynical and manipulative people (p.14 on Bell ).

The meaning of the term has come to be a hot bed of contention among social scientists, not because of any semantic or pedantic issue, as much as it stems from fundamental disagreements over the issues which have led up to it in our discussion of Marx. In short, the basic issues are clearly political or at least they have political

implications for the social sciences.

Marx's use of the term "Ideology" is not a point of consensus in the literature. This would appear to be the result of misinterpreting the meaning of such terms as "economic", "superstructure" etc. Elias' article is a prime example of this type of distortion. In particular, Elias attributes to Marx a dualism and an a-historical stance.

This is one of the roots of the particular ontological dualism which permeates his [Marx's] overall model of society, which finds expression in the seemingly eternal and unchanging contrast between 'economic basis' and 'superstructure' or 'being' and 'consciousness', and which left its mark on many later sociological theories (1971; p.153).

Unlike the author's presentation of Marx, Elias does not back up these interpretations with direct quotes from Marx's works, and, therefore, it is impossible to evaluate his particular position. However, it is clear from Marx's own comments quoted above that it is a highly questionable interpretation.

Williamson also argues against the position that Marx is a dualist and economic determinist (economic in the narrow sense). In addition, he gives an interpretation of the meaning of ideology in Marx's work. "Marx's concept of ideology is such that to say of ideas that, in one way or another, they distort the reality they picture" (P.127). At the same time, Williamson points out two other properties of ideology such that the above is a particular aspect but not a necessary part of the concept. It has a more general meaning, i.e., "to regard thought as ideological is to place it in the framework of a definite set of social relations (Williamson;p.127).

In the second place, it is an 'echo', a reflection of the life

process. To put these points in other terms then, ideology is a reflection of a particular set of social relations, a reflection of a certain type of distortion of conscious existence.

Williamson goes on to argue that this is only a partial view of ideology. His argument is based upon the separation of ideology from truth content.

The point that I am making, however, is that to say, for example, Darwin's theories have ideological significance is not to say anything about whether they are correct (Williamson, p. 134)

Class interests are responsible for ideological content. It is the nature of class relationships that they move towards a conflict due to the apparent and objective inverseness of their connection. Consequently, the ideology of the ruling classes is a distortion inasmuch as it does not represent the interests of the total society involved. It is, as Williamson says, a synecdoch, representing a whole with a part, and this renders it a distortion.

This does not necessarily make the ideas expressed incorrect, but there is a great potential for the ideas of the ruling classes, the bourgeoisie, to become increasingly involved in the defense of their system. Because the objective forces of fundamental change, the system becomes anachronistic and therefore, the ideologies also become obsolete. Again, the issue is primarily historical.

The role of the working classes, the proletariat, in Marx's system is significantly different from any other subservient class in the history of human kind. It is the first class in written history which contains the potential for the destruction of classes in general.

This is not to say that its ideology cannot be incorrect, but rather to point out that there is not the distorting potential which exists within the bourgeoisie, or the feudal aristocracy.

As an ascending class, the working class is prone to adopting the ideology of the ruling classes. This is what Marx called false class consciousness, its incorrectness being related to the idea of objective interests in conflict.

Alienation fits into the picture also. Alienation as fragmentation, is the unintended result of the capitalist system. It manifests itself in extreme egoism, in a fragmented view of the world, the consequences of which are to develop distortions in the behaviour of humans towards themselves and towards others. While its origin is unintended, after a certain point the ruling classes pursue it as a conscious end, in order to resist the growth of organizations which are dedicated to consciousness building and system change. Thus alienation is the motive force of false class consciousness.

Finally, Marx distinguished between the objective conditions of classes, "a class in itself", and the subjective conditions, "a class for itself." A class does not truly exist until it becomes conscious of its existence, its relationship within the social relations of production, and its potential. Only then can it change society.

#### Summarizing Karl Marx

The two critical aspects of Marx's thinking can be summarized in his concept of dialectical materialism. These are the essential aspects of his "methodology", i.e., what American sociology calls theory.

They are critical to understanding Marx's work in general precisely because they are tools, intellectual devices that are induced from history and which he uses to develop models of social action and social change.

As all methodological instruments, Marx's dialectical materialism is a means by which social scientists and human beings in general, choose the relevant information from the infinite amount of potential data that exists. Also, it is explicit in its rules and laws for the integration of data, for its analysis, interpretation and its own self criticism. Without a comprehensive understanding of these methods, it is inevitable that Marx's work will be misunderstood, distorted and generally taken out of context.

In interpreting Marx's writings on the theory of knowledge, it was unambiguously clear that his intention was to demonstrate the highly complex but comprehensible interrelationships that exist throughout all matter and all forms of life. The first fact of humanness is its biological organization, the first human act, i.e., the creation of social relations, was a product of conscious and deliberate action, which in turn is the product of the specific biological organization. Knowledge then, is a human product. It is human labour which creates knowledge, but not in isolation of the non-human material world and its laws or of the preceding society and its laws and the broader social laws which govern it.

## Chapter 4

### KARL MANNHEIM

It is not a thoroughly agreed upon interpretation of Mannheim which puts him in opposition to Marx. Zeitlin, in fact, places Mannheim under a Marxian umbrella:

Ultimately, however, the most conspicuous influence remained Marxian; for though he gained important insights from these and other thinkers [Scheler, Weber etc.] they served, Mannheim believed, primarily to enhance the analytical power a modified, non-dogmatic Marxian method could yield (Zeitlin, 1968; p. 282).

On the other hand, Merton takes the position that while there are traces of the thought of Marx and Engels in Mannheim's work, the more important influences came from the neo-Kantian tradition (Merton, 1968; p. 545).

The position which is to be adopted here on this point cannot be justified until Mannheim's views can be delineated in detail.

While there may be disagreement concerning the significance of the influences on Mannheim, there is complete agreement among the sources used here regarding the actual influences. Maquet points out three sources;

Marxism (particularly in Karl Marx and George Lukacs), Neo-Kantianism (since Mannheim read Max Weber and took the courses of Heinrich Rickert) and Phenomenology (since he was influenced by Max Scheler and was a student of Edmund Husserl) (Maquet, 1951; p. 19).

Kecskemeti, in the introduction to Mannheim's Essays On The Sociology Of Knowledge (1952) also mentions Marx, Historicism (neo-Kantianism), and Phenomenology as being the major influences upon

Mannheim's work. Again, Marx is considered only a minor influence.

There is one further problem which should be mentioned before beginning the explication of Mannheim's works. Merton indicates that there was a development in his writings:

It must be at once noted that Mannheim's theories have been undergoing constant change so that one cannot with propriety deal with his earlier or later studies as equally representing his matured views (Merton, 1968; p. 546).

This, however, is a problem which cannot be dealt with here, for the selections which have been chosen for analysis are primarily a part of his earlier work; On the Interpretation of Weltanschauung (1922), Historicism (1924), The Problem of a Sociology of Knowledge (1925), and Ideology and Utopia (1929). Nonetheless, each manuscript will be taken in chronological order. Besides the point about the development of Mannheim's thought in terms of its changing, his work also appears to develop in the sense that it lays a foundation upon which each successive work builds.

#### Weltanschauung: Mannheim's Ontology

The literal translation of the German term "Weltanschauung" is "world view". Like many terms, its literal definition is insufficient for its role as a philosophical concept. This becomes especially clear when it is noted that Weltanschauung involves a series of premises, least important of which is its ontological base.

This ontological premise of Mannheim's and of neo-Kantianism in general is not without certain ambiguities. In the first place, there is a "gestalt" like aspect that is fundamental to our world.

By this it is meant that there is a totality or a unity of the parts (of whatever unit chosen) such that the mere summation of these parts is not sufficient to give the whole. Yet, on the other hand, there is a basic split, an ontological dualism, whereby the logico-natural sciences are seen as being fundamentally different and separated from the cultural-historical sciences. For both of these reasons then, the methods employed to deal with each area are very different.

Bringing these various strata of cultural life in relation to each other, penetrating to the most fundamental totality in terms of which the interconnectedness of the various branches of cultural studies can be understood - this is precisely the essence of the procedure of interpretation which has no counterpart in the natural sciences - the latter only 'explain' things (On the Interpretation of Weltanschauung, 1952; p. 36).

The problem becomes clarified if the dualism is seen as being more fundamental than the unity premise. The duality hypothesized is that between the physical and the cultural realms. The unity or totality lies only within the cultural sphere. Therefore, in the so called pure sciences one can understand only through explanation, while in the cultural sciences one understands in a different way, i.e. "verstehen" through "Deutung" or "interpretation".

Just as with the term "Weltanschauung" these words translate into english in a very misleading way. Is not interpretation a necessary condition for explanation? The answer is more complicated than merely defining terms into colloquial english.

"Interpretation" as Mannheim (among others) uses it, refers to the special and unique characteristics of human cultural expression. This Mannheim distinguishes by constructing a three-fold division in



the concept "meaning".

Every cultural product in its entirety will, on this showing, display three distinct "strata of meaning":  
 (a) its objective meaning, (b) its expressive meaning,  
 (c) its documentary or evidential meaning (On the Interpretation of Weltanschauung, 1952; p. 36).

Objective level of meaning. The first level of meaning, the objective level, is essentially the empirical level. It is somewhat analogous to the Kantian idea of phenomena or things as they appear to be. This level of objective reality is the only level in the physical sciences. However, it is also a level within the cultural sphere. The difference is that the cultural aspect contains two other levels, both of which are more subjective and more fundamental. Mannheim makes the following distinction between natural and cultural phenomena:

The former [natural phenomena] must be conceived exclusively as something located in physical space-time or in the temporal-psychic medium, whereas the latter are invariably vehicles of meaning and hence are not integrally located either in the spatio-temporal world..... or within the psychic acts of the individuals who create or experience them.....(1952; p. 44).

It appears to follow from the above quotation that objective refers to mechanical action and as such, it cannot explain by itself cultural reality.

Expressive level of meaning. The second level of meaning transcends the world of natural science. It is the concept of expression:

True expression is characterized by the fact that some psychic content is captured within a sensually formed medium, endowing it with a second dimension of meaning; and this capturing of the psychic content is possible only if the sensual medium is not treated as something secondary and exchangeable but is given its individual form valuable in its own right (1952; p. 52).

Expression then is the individual and internal element of meaning. Most important of all, it is not generated from without, but rather, it is generated within itself. It is an intuitive instrument which can grasp meaning prior to conceptual formation, and apparently prior to perception since it is "internal" in nature.

Documentary level of meaning. The third and final level is the documentary meaning.

documentary meaning.....is a matter not of a temporal process in which certain experiences become actualized, but of the character, the essential nature, the "ethos" of the subject which manifests itself in artistic creation (1952; p. 55).

This ultimate meaning level is much like a centralized core, out of which stems every other level. It is historical in the sense that it is unique, it contains within itself the identity of an epoch or civilization. As Mannheim puts it, it is not timeless like mathematical or scientific knowledge (1922; p. 61-62).

Two consequences follow from the fact that documentary meaning is a core or an essence; in the first place, major change occurs in the core in a dramatic leap, much like in Hegel's dialectic. Secondly, documentary meaning grasps the whole through the part, whereas expressive meaning cannot grasp the whole without taking the objective factor into consideration (1922; p. 56). In addition, the validation of documentary meaning can only come about through documentary evidence.

#### Methodological Consequences of Mannheim's Weltanschauung

Mannheim's perspective has profound methodological consequences for social science. Since the most fundamental level of meaning for

the cultural-historical sciences is also the most subjective, then the tools used to understand must be somewhat "a-theoretical" and "irrational".

There are data which can be treated mathematically; others may be described in terms of different but still uniform regularities; still others are uniquely individual but nevertheless display an inner law of their unique structure, an inner consistency which can be described conceptually; and finally, there are some in respect of which all theory must limit itself to an "indication", "approximation", or "profiling" of certain correspondences, because their substantive characterization has already been accomplished in pre-theoretic experience (1922; p. 71).

The a-theoreticalness and the irrationality are interrelated by a third aspect. This intervening factor is that of causality. At the documentary level, documentary data are not related in causal terms but rather, are parallel. That which is not causal is irrational and cannot be formulated into a theoretical framework. Theory, at most by definition, involves statements concerning the causal connectedness of variables (hypothesis) and the interconnectedness of these statements. This is why the documentary level is a-theoretic and irrational (1922; p.81).

Cultural methodology. Let it be further emphasized that the documentary level is the most basic and the most critical for the 'understanding' of cultural-historical science.

As we see, meanings of formed experience re-cast the objective meaning in the mould of expressive and documentary meaning (1922; p.68).

The methodology of 'interpretation' is that of correlating the various strata of meanings and rooting them in the documentary level.

To this point, only the intra-epochal or intra-civilizational aspect of Mannheim's theory has been expounded. His view of history and of social change has not been touched upon. It was, however, pointed out earlier that Mannheim was an Historicist.

Historicism, as Mannheim himself points out, is not the same as historiography. The former is a particular theory whereas the latter is a general term to describe the study of history. Historicism relies upon the methodology of "interpretation" in order to understand the dynamic nature of cultural reality.

The first approach to the historicist mode of thought and living lies.....in the ability to experience every segment of the spiritual-intellectual world as in a state of flux and growth (1924; p. 86).

The cultural reality is defined by Mannheim in a more sociological manner, i.e., as a spiritual-intellectual phenomenon. This, of course, does not eliminate the crass material reality or objective factors, but rather, it emphasizes the expressive and documentary levels. Further, it designates these levels as the moving force of history.

Historicist theory fulfils its own essence only by managing to derive an ordering principle from seeming anarchy of change - only by managing to penetrate the innermost structure of this all-pervading change (1924; p. 86).

The process by which the inner most structure of change is penetrated consists of both historical vertical analysis and historical cross sectional analysis. Historical vertical analysis is defined in the following way:

....takes any motif of the intellectual cultural life  
.....and traces it back into the past, trying to show how each later form developes continuously, organically from the earlier (1924; p. 86).

On the other hand, cross sectional analysis:

....are made to show how, at one temporal stage, the motifs, which have just been observed in isolation, are also organically bound up with one another (1924; p. 87).

By proceeding with both kinds of analysis, a more comprehensive picture can be achieved of the "wholeness" of cultural reality. It is important to note that this is an organic wholeness, and that change occurs in an accumulative manner.

The dynamism, then, is a dynamism of reason and it opposes itself to the static reason of timeless laws found in Kantian formalism. Yet, it is more than reason and rationality.

But how the historicist is in a position, and will be so in an ever-increasing degree, to point out what extra-philosophical and pre-philosophical attitudes of life and what dominant socio-cultural realities determine the choice of this or that set of axioms. In so doing, the historicist steps beyond the immanent exclusiveness of theory and becomes more or less an "irrationalist" and "philosopher of life" (1924; p. 94).

Mannheim is not so much opposed to the ontological premise of idealism and Kantianism, but rather, he wishes to come to grips with the state of flux which is so pervasive and which must be explained.

When one takes one's departure, not from a static Reason, but from a dynamically developing totality of the whole psychic and intellectual life as from the ultimately given, the place of epistemology as a fundamental science will be taken by the philosophy of history as a dynamic metaphysic (1924; p. 97).

It is the replacement of a philosophy which is prone to post hoc explanation of change, with a dynamic metaphysic, a philosophy which predicts change in general but which cannot grasp the direction.

Relativism verses perspectivism. Such a perspective leads in

the direction of relativism, i.e., the view which holds that truth is only relative to the time and place and cannot be absolute. Mannheim denies that his philosophy is relativistic.

The mere fact that every item of historical knowledge is determined by a particular positional perspective, and there is an intimate fusion of the particular historical picture of every epoch with its actual aspiration and concrete values, in no way implies the relativity of the knowledge so obtained (1924; p. 104).

Since each new epoch has its own distinctive core, is not truth relative? There are three qualifying premises that are added to overcome this difficulty. Because development is organic, there is a "subtle bond between thought and reality" (1924; p. 104). It is then possible that

Historians indeed may grasp past epochs from those epochs' own centres, a mode of interpretation called the immanent critique and representation of the past. This is possible through "understanding" (Verstehen) as an intuitive faculty of the historian which enables him to penetrate into his subject-matter, into the concrete valuations of the epochs in question (1924; p. 105).

Still, there are different perspectives or interpretations concerning each epoch and they must be explained if knowledge is said to be existentially determined. The solution lies in the idea of perspectivism. Perspectivism involves two components, one of which has already been considered; namely Weltanschauung or rather the Gestalt-like structure of cultural-historical reality. The second part relates to the view that humans can only see part of the whole and that the interpretations which appear to be contradictory are complementary. Conflict becomes a misunderstanding that stems from not being able to grasp the whole. This false consciousness of conflict becomes resolved

only when the "problem constellation" (1925; p. 134) has been completely resolved. This constellation consists of:

- (1) the self relativization of thought and knowledge,
- (2) the appearance of a new form of relativization introduced by "unmasking" turn of mind, (3) the emergence of a new system of reference, that of the social sphere, in respect of which thought could be conceived to be relative, and (4) the aspiration to make relativization total, relating not one thought or idea, but a whole system of ideas, to an underlying social reality (1925; p. 144).

Self relativization of thought refers to the fact that thought is subordinate to more comprehensive factors. "Unmasking" is a particular form of relativization of thought, which stems from the Enlightenment and the rule of reason. It is the Marxian contribution to the sociology of knowledge. Unmasking leads to the realization of the need for a new system of reference, which is a "being", something absolute that can act as a base for the relative (1925; p. 142). This absolute being is social reality and its systematic wholeness reflects itself in the systematic wholeness of thought.

When this stage [the fourth stage] is reached, the original emphasis accompanying the emergence of these new patterns of thought gets shifted, and many superficial forms of expression originally associated with the new approach fade away of their own accord. Thus the emphasis on "unmasking" in determining the social function of ideas can more and more be eliminated (1925; p. 144).

#### Alternative Approaches to Sociology of Knowledge

Mannheim outlines what he considers to be the four major alternatives to approach the sociology of knowledge and its problem constellation. These are: positivism, formal apriorism, material apriorism and historicism (1925; p. 149).

Positivism. Positivism is rejected because:

It is, however, an essentially deluded school, both because it hypostatizes one particular concept of empiricism, and because it holds that human knowledge can be complete without metaphysics and ontology (1925; p.149).

It is within this realm that 'vulgar Marxism' resides with its inordinate emphasis upon materialism and 'homo economicus'.

Formal apriorism. Formal apriorism or formal validity is the opposite point of view from positivism.

.... the philosophy of validity depreciates being, as against thought, to an extent equivalent to a declaration of complete disinterestedness in being. This school mainly seeks to comprehend thinking in terms of thinking,.... From this immanent point of view, to be sure, the phenomenological differences between 'being' and meaning, to which the positivist attitude is necessarily blind, becomes easily discernable, and one will be able to do justice to the essential difference between an act of experience and the meaning intended by it (1925; p.152).

While Mannheim finds a certain affinity in this position, he also rejects the immanent position concerning thought, i.e., thought generated through thought independent of 'being'.

We have to recognize in the light of the foregoing, that there is something true in the materialist conception of history, according to which it is being, reality, that creates the ideal sector. The error of materialism consists merely in its wrong metaphysics which equates 'being' or 'reality' with matter (1925; p.162).

Material apriorism. Phenomenology or apriori materialism, as Scheler propounds it, makes the sub structure/super structure division with the exception that the sub-structure consists of psychological as opposed to socio-economic factors (1925; p.157). The basic problem of phenomenology is that it attempts merely to describe what is "given",



the psychological sphere, and it does not deal with genesis. It is, therefore, unable to bridge the gap between the real and ideal.

Historicism. The view which is best able to surmount these problems is that of historicism.

We completely agree with Scheler, then, that metaphysics has not been and cannot be eliminated from our world conception, and that metaphysical categories are indispensable for the interpretation of the historical and intellectual world. We also agree with him that factual knowledge and essential knowledge represent two different forms of knowledge, but we do not admit an abrupt separation of the two - what we think is rather that the essential knowledge merely goes farther and deeper in the same direction in which factual knowledge sets out (1925; p.175).

Essential knowledge here, refers to the element of meaning which is unique to cultural science. The dualism, then, which Mannheim is eliminating is that of dualism within thought more than it is the dualism which exists between the fact or empirical reality and our knowledge of that empirical phenomena.

#### The Historicist Solution: The Sociology of Knowledge

The ultimate solution to the original problem of relativism which change seemed to raise is that of perspectivism. Mannheim formulates this in concrete social terms.

Differentiation in the world of mind is much too great to permit the identification of each current, each standpoint, with a given class. Thus we have to introduce an intermediary concept to effect the correlation between the concept of class defined in terms of roles in the production process, and that of 'intellectual standpoint'. This intermediary concept is that of intellectual strata. We mean by intellectual stratum a group of people belonging to a certain social unit and sharing a certain 'world postulate' ....., who are at a given time committed to a certain style of economic activity and of theoretical thought (1925; p. 186).

In Ideology and Utopia (1929), the intellectual also came to be the most important factor in the problem of grasping the whole. It was the 'intelligentsia' as a special class which developed after the religious domination of medievalism was lifted. The uniqueness of this strata lay in its monopolization of the means of education as well as its 'scholasticism', i.e., its remoteness from the conflicts of everyday life (1929; p.11).

In general, the above work is a concrete expression of the more abstract theoretical essays which preceded it. Again, Mannheim chooses a sociological perspective as opposed to the epistemological (subjective) or the psychological. The sociological position, however, embodies both of them in its interpretation of knowledge. Its distinctiveness lies in this:

The full emergence of the sociological point of view regarding knowledge inevitably carries with it the gradual uncovering of the irrational foundation of rational knowledge (1929; p.32).

Here, Mannheim is equating change or the dynamic with the irrational and the static with the rational. Knowledge is dead and static and that is why it can be considered rational, for it is fully comprehensible. The reality which underlies this knowledge is dynamic, subjective and constantly changing. It is not comprehensible until after it ceases in the present and becomes a history embodied within a static knowledge. Even so, it is a history seen within a perspective and therefore, he must use an intuitive mechanism to grasp the fundamental documentary meaning and expressive meaning of its own determination (1924; p.93).

Politics and knowledge. Historically it was industrialization and the rise of the bourgeois class that first led to skeptical thought and the rise of reason as a philosophical position of dominance. Not only did thinking become consciously and systematically rational, but it also began to become fused with politics.

The result of this amalgamation of politics and scientific thought was that gradually every type of politics, ..... was given a scientific tinge and every type of scientific attitude in its turn came to bear a political colouration (1929; p.37).

The three political alternatives that developed were liberalism (bourgeois class), conservatism (land owning class), and socialism (working class). Each view becomes organized into political parties, within which a political philosophy is developed. The effect of thought being evolved in a political organization is two fold. In the first place:

Political parties, because of the very fact of their being organized, can neither maintain an elasticity in their methods of thought nor be ready to accept any answer that might come out of their inquiries (1929; p.38).

The very fact that a political party wishes to cover up its own bias, is also the motivation for its attack upon political opponents.

Political discussion is, from the very first, more than theoretical argumentation; it is the tearing off of disguises - the unmasking of those unconscious motives which blind the group existence to its cultural aspirations and its theoretical arguments (1929; p.39).

In these two statements there exists the basis for Mannheim's concepts of "Ideology" and "Utopia".

There is implicit in the word "ideology" the insight that in certain situations the collective unconscious of certain groups [dominant groups] obscures the real condition of society both to itself and to others and thereby stabilizes

it (1929; p.40).

It is the ascending group which unmask the obscurantism of ideology.

The concept of utopian thinking reflects the opposite discovery of the political struggle, namely that certain oppressed groups are intellectually so strongly interested in the destruction and transformation of a given condition of society that they unwittingly see only those elements in the situation which tend to negate it. Their thinking is incapable of diagnosing an existing condition of society (1929; p.40).

The conservative elements are always ideological, but the liberal and socialist views are both utopian in as much as they comprehend the necessity to be futuristic.

The theory of ideology is in itself insufficient as an explanation of cognition and knowledge. While Marx made an important contribution to the theory of ideology by pointing out its social basis [the general theory of ideology], whereas all previous theories were more particularistic, i.e., more psychologistic, it was necessary to progress to a broader theory which Mannheim called the sociology of knowledge (1929; p.78).

The non evaluative approach: relationism. The distinctive feature of a sociology of knowledge was its non-evaluative position. Thought was no longer examined as if one's own position were infallible and absolute, but rather, all thought was to be considered in relation to its origin and without regard to party biases (1929; p.78).

This again raises the spectre of relativism. Previously, Mannheim resolved the problem through the idea of perspectivism. On this occasion, perspectivism is only a partial answer. A new concept is introduced; "relationism".

Relationism signifies merely that all of the elements of meaning in a given situation have reference to one another and derive their significance from this reciprocal interrelationship in a given frame of thought (1929; p.86).

This is not significantly different from perspectivism since it accentuates the validity of the whole as opposed to the competitive validity of the different parts. However, there is an additional factor; the evaluating component. Although Mannheim does not define the concept of value explicitly, he uses it in what appears to be several different ways. In the first case, "value" is used as a synonym for correctness.

The non-evaluative general total conception of ideology is to be found primarily in those historical investigations, where, provisionally and for the sake of the simplification of the problem, no judgments are pronounced as to the correctness of the ideas to be treated (1929; p.80).

This is the first stage in the development of a relationist perspective. To put this in different terms, it is not possible to make decisions regarding the correctness of a position until after the evidence is collected. There is another aspect to this non-evaluative position. This involves the second use of the term "value".

To-day, there are too many points of view of equal value and prestige, each showing the relativity of the other, to permit us to take any one position and to regard it as impregnable and absolute (1929;p.85).

Here, "value" is used to mean that which is desirable, specifically in relation to its unmasking function. Thus, even after the evidence is collected, each perspective has a rough equivalency of value.

The third use of the concept of value is developed in the transition from the non-evaluative to the evaluative conception of ideology. Mannheim links the two aspects in the following quote.

We have, then, as the theme of this non-evaluative study of ideology, the relationship of all partial knowledge and its component elements to the larger body of meaning and ultimately to the structure of historical reality (1929; p.86).

The purpose of the non-evaluative stage is to prepare each perspective for the "ultimate" unification in the historical whole. However, that very historical whole in itself is an evaluative stage. In fact, Mannheim claims that an evaluative position was being utilized all along and that he wasn't aware of it.

This involves the third usage of the term "value" or the process of evaluation. In this case the concept is being used to designate metaphysical-ontological judgments, the basic presuppositions which underlie all thought.

.... the type of inquiry which is seriously concerned with an objective analysis, and which, after eliminating all conscious evaluation, becomes aware of an irreducible residue of evaluation inherent in the structure of all thought (1929; p.100).

In some sense, this discussion serves to reintroduce the historicist methodology of "understanding" through "interpretation" back into the argument. This serves to aid Mannheim's refutation of relativism, for it enables him to reduce reality to a unique paradox. On the one hand, reality is in a state of flux and is therefore irrational. As a consequence, the methodology for its comprehension at the social level is highly intuitive and subjective. This subjectivism leads to a fragmentation such that misunderstanding occurs in grasping the whole. Underlying all of these different perspectives social reality is the same.

If we examine the many types of ontological judgments with

which different groups confront us, we begin to suspect that each group seems to move in a separate and distinct world of ideas and that these different systems of thought which are often in conflict with one another, may in the last analysis be reduced to different modes of experiencing the "same" reality (1929; p.99).

Conflict, then, is a development of subjective experience, and not a fundamental social reality. Convergence and consensus are inevitable and will come about when consciousness of the whole is achieved.

Mannheim is correct in denying the absolute relativism of his thinking. All perspectives are incorrect because they are only fragments of the whole. It is better understood as relationism, i.e., as the interrelationship of the parts to the whole.

Unification and the intelligentsia. In Mannheim's terms, how is it possible to relate all these different perspectives together since each perspective is by itself incorrect? The solution lies in the historical role of the intelligentsia. Education has an inherent potential within itself to liberate individuals from their moorings through its exposure to the opposing tendencies. It is not until a particular historical period that this factor becomes significant.

But not until we come to the period of bourgeois ascendancy does the level of cultural life become increasingly detached from a given class (1929; p.156).

In capitalism, learning becomes less dictated by the structure (of power) and there is more freedom to pursue independently the wholeness of cultural-historical reality. The intelligentsia can separate themselves from partisan politics and thus begin to see the opposing view in order to integrate it into a total picture. The methodological goal is to avoid political pitfalls and to transcend the fragmented

political world in order to achieve a total and accurate understanding. Since political parties are representatives of classes, it is necessary to transcend the class background of any individual through the various unmasking mechanisms in order to achieve this delicate understanding.

Each of these points of view reveals the interrelationship in the total complex of events from a different angle, and thus the suspicion grows that the historical process is something more inclusive than all the existing individual standpoints, and that our basis of thought, in its present state of atomization does not achieve a comprehensive view of events. The mass of facts and points of view is far greater than can be accommodated by the present state of our theoretical apparatus and systematizing (1929; p. 252).

Although this special point, where it is possible to understand the whole, is achievable, social science is not yet sufficiently developed to be able to grasp this potential whole.

#### Summarizing Karl Mannheim

As with Marx, it is important to understand Mannheim's basic methodological tools in order to comprehend his significance. Primarily, this entails grasping the meaning of "verstehen" and the process of interpretation which this involves. The method of historicism includes this form of understanding which separates the natural, static world from the cultural, dynamic world. Because cultural life is in flux, it is fundamentally irrational, but still comprehensible. However, it only becomes comprehensible when the third level of meaning, the documentary level, is discovered through an intuitive process of interpretation.

Mannheim also acknowledges the political nature of scientific thought and the scientific nature of political thought. In the second



case, thought is only scientific in the terms defined above. In the first point, the political nature of the scientific, especially as it relates to the cultural historical sciences, is only a temporary phenomena. It arises due to the inherent perspectivism of socially determined thought. Therefore, all pre-existing thought has been political and thus only a partial representation of the whole. This has been the basis of conflict.

One class has always been ideological, i.e., has presented its point of view as the only correct one. This is the conservative land-owning class which is preoccupied with the maintenance of an existing structure and with the traditions of the past. On the other hand, utopianism is the perspective of the capitalist and working class. They also see each of their perspectives as being the only correct ones. However, they look to the future and attempt to find some transcending element.

All of these political perspectives as partisan political beliefs, are both correct and incorrect, i.e., their ideas are both incongruous and congruous with existing conditions. The solution to overcoming the conflict between them lies in the integration of the seemingly disparate perspectives, or relationism.

This solution is potentially achievable when a class is developed which is able to unmask its own moorings as well as the roots of the opposing groups. This class begins its potential liberating movement in the stage of capitalism, when skepticism and the age of reason arises. It is the intelligentsia or the academic who fulfill this role. Their potential is developed by virtue of their being exposed to opposing points of view from academics of different social backgrounds.

## Chapter 5

### MANNHEIM VERSUS MARX

The purpose of the following chapter is to outline the debate between Marx and Mannheim and to demonstrate the rationale for selecting Marx's position over Mannheim's.

In the process of the following debate and dialogue between the two theorists, a very definite series of issues will become apparent. These issues will eventually be generalized into categories of a model for social theory ( in chapter 7).

In any comparison of any nature, both the similarities and the differences between the object under consideration must be made clear. First, the similarities will be examined.

#### Similarities

Although there are few similarities between these two writers, the ones which do exist are extremely important. The most apparent one from the context of their writings is their use of an ontological base from which much of their works evolve. This explicit usage of such a premise implies a number of other similarities in their work. In the first place, their utilization of an ontological premise involves having an evolutionary view of life. Having an evolutionary view in turn implies that the author's view is historical, i.e, sees change as being an important issue. Being an evolutionist and seeing change occurring in this way means that it is necessary to approach social science from an interdisciplinary position. Finally, each of them accords a high place to the role of consciousness and knowledge

as a mechanism of social change.

While these common elements appear to be unimportant, they have a significance which will become increasingly clearer in the examination of contemporary theory. The primary function of these similarities is that they allow for an understanding of the differences.

### Differences

Zeitlin was not the first to raise the idea of a silent debate occurring among social theorists. Barrington Moore Jr. discussed the idea in Political Power and Social Theory (1958).

It is legitimate, I think, to regard our nineteenth century writers as participants in a simple debate about the possibility of putting practice the principles proclaimed by the French Revolution (1958; p.113).

Marcuse in Reason and Revolution (1941), traces the debate as far back as early Greek philosophy, but claims that the contemporary issues developed through the transformation of Hegel by Marx. Undoubtedly, there are other writers who have made similar or parallel observations.

Ontology. While it cannot be demonstrated that Mannheim was debating Marx in a point for point dialogue, it is clear that he was attempting to cope with points raised by Marx.

The major point of contention between Mannheim and Marx lay precisely in their ontological bases. Marx adhered to the idea that all of empirical reality was material and that it had a dialectical structure. Even ideas were material in their origin and nature, although they are of a qualitatively different form.

Mannheim, on the other hand, rejects materialism. As far as he is concerned historical materialism (of Marx) is nothing more than a delusion, or at best a metaphysic which is simply not acknowledged. "Historical materialism was materialist only in name; the economic sphere was, in the last analysis, ... a structural interrelationship of mental attitudes" (1929; p.255).

At the same time, Mannheim also wished to disclaim any allegiance to idealism. However, it is an obtuse form of idealism, or what he terms "immanationism", which he rejects. In other words, ideas do not stem from ideas, but rather, are socially determined. On the surface there appears to be a kinship between the two thinkers. This is precisely where the similarity ends. For Mannheim, the social determination of ideas is fundamentally subjective, whereas it is objective for Marx.

Views on science. The basis of the difference lay in the fact that Mannheim held a dualistic view of the world. Natural science was so fundamentally different from cultural science that the basic methodology employed to understand them was completely different. Natural science dealt with static factors and thus the objective process was sufficient for its comprehension. Cultural science was dynamic, historical, and the objective means for understanding it was insufficient. In order to grasp the uniqueness of the cultural flux, the subjective and intuitive method of "verstehen" had to be employed.

Marx did not hypostatize the difference between the two types of science. He did not feel that the pure sciences were static, where-

as the cultural sciences were dynamic. Change was a PERVASIVE factor and not isolated to any single area. While there were qualitative differences which existed between the human and non-human sciences, there was yet a common element that linked them together. Humans had evolved out of the natural world. It was the process of change within the natural world which had led to human existence. The difference was that humans began to be able to make themselves, to construct, create and change their own world. Change was a dialectical process wherever it occurred.

Change, however, did not mean for Marx that life was in some way fundamentally irrational as it did for Mannheim. By the same token, Marx did not feel that it was necessary to have any metaphysical postulates concerning cultural life. Mannheim cannot conceive of such a possibility. He even reinterprets Marx in terms of his own need for a metaphysical postulate.

The "material" conditions which were previously regarded merely as evil obstacles in the path of the idea are here hypostatized into the motor factor in world affairs, in the form of an economic determinism which is reinterpreted in materialistic terms (1929; p.242).

The relationship between ontology and science. Two points are being made here. The first is that Marx and Mannheim hold opposing positions regarding ontology, and secondly, the nature of the ontological premise is crucial as a determinant for premises concerning the methodology of science in general and social science in particular.

Dualistic premises, which earlier were defined as being inherently idealistic, lead to the position that the cultural sphere is so different from the natural sphere that there is a gap between human

and non-human life. As a consequence, the methods for understanding life in its behavioral manifestations also reflect this gap.

While it is not to be argued here that Mannheim's historicism is the only form which can express this perspective, it is clear that the methodology of "verstehen" is a consequence of the metaphysical ontology of historicism. By the same token, Marx's position of monistic dialectical materialism leads to the methodological position of the political economy of human behavior. For Marx, this ontology is not a philosophy, not a metaphysic as he demonstrates in The Poverty of Philosophy (1847), but a concrete and comprehensible science of human behavior.

Discipline of study. While each of them is interdisciplinary, their basic premises lead them to different methods and thus to different disciplines. Mannheim and his metaphysics were more amenable to philosophy, then to history, and finally to sociology. Marx, although he began in philosophy and law, evolved out of these areas into political economy, which was traditionally an interdisciplinary field. Engels became concerned about the pure sciences such as chemistry, physics and finally biology and physical anthropology.

Each of them chose different areas within which to collect their data and different means by which they would collect and integrate their material. Even their calculus, or their abstract logic differed. Mannheim was more oriented to a formal logic as it was defined earlier. This is somewhat apparent in his dualism where he makes the differences between the cultural and natural realms almost

mutually exclusive. Marx consistently utilized a dialectical logic or calculus which is manifested in his monism.

Human nature. The differences between these two thinkers at the ontological levels has its consequences for the understanding which each of them had concerning human nature. Marx saw human nature as having certain physiological preconditions, which were of such a kind that human nature itself was a totally variable component. It was not fixed into any permanent condition which was dictated by external forces. Rather, human nature meant merely that humans were capable of changing themselves and their behavior, a fact that differentiated them from non-human animals. However, this was only a potential which needed to be developed within a concrete social and historical situation ( Venable, 1970).

Mannheim as well saw human nature as a variable factor, but for different reasons and with different consequences. In the first place, he did not see the necessity to define the human biological nature, for his methodology was subjective and intuitive. Secondly, Mannheim did not see any necessary connection between the natural realm and the human behavioral world. At least, he never saw any point in making such a connection.

Finally, as it was pointed out in the section on Mannheim, change was an irrational condition. Cultural change, then, was organic and it occurred in a slow manner without the direction which Marx had been willing to give it. Conflict was not the outgrowth of a fixed evil component in human biology or even a religious original sin,

but rather it was the result of a distorted perception which could rectify itself in the future.

Views on society. The net result of a different ontology, a different methodology, a different abstract calculus, a different conception of change and a different approach to human nature was that each theorist saw society in a totally different way.

Mannheim dealt with the traditional problem of the relationship of the parts of a society to its whole. This is usually called the nominalism/realism debate, i.e., whether the whole is equal to the sum of the parts or whether it is greater than the sum of the parts. What is more basic to such a debate and what is usually overlooked, is the nature of the parts selected. Obviously, the nature of the relationship of the parts to the whole takes on a different meaning when the units of analysis change. In some ways, it is possible to see this discussion as an outgrowth of a more classical debate, the individualism/collectivism debate.

The inadequacy of the nominalism/realism debate is apparent in both Marx and Mannheim. Mannheim saw the whole as an essence, and therefore, it was a quality, not a quantifiable property. The parts consisted of the three levels of meaning, none of which could be added together. Only the documentary level was the essence, the core of any epoch. The social units centered around this fact. These units were not individuals, rather, they were somewhat ambiguous political groups, whose differences were the result of perceptual distortion.

They were classes that appeared similar to Marx's; aristoc-



racy, bourgeois, and proletariat. However, Mannheim added a fourth class which he called the intelligentsia, and which resolved the conflict relations existing among the units. Since the problem of conflict was merely perceptual, i.e., attitudinal, are we to conclude that the parts are to disappear as soon as their biases are unmasked?

That clearly is the impression which Mannheim leaves.

We could change the whole of society tomorrow if everybody could agree. The real obstacle is that every individual is bound into a system of established relationships which to a large extent hamper his will (1929; p. 261).

The individual, then, is the basic unit which Mannheim eventually focuses upon. There is no necessary conflict for Mannheim between the individual and the whole.

Marx, more than Mannheim, transcends the poverty of the nominalism/realism debate. Almost any positive critique of Marx demonstrates why this the case by its explanation of Marx's methodology.

As it was shown above, Marx's concern was with the pervasiveness of change. Therefore, the parts, the whole, and the interrelationship of the parts constituting the whole constantly changes.

The most critical unit to this point in history has been class as an objective force. Classes had changed over time and so had their inter relationship which constituted the whole. That whole, or totality, always metamorphosed from an apparently stable unit into a precarious and volatile unity which has to break apart before further development occurred.

But even the unit class itself was destined to disappear. At that point the individual as a unit was to become more prominent than

ever before. This raises two additional points: There are more than two levels in Marx's theory, i.e., more than the part and the whole. There are parts which constitute wholes which in turn are parts for other wholes; the individual is the ultimate focus of Marx's theory. Class was particularly inimical to the expression of individuality of the majority of people. Thus, the collectivity was not in any necessary relationship to the individual as it had been for Marx's predecessors such as Adam Smith.

The nominalism/realism debate fails in two ways. The part on realism cannot distinguish between the qualitative nature of Mannheim's wholes, and the dialectic of Marxism. Nominalism, on the other hand, cannot distinguish between the fundamental subjectivism of Mannheim and Marx's historical process of individual liberation, where an original potential becomes actualized in a concrete historical process.

Mannheim's subjectivism appears to be a variation of the classical liberalism of laissez-faire political economy and social philosophy, where the individual is given an a priori primacy over the collectivity. To a large extent, classical liberalism appeared as a moral prescription and was related to the utilitarian thinking of Bentham. More recently, writers such as Parsons and Etzioni have labelled it "voluntarism", emphasizing the apparent accentuation of the individual. Along with this, they have labelled Marxism collectivism, emphasizing what they interpret to be the primacy of the collectivity over the individual.

Implicit within such a scheme is the idea that the group or the collectivity is in some form of inherent conflict with the freedom of

the individual. Gouldner called this a "pre-Keynesian" conception.

The role of knowledge. In both the case of Mannheim and Marx, knowledge played a vital part in the transformation of Society. For Mannheim, the intelligentsia was a class in itself, whose existence was to change society. It was to piece together perceptually, the parts into a whole. This would bring an end to conflict.

Marx also saw the intelligentsia as an important force within his scheme, but only as they related to the proletariat. Knowledge was as much a political tool as any other factor in that society. The intelligentsia were members of the working class in the sense that they were producers of socially necessary labour which was instrumental in the progress of technology. Technology was a significant motor force in social change for it produced the increasing surplus value and hence the transformation of exchange and productive relations. In more direct terms, scientific knowledge of society in general would lead to the demise of Capitalism.

Political differences. All of the differences that have been raised to this point become more apparent if the political positions of both writers are examined. On the basis of the above discussion, it is reasonable to expect that the political differences will be very marked.

Marx and Mannheim could be no further apart than in their view of political structures. Mannheim adopts a position which is very close to Weber's. The basic problem which confronts humankind is a result of the inherent nature of the human condition. This cannot be altered

by superficial political manipulations, but rather, can only be changed through the role of the intelligentsia. This new class will bring together the parts and construct the essence, the wholeness of our culture.

The decision as to whether there was to be Capitalism or Socialism was entirely irrelevant. Marx, on the other hand, understood that Communism would eventually supersede Capitalism and that this transformation would be necessary. There is nothing inherent in cultures which leads to irrational behavior. The irrationalities are merely the product of classes in conflict. When that conflict can be resolved then societies can embark upon a different historical epoch.

#### Debate

The purpose of the above dialogue was not to outline in fine detail the thought of the two thinkers. Rather, it was concerned about demonstrating in general terms, broad and fundamental differences between the two men. The similarities, generally speaking, merely take on the form of agreeing on the issues to disagree. It now becomes possible to demonstrate the rationale for the selection of the Marxian position.

Ontological decision. It was pointed out before that the basic issue involved in the ontological decision is whether or not theorists are materialists or idealists.

Mannheim's idealism can be criticized through his dualistic premise. This dualism postulates a qualitative difference between ideas and material reality. By qualitative difference, Mannheim means that there is a gap, an inexplicable rift without any quantitative

basis.

The issue which Mannheim avoids is the origin of ideas. Since he holds a metaphysical postulate, he has an a priori postulate which acts as a built-in escape hatch. Ideas merely exist, and they do not have to be understood in terms of their genesis.

There can be no justification for overlooking the genesis of ideas. Once this problem is considered, the ontological debate becomes clearer. Either a supernatural being or element is called into existence, or ideas are seen as the outcome of the development of matter.

The superiority of Marx's position lies precisely in this area. Marx consciously stops the objectification of any aspect of the human sphere into metaphysical and religious forces, or forces external to humans. The origin of ideas stems from matter. They are the result of an evolutionary process which led to the development of humans.

Materialism defeats idealism simply because it is empirically correct. Ideas cannot exist prior to material preconditions. Matter in many forms existed long before humans. It took not only matter, but a particular configuration of matter to yield human consciousness. All of this Engels considers in his work (See especially "On the Transition of Ape to Man", 1960; pp. 110-85 ). Nowhere does Mannheim consider this problem. There is no discussion on the origin of human society, its prerequisites or preconditions.

The problem can be examined in different terms. Mannheim looks at society post hoc, i.e., at time 2. At time 2 he observes both ideas and matter. Ideas are qualitatively different from matter. Therefore, he concludes that ideas are universally qualitatively different from

matter. There is no link between the two.

The trick is to omit the first historical phase, time 1. Through the omission of time 1, the quantitative and concrete historical development of the differences is eliminated. The present must be seen as the surface of a continuous historical development. Marx's dialectic discusses qualitative change of matter into ideas as a surface distinction which exists at time 2 but which requires an understanding of the quantitative development of matter between time 1 and time 2.

Mannheim's historicism eliminates the possibility of taking into consideration the underlying quantitative changes which result in the qualitative distinctions. Thus Horowitz comments that:

The special dimension of metaphysical doctrines has always rested upon the inviolability and mystery of the human mind - its uniqueness among all things in the cosmos, its ability to comprehend uncomprehending things (1961; p. 6).

Nature of the ontological issue. One of the important characteristics of an ontology is that it has a high level of generality or a high level of abstraction. It is, in fact, at the highest level of generality.

The phrase "level of generality" is being used in the same way that Karl-Deiter Opp defined it in discussing middle range theories.

We define a theory A as more general than a theory B, if, and only if A can explain the same singular facts as B and additional singular facts which B cannot explain (1970; p. 249).

There is a two-fold significance to the level of generality. In the first place, it is interwoven with the idea of historical sequencing. In evolutionary terminology, that which occurs first in time is

also going to take on a more generalized form. For example, Homo Sapiens are a specific form of mammal, which is a specific form of animal. The most generalized category, animal, occurs prior to the more specific form, mammal, etc.

The importance of the sequencing lies in the fact that the establishment of an empirically correct ordering of events allows for the development of a necessary factor in causal relationships, and possibly sufficient factors as well. This is the second consequence of the level of generality being made known.

Effects of the ontological level. Since the ontological issue is at the highest level of generalization, it should be expected that the ontological issue will be a necessary cause in the determination of lower level issues.

i. Science and methodology. The manner in which both Marx and Mannheim view science should be the outcome of their ontological positions.

Mannheim's ontological idealism and dualism should lead to a dualism in his approach or his methodology to the two spheres, the natural and the cultural.

In the exposition of Mannheim's works, it is clear that such a methodological division occurs. The natural realm requires a strictly objective technique, whereas the cultural realm involves a fundamentally subjective method. In the natural sciences one comes to understand through explanation. In the cultural sciences, one comes to understand through interpretation, basically an intuitive mechanism.

Marx's work follows the same pattern. His ontological premise is monistic and dialectically materialistic. Therefore, it can be expected that Marx's methodology should be comparable for the natural and social sciences. While there will be differences between the specific methods used in the natural and cultural sciences, the general conception of science and the general methods employed should be identical.

The previous examination of Marx and Engels indicates that this is the case. Both the natural and the cultural sciences are objective and subjective sciences. The dialectic is employed in both areas. In political economy, Marx's examination of capitalism was made through a concrete formulation of a series of mathematical formulas. The rate of exploitation, the tendency for the rate of profits to fall and his theory of trade cycles all take on this form.

Effects of the ontologically derived methodology. The ontological issue is rarely considered in an open dialogue. Scientific methodology, then, becomes increasingly important as an issue in social science. Whether or not the ontological issue is debated freely, the social science methodology chosen becomes an extremely important factor simply because it is a basic tool which every social scientist (and probably every human being) must use.

Methodologies determine the level of operation, the data selected, the collection techniques and the method of integrating and interpreting the information. It is the principal means by which the ontological issue is translated into lower level issues. To a large extent, it ensures a consistency to any particular approach.



Ontology, method and change. The change which is under consideration in this section is that between the natural and cultural realms.

The adoption of the dualistic ontology guarantees that there will be no explicit need to demonstrate objectively the relationship between the natural and the cultural sciences. This follows from the position which Mannheim held on the above two issues. The dualistic ontology is a metaphysical and a priori postulate, while the scientific philosophy which follows from it attributes to the cultural sciences both a subjective and self validating procedure. In other words, the cultural sciences can only be explained in terms of themselves. Not only that, but natural reality is static and therefore, it cannot explain the genesis of cultural reality. That change exists in the eyes of Mannheim is not to say that change is objective and manipulatable by objective means, but rather that change is a subjective reality and cannot be dealt with in objective terms.

Mannheim eliminates two aspects of change; genesis and death. While the a priori postulate in his ontology dispenses with the need for an origin, the lack of an explanation of the origins of a phenomena likewise displaces the need to cope with the demise of the phenomena. This is not to say that Mannheim does not recognize, at least implicitly, that there are such occurrences. He merely neglects to explain them. It is not necessary to explain the objective basis of culture if culture is fundamentally subjective, and if any understanding of culture has to be validated in subjective terms at the documentary level.

As a dialectical materialist, employing a dialectical and objective scientific method, Marx is more willing to explain the entire process of change. Non cultural natural phenomena also have a history. If change did not occur at the natural level, then human cultural existence could never appear. Because Marx does not hold a dualistic ontology, he finds it necessary to explain the genesis of human culture.

Once he has explained genesis, he also explains process as change which is leading toward destruction. Destruction and negation are an objective part of both natural and cultural realities.

Yet, it is not destruction, pure and simple, without any future. The consequence of the destruction is the release of new forces which produce a new genesis.

This is precisely the form which change takes in modern evolutionary theory. There is the internal contradiction; the normal amount of variation within any gene pool population as well as mutations (mutator genes), and other factors such as genic interaction, that produce new amounts and kinds of variation. There is the external contradiction; the variations within the environment or "niche" of any given species. The interaction of the two factors allows for a selection of certain adaptive traits. If the amount of change required is too great for the selection process to operate, then there is extinction. If the adaptation can be made, then eventually the accumulations of adaptations themselves will cause extinction, a good example of quantitative changes yielding qualitative differences (See Lerner, 1968).

Ontology, method, change, and human nature. Sociologists with a strong sense of the boundary of their discipline will likely protest. Biology is for the biologists.

Mannheim would likely have taken such a position. Given his ontological dualism, and the fact that it reflected his view of science, Mannheim cannot conceive of discussing human nature meaningfully in objective terms. The elimination of the genesis of human culture obviates discussing human nature in terms of human biology.

Marx, on the other hand, was prepared to state that the first premise of all human history was physical existence, and the first fact to be established was their "physical organization" (1970; p.20). Nor is that biological premise vacuous. It is, according to Marx, the basis of their true human nature.

In Mannheim's terms, Marx saw the unity of the subject and object in all things. The subjective was not isolated to the human cultural sphere, not the objective isolated to the non-human natural sphere. Both factors existed in some relatable fashion, and this was especially significant for human beings.

### Societal Issues

It is being postulated that the nature of social units, their selection and their interpretation, is the result of the premise states chosen in the resolution of the preceeding categories.

Social structure. The cultural part of Mannheim's dualism was basically subjective. Consequently, his cultural methodology was also subjective. The mode of "verstehen" is essentially the inter-

pretation of the documentary level of meaning through a fundamentally intuitive process.

It is of little value to discuss the relationship between Mannheim's two realms. The natural is simply parallel to the cultural. Genesis of culture is not considered important. Human nature is part of the metaphysical realm which is understood through some a priori postulates. It is the importance of the intuitive process to grasp these a priori premises.

The phrase "social structure" implies the idea of a basic framework which is the basis for the operation of a society. Given Mannheim's subjective premise states, his conception of social structure should also be subjective in character.

Mannheim does in fact conceive of a social structure as being a subjective entity. It is the structure of meaning which is located in the space-time continuum, nor in the psychic acts of the individual ( 1922; p.44).

The structure involves three hierarchically ordered strata. The ultimate level of meaning, and the most profound, is the documentary level. To repeat what Mannheim said about this level:

documentary meaning, .... is a matter not of a temporal process in which certain experiences become actualized, but of the character, the essential nature, the 'ethos' of the subject which manifests itself in artistic creation (1922; p.55).

In contrast to Mannheim, Marx's position takes on the opposite interpretation. Marx's ontology, methodology, relationship of spheres, and concept of human nature all stem from his monism. As it was pointed out above, human nature had to be understood in biological terms be-

fore it was possible to establish the meaning of humanness in social terms.

Marx's idea of social structure, then, was stated in both objective and subjective terms. Structure is made up of an interacting web of social relations of production. To be sure, it involved meaning, art human activity of any nature. However, the subjective in Marx's scheme was not separated by an insurmountable chasm from the objective. There is a direct linkage and that linkage could only be seen if one held to a materialist ontology.

Marx is often seen as a dualist because he postulates the existence of both a sub-structure and a super-structure. By sub-structure or basis is commonly meant the economic structure and by super-structure, culture.

K. Korsch deals with this problem in his book in chapter 6, "Basis and Superstructure" (1938; pp.214-29). According to Korsch, it is a necessary part of any scientific method to differentiate the parts of an interacting process if any specific moment is to be understood. Therefore, it is not dualism in an ontological sense, but rather a unity which is split for heuristic purposes, by taking the parts out of a process to evaluate their relative strength in the relationship.

It is difficult to discuss Marx's concept of social structure without putting it into the context of social change. Unlike Mannheim, it is not possible to understand social process without dealing with social genesis and demise.

Social change. Mannheim's historicism effectively eliminates objective change in the cultural realm. Change in the cultural sphere

merely appears to be an obtrusive element which must be eliminated, or at least minimized, if the a temporal documentary level is to be grasped. Mannheim does not explain change, he merely explains it away.

The origin of culture cannot be discussed. Ontological dualism blocks such a possibility. Change between cultural epochs is merely the history of a dynamic metaphysic. The movement of culture away from conflict and disunity towards a unity is predicated upon relationism, i.e., upon grasping the absolute wholeness of being by piecing together the parts. Even cultural change is a change of the subjective. Whether or not the objective part changes or not isn't relevant. Because change is subjective, it doesn't involve the demise of cultures. Change can occur through organic growth, accumulation of the parts.

Needless to say, Mannheim has ensured the safety of his position by maintaining that it is not possible to examine cultural premise states with objective techniques. This has to be seen as the basis of a consensual approach, for it eliminates any opposition before it can emerge.

However, if objective methods are used to examine this historicism of Mannheim or of historicism in general, then historicism has difficulty in maintaining its position.

Samuelsson thoroughly demonstrates the inadequacy of the historicist position in his devastating critique of Max Weber's Protestant Ethic (1930). Weber's weaknesses were all located in his manipulation of social and historical data, i.e., objective data. While Weber assumed that modern capitalism had arisen first in protestant countries, Samuelsson shows that catholic countries, such as Belgium and Italy

were in the vanguard of industrial expansion. In the protestant countries of Switzerland and Scotland, industrial expansion did not begin until the eighteenth century (1961; pp.120-1).

Weber's intra-national religious hypothesis, i.e., that protestants will be more economically successful, is equally untenable. In order to demonstrate his point, Weber used Offenbach's figures dealing with the percentage of protestants and catholics in secondary schools in the district of Baden in Germany. Samuelsson shows that Weber's conclusions because there are more protestants in secondary schools, protestants are more economically successful) is based upon several errors. Firstly, the figures were incorrect and exaggerated the percentage of protestants by 15%. Secondly, the figures dealt with only two years (1895-6) and did not take into consideration long range trends. Thirdly, the figures were not analyzed on the basis of the proportion of the respective religious groupings in the population at large.

Thus, school by school and district by district it appears that the proportions of school children classified by religious faith are almost exactly the same as the corresponding proportion of the total populations of the appropriate district (1961; p.141).

It should be noted, as Stinchcombe has, that the invalidation of data at one level of analysis does not invalidate the higher level hypothesis of the same theory (1968; pp.50-2). However, it is inevitable that historicist theorists who carry on social research will fall into grave errors because their ontology emphasized subjective techniques at the expense of disparaging objective methods.

Marx's idea of social change does not involve defining the super-structure as 'ethos'. This is why Weber's work cannot be seen

as an extension, or a rounding out of Marx's works, as Gerth and Mills indicate (From Max Weber, 1946; introduction). Weber's ethos, like Mannheim's, is purely subjective, whereas Marx's super-structure is both objective and subjective.

Marx's ontology allows for a unified conception of the world. This unity ensures that there will be a discussion on the origin of culture. The origin of culture in general, of course, must be distinguished from the origin of any particular culture,

Dialectical change as it applies to society is both quantitatively and qualitatively different than dialectical change as it applies to, for example, biology. The most important difference is that change in human society is conscious change brought about by humans themselves. In non human organisms change is not conscious for even if the organism had the intellectual capacity to conceive of change, it does not have the tool making abilities to translate its consciousness into concrete actions of a sophisticated nature.

The very fact that Marx saw, "that mankind is the author of its own drama" (Ojzerman, 1968; p.139), indicates that sub-structure has a subjective element and that the super-structure does indeed act at times as an independent variable in their interaction. How else could Marx talk of revolution if he did not conceive of super-structure, consciousness, as a moving force in history?

It is impossible systematically to validate or invalidate Marx's theory of social change in this thesis. All that can be done is to demonstrate that the premises which underlie Marx's theory have greater degree of plausability than those of Mannheim's. Of course, it could



be argued that his prediction about the disintegration of capitalism and the rise of socialism is becoming more prophetic day by day. However, such a position could not do justice to Marx for it would fail to consider his work according to his scientific methods. The significance of this work is to define the differences and similarities between these thinkers such that their positions can eventually be tested more thoroughly.

Class. Just as a full discussion of Marx's concept of social structure cannot proceed without the introduction of change, neither can a complete analysis of change be made unless Marx's idea of class is introduced.

Marx's concept of class, as it was stated in chapter 3, has been grossly misinterpreted. Most of the misinterpretation of Marx can be traced to theorists holding alternate positions, and imposing these positions upon Marx.

Weber splits the idea of class into its economic and social components, "answereng" what he thought was a one sided economic definition of class. Marx, as it was pointed out earlier, is not an economist, but rather, a political economist.

When Marx defines class as social relations of production, he means simply that humans construct their own world. Class is the major unit of the present structure. It is a development of the division of labour which is necessary but undesirable.

Class as a form of the division of labour begins to develop only when there is a significant social surplus value created to allow for the subordination of one group by another.

The idea of surplus value must be seen dialectically in order to be appreciated. The production of the surplus itself is a positive event. It can be used to improve the conditions of a society and allow for further developments. Simultaneously, it also has the potential to be centralized into a small elite group who can maintain control over the majority.

The result is that there is an internal contradiction produced within the society based upon class antagonism. Those who control the means of production, control the surplus value produced. Those who control surplus value, control whatever power is available within that particular society.

Class exists objectively, i.e., in itself, and also subjectively, for itself. The true class only emerges when it becomes conscious of its own existence and translates that consciousness into organized action, into a political group.

It is this political action of an organized group of humans that transforms the society. Class in this sense is the active agent of change and critical composition of the structure of a society.

All Marx's societal premises can be seen as the outcome of his dialectical (historical) materialism. Any dualism that separates subject from object is seen as an aberration, an alienation which is blocking the potential development of human beings. There is nothing natural about capitalism and nothing in the universe of human-kind which is fixed. Change, when it occurs, itself is changed each time. Any limitations which are imposed upon human societies are historical, the result of previous actions by humans, and are therefore capable of being

changed. The past can only set parameters upon the immediate future. It cannot determine the future.

In the same way, Mannheim's concept of class is a result of his ontological dualism. Class as a part of culture must, like all parts of culture in a dualistic framework, be basically and primarily subjective.

Mannheim sees classes as the distinctive parts which go into making up the whole. The ideas held by each class are correct, but they are incorrect for the whole. Each group has a legitimacy which is weighted equally. The historically critical point in time occurs when a new class, called the intelligentsia, comes into existence. The intelligentsia, because it consists of individuals from every class, comes to appreciate the relative merits of each view. It synthesizes the parts into the whole. The parts are not destroyed, but rather frozen into the crystal-like structure of perception.

For those who have any experience within the structure of a university, it can only be a naive view which sees the intellectual as being fundamentally a class. Of course, it also indicates that the class foundation is perceptual and subjective one.

The structure of the university in capitalist societies are clearly oriented toward the domination and control by the ruling classes. The very structuring of the relations of learning are hierarchical, oriented as much to control as they are to learning. Like all hierarchies, control is for the benefit of the elite, not the majority.

It is especially ironical that the social scientists are the particular intellectuals to whom Mannheim is referring. Is it the wholism of social science intelligentsia which has grasped the documentary

level by the elimination of the main opposition? Marx has as much as possible been simply avoided, and where that hasn't been possible, been distorted. Has the wholism of this elite group begun to eliminate racism, sexism and poverty in western capitalism? Much of the academic community spends its energies in the defense of these very inequalities.

Political ramifications. From the previous examination of Marx and Mannheim, it is clear that their politics are diametrically opposite. Marx was a Communist and Mannheim was too involved in subjectivism to be concerned about objective political action. It made little difference to him whether Capitalism or Communism existed.

However, by Mannheim's lack of concern about politics, he fulfills a necessary political function; he does not oppose the existing structure and therefore, helps to maintain it. That existing structure, no matter how indifferent Mannheim is to it, is still Capitalism.

It is important to realize that Mannheim's subjective and dualistic ontology inevitably leads to a Capitalist political philosophy, even if it is political by default.

Dualism takes the contemporary alienation (separation) of subject and object, which is an historical condition, and universalizes it into an ontological base. In the process, it eliminates the objective aspect from cultural reality.

It ensures that the subjectivism will be applied consistently throughout the model by the application of a subjective methodology. The subjective form of validation makes it into a closed system. Any criticism can be translated into subjective terminology and reinterpreted to

become a validating factor.

Dualism results in the interpretation of history in either Phenomenological or Historicist terms. Both of these positions have one thing in common; they eliminate genesis or origin, both in the general sense of culture and in the particular sense of a specific culture.

The reason is that the past is no longer subjectively alive. It can only be treated in objective terms. Since these objective factors (quantitative) have been a priori eliminated, history also can be eliminated.

In all fairness to Mannheim, it should be pointed out that he does see history as being important, but again only in a subjective sense. He felt that it was possible to reconstruct the subjective mood of a period by the examination of its art, or the documentary subjective level. Yet, the objective factors have still been eliminated.

Political action is quite clearly tied to objective factors. Even Mannheim discusses classes and their politics in terms of objective conditions. Conservatism is associated with the Aristocracy, Liberalism with the Bourgeois, and Socialism with the proletariat (1929; pp.192-262).

However, Mannheim again resorts to his original dualism in the treatment of politics. "Why is there no science of politics?" (1929; p. 109). There are two reasons. Either we are moving towards that point when there will be such a science, or such a science is not really possible.

Our social structure is built along class lines, which means that not objective tests but irrational forces of social competition and struggle decide the place and function of the individual in society. .... The two main sources of irrationalism in the social structure (uncon-

trolled competition and domination by force) constitute the realm of social life which is still unorganized and where politics becomes necessary (1929; pp.115-6).

The political is part of the irrational, and it is tied to our emotions. In other words, there is no objective science of politics, only a subjective science, which is no science at all.

The solution to the political conflict lies in the observer (latter to be the intelligentsia) rising above the conflict. This is a tricky matter for;

Even though the observer be a participant in the struggle, the basis of his thinking, i.e., his observational apparatus and his method of settling intellectual differences, must be above the conflict (1929; p.117).

It becomes even more improbable a possibility when just above this statement Mannheim realizes that "... in the realm of political and social thinking, .. we must recognize actual differences in styles of thought - differences that extend even into the realm of logic itself" (1929; p.117).

If the political differences are this thorough and pervasive, is it reasonable to take this quasi-value free position? Only if the position adopted is basically subjective, for then the social scientist can claim that the conflict is basically subjective. If the conflict is subjective, then the solution is also subjective. It is not difficult to rise above a subjective problem, especially if one can draw upon metaphysical and a priori elements. Once the objective world is eliminated, then the only limitations upon the possible arise out of the limitations of imagination.

The important thing to realize is that the conflict in any fun-

damentally objective sense does not exist. The advent of the intelligentsia does not eliminate class. Capitalism continues to exist. However, the conflict dies for it was always based upon a misunderstanding.

Everything in Mannheim's position becomes its opposite. The purpose of science is to discover the non-scientific nature of the human world. The purpose of knowledge is to create awareness. The purpose of being aware is to discover the forces controlling our lives. The forces controlling our lives are political. These political forces are irrational. Therefore, we come to learn that we cannot control our lives.

The absurdity of the age, the seeming powerlessness of the majority, and the obvious power of the minority, all become twisted into an incomprehensible system of thought. Mannheim becomes the greatest manifestation of his time.

## Chapter 6

### MARX AND CONTEMPERARY SOCIAL THEORY

#### Two Forms of Debate: Their Underlying Unity

There are two basic forms which the debate with Marx can take. On the one hand, there are people like Mannheim and Weber who reject the scientific approach of Marx and substitute a historicist method. This philosophy has manifested itself in popular as well as academic circles, through a form of "technophobia" where technology is seen as being uncontrollable by human social forces (Ojzerman; p.145).

On the other hand:

... the most influential philosophy in contemporary science is positivism, according to which the sole function of science is to describe and explain what there is and, if at least some laws are known, to extrapolate what there will probably be. All evaluation in terms of needs, feelings, ideals, in terms of ethical, aesthetic and other standards, are considered basically irrational and, from the scientific point of view, pointless (Markovic; p.157).

These two forms, however, have a fundamental unity. E.A.

Tiryakian (1965) demonstrates that the essential feature of phenomenology is the distinction made between the natural and cultural sciences. This difference is identical to the differences which both Weber and Mannheim postulate, i.e., the cultural sciences have a subjective quality about them which is an essence, or an ethos, and which cannot be grasped by natural scientific techniques. Tiryakian goes on to associate Mannheim, Weber, Scheler, Vierkandt, Gurvitch, Mauss, Simmel, Thomas, Cooley, Mead, Sorokin, Parsons and Durkheim with phenomenology.

The inclusion of Durkheim is most interesting because Durkheim has always been associated with positivism. As Martindale points out,



Durkheim followed in the footsteps of a Comtean synthesis of Organicism and Positivism (Martindale; pp.86-92). Martindale also points out that Organicism is rooted in idealism and that its assumptions are inherently transcendental, whereas positivism is non transcendental technique. While it is true that there is some potential for a conflict between these opposing tendencies (Martindale; pp.52-3), Tiryakian demonstrates that Durkheim, and more recently Parsons, have managed to maintain these antithetic tendencies in their work. Of Durkheim and his concept of suicide Tiryakian says:

The surface manifestations of suicide establish its presence as a social phenomenon; these objective, quantitative factors are then "reduced" phenomenologically to underlying layers of the social structure in which the act of suicide occurs, and ultimately the meaning of the act is grounded in the psychological nexus between the individual and his social milieu (which is a subjective one). The "depth" analysis leads Durkheim to perceive that sharp historical fluctuations in suicide rates are phenomenal surface manifestations of much deeper societal currents of a psychological nature, which presently lie outside the scope of scientific research (Tiryakian; p.681).

Of Parsons and his action frame of reference:

This begins to suggest how closely the action frame of reference is consistent with a phenomenological perspective.. Not only does it assume a Naturwissenschaft-Geisteswissenschaft distinction, but also, as Parsons explicitly acknowledges,

...the action frame of reference may be said to have what many, following Husserl have called a "phenological" status (Tiryakian; p.685).

Tiryakian makes an interesting distinction here, when he uses the phrase "radical positivism", by which he means monistic and anti-dualistic views of reality (Tiryakian; p.685). The point is that one can use empirical techniques and methods without necessarily accepting

a materialist and non metaphysical perspective. Thus, there is a fundamental unity in the two opposing views countered against Marx.

Using Parsons as an example of contemporary theorising is misleading for it gives the impression that contemporary theory is still like the classical theory of Durkheim, Weber, Simmel etc., i.e., it exists on a "grand" or large scale. This, however, appears to be one of the distinguishing features of contemporary American social theory: it is oriented toward small theories and empiricism and it basically lacks a large theoretical framework. Warshay states:

1) Modern sociology is dominated by small theories and by empiricism rather than by a single integrating theory of even by a few large theories or schools. Among factors accounting for this might be the proliferation of sociological sub-areas, the Theory-Method ideal, and particularly, the call for "middle-range" theories (Warshay, 1971; p.23).

Warshay also points out what he calls the "Humanist-Positivist Polarization" (p.25), as part of the contemporary trend. By humanism he means:

The key is involvement, in several senses of the word: theoretical, methodological, and activist. Theoretically, it emphasizes the humanistic subject matter of sociology (Berger, 1963; Cameron, 1963; Coser, 1963), emphasizing meanings and values within complex and changing political economic, and cultural settings that are part of an historical process. Methodologically, it distrusts the rigor of science as excessive and increasingly sterile, and favors more loose-jointed methodologies, ... (p.25).

The difference between humanism and positivism is purely one of degree. They both stem from the same subjective base, arguing that human behavior is so fundamentally different from other life forms that it requires a different approach, i.e., namely a non quantitative a priori method. In this ontological sense, humanism and positivism are linked.

It was originally argued that a dialogue is essential to the development of objective social science. It was also argued that Marx is the key figure of an historical dialogue which Hegel initiated in its modern form. The discussions concerning such a debate have either taken on a classical form as in the cases of Zeitlin, Moore, and Marcuse, or, if they mention contemporary theory, it takes on a consensual approach as in the case of Gouldner and Martindale. Objectively, it was argued that there is no basis for the consensus, either in terms of Marx's writing, or in terms of the social structure.

It can be further argued that consensus as an approach in general is another political ploy. A consensus approach always appears to construct the problem as if there were only two mutually exclusive alternatives: consensus or anarchy (in the literal sense of chaos). Thus, the advocates of law and order argue in these terms, implying that there can be no alternative forms of law and order. Horowitz clarifies this point in his article (1962):

Thus the history of conflict and consensus has been a dialogue between exclusive frames of reference seeking to explain the same phenomena - human cooperation (p.179).

Horowitz then goes on to demonstrate that consensus is not identical to cooperation (see Chapter 2). The significance of consensus is that it eliminates its opposition in one way or another. Horowitz, however, over states his case. It may not always be possible for opposing factors to coexist. The reason, for example, why consensus in social theory eliminates Marx is because Marx is attempting to offer an alternative to the reigning political structure. If Marxism were successful, it would eliminate Capitalism. Therefore, consensus is a realistic pol-

itical stand taken in defense of capitalism.

Horowitz's use of the term 'cooperation' in these overly general terms fails to distinguish between the two different uses of conflict, which he himself recognizes elsewhere. On the one hand, Simmel and more recently Coser, see conflict as having a functional significance for the maintenance of a system. On the other hand, Marx sees conflict as a primary factor in bringing about change both within structures and eventually between alternative structures.

Insofar as consensus implies elimination, deprecation and distortion of opposing alternatives, contemporary social theory is consensus oriented in relation to the historical dialogue with Marx. Consensus in modern theory, however, takes on a totally different form. The structure of modern theory is primarily small, middle range, or simply anti-theoretical. The argument to be made here is that these methodological structures can in fact be political strategies for a consensus approach, acting as extensions of the classical position of people such as Weber.

#### Merton, Middle Range Theory, and Consensus

It will be argued here that Merton's middle range theory is not in fact middle range. Merton can be seen as an extension of the classical dialogue discussed above. The middle range theory is simply a variation upon the non-acknowledging consensus theme.

Merton's thesis concerning the middle range can be broken down into four distinct but interrelated arguments. In the first place, he argues that the history and systematics of theory must be separated. His second argument relates to the optimumness of the middle range. Large theories are too abstract, and small theories are not general enough.

His third argument involves the construction of large theories through the accumulation of a number of reliable middle range theories. Finally, Merton stipulates that the content of middle range theory is limited to issues concerning social structure, but excludes historical content.

Critique of argument 1. Merton argues that the history and the systematics of theory should be separated. However, he does not make an explicit argument for his position.

The basis of the argument appears to be an ontological premise.

These efforts to straddle scientific and humanistic orientations typically lead to merging the systematics of sociological theory with its history (Merton, 1968; p.29).

In other words, if one is an ontological dualist, then it is possible to see the systematics of theory, its structure or form, as being separated from history, or its content.

Tiryakian lends support to this position and gives some indication as to why this may be the case.

... it should be realized by now that this phenomenological approach to "meaning" and "structure" is at the heart of functional analysis, particularly as formulated by Merton... (tiryakian; p.676).

It is the phenomenological approach of Merton which leads him to devalue the role of history and its relationship to systematics. A critique of this position will be made in argument 4, where a similar discussion ensues over the relationship between history and the structure of society.

It becomes clear that Merton is in fact using premises of a very high level of generalization. The existence of his middle range theory

is predicated upon an implied ontology. Therefore, it is highly questionable whether Merton can be considered a middle range theorist.

Critique of argument 2. Merton defines middle range theory in terms which eliminate certain levels of generalization.

theories that lie between the minor but necessary working hypothesis that evolve in abundance during day to day research and the all-inclusive systematic efforts to develop a unified theory that will explain all the observed uniformities of social behavior, ... . It is intermediate to general theories of social systems which are too remote from particular classes of social behavior, ... to account for what is observed and to those detailed orderly descriptions of particulars that are not generalized at all (Merton; p.39).

Merton has two major objections to what he calls large or unified theories. The first objection lies within the above quotation, and it states that general theories are too removed from particular events to account for the observations.

Deiter-Opp contends that Merton has no basis for making such an argument. If he argues that large theories are too general, then he is implicitly arguing that the more specific a theory is, the better it is to start from. Thus, he is involved in an infinite regress unless he can demonstrate why a theorist should stop at the middle range (Opp; p. 250). Since the middle range theory is also in a problematic state presently, then it becomes necessary to start from the lowest level possible.

Besides the logical contradiction which Opp points out above, it is not apparent that high levels of generalization cannot be operationalized. Power, class, and social structure are all high level variables which are commonly used. In fact Merton himself uses them.

Critique of argument 3. Not only does Merton argue that history and systematics of theory can be separated, but he also argues that scientific developments are accumulative. As Opp points out:

Such a cumulative development of the sciences clearly contradicts the facts. Especially the history of the natural sciences demonstrates that there is no simple progress from special, empirically confirmed theories to unified "scientific system". Thus, the empirical law mentioned must be refuted as empirically wrong (Opp; p.247).

One of the references cited by Opp is Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1970). Kuhn's thesis on the history of science is essentially dialectic in nature, although he never uses such a term. First, there is the normal period of science, by which he means:

... research firmly based upon one or more past scientific achievements, achievements that some particular scientific community acknowledges for a time as supplying the foundation for further practice (Kuhn; p.10).

The past achievements are places into a generalized theoretical framework and which have a broad consensus in the particular community of scholars. This is what Kuhn calls the "Paradigm". The consensus of Kuhn's thesis has that exclusive property which Horowitz attributed to it, namely that new views are suppressed. However, in the process of refining the paradigm, certain anomalies appear. As the anomalous elements grow, the paradigm becomes weakened until an alternative is developed which can obviously explain what the old paradigm could plus what the old paradigm could not explain. However, the transformation is not accumulative. In the first place, the problem becomes redefined. Then there is a transformation of scientific imagination and finally, the rules are changed.

That is why a new theory, however special its range of application, is seldom or never just an increment to what is already known. It's assimilation requires the reconstruction of prior theory and prior fact, an intrinsically revolutionary process that is seldom completed by a single man and overnight (Kuhn; p.7).

Not only is it factually incorrect that science is a purely accumulative process, but there is also a more general logical problem that destroys the accumulative approach. Merton assumes that it is feasible to move from less to more general theories, in other words, that it is possible to construct a unified theory through the accumulation of specific theories. If generality is defined in the following terms:

We define a theory A as more general than a theory B, if, and only if A can explain the same singular facts as B and additional singular facts which B cannot explain (Opp; p. 249).

Then Merton violates the ecological fallacy (Robinson, 1950). Essentially, the ecological fallacy states that there is no necessary relationship between ecological correlations i.e., group characteristics and individual correlations. In other words, it is not possible to draw any definite conclusions from group characteristics concerning any particular individual within the group, and vice versa. Translating this into levels of generality, there is no necessary relationship between a general theory and a less general theory.

However, this does not mean that it is irrelevant which direction is taken. An incorrect specific theory can be derived from a correct general theory, whereas a correct general theory cannot be derived from an incorrect specific theory. Therefore, one may commit the ecological fallacy in the application of a correct general theory and still be able to refine the problem into a correct specific theory. This is pre-



cisely the purpose of the method of successive approximation. If, however, one commits the ecological fallacy in the generalization of a specific theory which is incorrect, then the probability is extremely high that the general theory will be incorrect also. There can only be a small chance that an incorrect specific theory will be incorrectly generalized to yield a correct general theory. As Opp states:

According to these facts [Newton's theory contradicted certain laws of Kepler and Galileo] it seems very unplausible that wrong theories of the middle range lead to the discovery of a true general theory which in turn modifies the wrong theories of the middle range (Opp; p.248).

Critique of argument 4. Merton's final argument deals with the content of the middle range theory.

Finally, the logic of analysis exhibited in this sociological theory of the middle range developed wholly in terms of the elements of social structure rather than in terms of providing concrete historical descriptions of particular social systems. Thus middle range theory enables us to transcend the mock problems of a theoretical conflict between the nomothetic [general laws] and the idiographic [particular laws], between generalizing sociological theory and historicism (Merton, 1968; p.44).

Just as it isn't necessary to examine both the structure and content (systematics and history) of theory, it also isn't necessary to study both the structure and content (history) of a society. The middle range theory is, then a structural functionalist theory.

There are two possible interpretations that can be made of Merton's position and therefore two possible lines of criticism. The thesis can be treated either as being a failure at constructing a legitimate phenomena, i.e., a middle range theory, or it can be criticized as being a totally invalid thesis.

The first criticism will assume that the construction of a middle range theory in Merton's terms is a legitimate operation. the major problem which confronts Merton is that he has separated change, or history, from the systematics or structure of both society and theory. But how could Merton know that history or content is separated from structure or systematics unless he has already studied the different temporal states of a society? How can one tell that history is irrelevant to structure unless one has already studied history and structure together?

It is quite clear that he cannot do this. There is something wrong with his approach to middle range theories. Yet, Merton could argue that such a criticism would apply to natural or pure science, but that when a theorist is dealing with the cultural sciences it is necessary to have certain a priori or metaphysical premises. The criticism made above adopts an objective stance to a fundamentally subjective science.

The only defense which Merton can launch against the arguments made above is to appeal to his implied ontological dualism. In doing so, he falls into the second criticism; he is not actually a middle range theorist.

Either an explicit or implicit ontological premise means that he is utilizing the highest level of generalization possible. Therefore, the middle range thesis is merely a large subjective theory in disguise.

The position to be taken here is that Merton does in fact have a large theory in disguise. By advocating a middle range theory which is in fact a large theory in disguise, Merton is able to assume a number of premise states which are necessary to his position without actually

involving himself in a scientific debate. The ontologic dualism, methodological dualism, accumulative-organic change premise and several societal premises are all imposed upon the methodologist in using the middle range theory.

The political implications of such an approach are clear. In terms of socialization of the sociologist, the uncritical transfer of such a theory eliminates the issues and debates raised in the genesis of the position. Merton's theory effectively eliminates its own history as well as the existence of any legitimate and fundamental alternative, i.e. Marx. In a hierarchically structured learning process, it becomes feasible for the teacher to define into correct existence as fact, issues which require both debate and validation. This being the case, it is possible to represent middle range theories in general, as at least reasonable alternatives.

The political implications of the socialization of sociology students into middle range mentality can well be imagined. Those who would eventually carry on research would always define problems intraststructurally, thereby eliminating the significance of the historical transformations which have already occurred in the past, as well as eliminating the possibility of examining alternative structural systems for the future; namely socialism as an alternative to capitalism.

While it may be correct to state that the more general theories or unified theories are more removed from what they wish to explain, it doesn't follow that it is impossible to explain or account for behavior by using a unified theory. It does however, involve greater responsibilities on the part of the social scientist, for the unified theory and its

direct application necessitates an interdisciplinary and comparative-historical approach.

There is, finally, a problem with the validation of large theories. How is an invalidated hypothesis or application of a unified theory to be interpreted? Kuhn points out that even in natural science, which is reputed to be more precise than social science;

As has repeatedly been emphasized before, no theory ever solves all the puzzles with which it is confronted at a given time; ... if any and every failure to fit were ground for theory rejection, all theories ought to be rejected at all times (p.146).

There are three possible interpretations concerning the invalidation of theories: certain techniques have been refined and innovations introduced into the process of gathering or integrating data, thereby leading to the uncovering of information which invalidates the theory; the theory as it stood in time 1 was roughly accurate. In time 2, that reality changed so that the theory formulated in time 1 becomes invalidated in time 2; finally, it is likely that both factors are in operation thereby compounding the problem.

There is another interesting way of looking at the problem. The above explication assumes that theory, and science in general, is an instrument for understanding and predicting (Nagel, 1961). The question is, for what purpose? Merton's response to this is, learning for the sake of learning, a not uncommon position in social science.

Such a position can be traced back to classical liberalism, where its laissez-faire philosophy argued that societies run automatically. Any interference merely constitutes a violation of individual rights (As in the case of Adam Smith's "blind hand". Roll, 1939).

Gouldner discusse Parsons in these terms, indicating that Parsons believed in this classical position.

An alternate response is that science is a tool which seeks to predict and understand for the purpose of greater control over both our natural and social environment. With this point of view in mind, then it is also possible to see social theory and social scientific means in general, as tools which actually initiate changes in the environment and thereby invalidate themselves, in a manner of speaking.

It has become abundantly clear that social science is being funded more and more by both private and public agencies. Therefore, it is becoming more and more involved in an overt political process of control. The question which social scientists are having to face is, in which direction are we going to influence our societies? If such a decision is going to be made, is being made, there must be clear alternatives. Merton's middle range approach structures out these alternatives and therefore becomes involved in the maintenance of capitalism through a pretentious and misleading attitude of non involvement.

## Chapter 7

### ABSTRACTING A MODEL FOR SOCIAL THEORY

The categories which arise out of the debate between the two dominant themes in social theory are fairly clear and unambiguous. This "dialectical" model, however, contains more than just categories. A necessary feature of the model is the relationships existing between the various categories.

#### Generic Categories

By generic categories it is meant that the category is general enough to encompass the major antagonistic traditions.

The most basic categories are; the ontological category, the nature of science category, the natural change category, the human nature category, and the societal categories.

Subdivisions. Some of the categories can be clarified through subdivision. In particular, the nature of science category can be split into natural science and social science.

The societal categories can be subdivided many different ways, depending upon the historical conditions. This the most fluid category and will likely change considerably, both with the addition of more social theory data, as well as with changing social conditions.

The subdivisions chosen here can be extended or deleted, depending upon the above considerations. Given the data utilized here, and the nature of the issues concerning contemporary social history, the major subdivisions chosen were; social change, class and political

ramifications.

One subdivision which could be generalized more adequately is class. It would be more useful for many sociologists to call this category the unit of analysis. In part this stems from the traditional nominalism/realism debate.

The more traditional subdivisions within sociology are not being excluded from the content of the model. There is no reason which would eliminate societal categories such as organizations, educational institutions etc.

These areas of discussion can be more comprehensible and more useful if they are considered within a macro-theoretical framework. Research conducted in these areas relies very heavily upon such a broad perspective, as it was pointed out in discussing Merton's fallacy of the middle range.

#### Relationships Between Categories

One of the difficulties which was encountered with Gouldner was what we termed eclecticism. Basically eclecticism means drawing the best elements from different sources. In this sense, it isn't necessarily a pejorative term. In fact, it has the opposite connotation.

What is meant by eclecticism here has a negative connotation. Basically it refers to not seeing the potentially exclusive and immiscible nature of theories. Just as classes become hostile and fundamentally opposed, so do their ideological representations. Choosing a middle path, as Merton attempted is not always possible.

Choosing a middle path, however, is often in itself an ideological response to intense political pressures. On the one hand, Marx

may appear to be more cogent and consistent with contemporary social realities than academic or mainstream sociology. Yet, on the other hand, Marxism and the pursuit of an individual career are likely to be mutually exclusive. Careerism in the university is an individual response to a highly competitive set of social relations. It is a political act.

Eclecticism involves both atrophying the higher levels of generalization, as well as eliminating the idea of social determination of knowledge. Primarily, eclecticism involves the inability of the theorist to discern the nature of the relationships existing between the components of a theory. We cannot, for example, apply a subjective perspective in the interpretation of Marx's economic concept. First it is necessary to make this difference clear at the ontological level.

On the basis of the examination of Marx, Mannheim and Merton, the following statements can be made:

- 1) Categories of theories can be arranged in a hierarchy according to their level of generality.
- 2) The more general the category or level, the more primacy the category has in causal terms.
- 3) The ontological category is the most general, and therefore it is the most critical for understanding causal relations within a theory.
- 4) The nature of science category follows directly from the ontological category.
- 5) The nature of science category is the next most important category, for it transfers the premise state of the ontological category throughout the theory. In this way a continuity is established in a theory.

The nature of these relationships is such that it is possible to infer high level premise states from low level states (as it was



Diagram 1

Conflict Model of Social Theory

Categories	Level of Generality	Premise States			
		Dialectical Materialism	Mechanical Materialism	Secular Idealism	Religious Idealism
Ontology	High 1				
Nature of Ontology		Monistic	Monistic	Dualistic	
Natural Realm	2	Subjective and Objective	Objective	Objective	
Natural Change		Dynamic	Static	Static	
Origin		Evolution			
Process		Dialectical	Equilibrium	Equilibrium	
Death		Extinction			
Natural Science Methodology		Dialectic	Mechanical	Rational	
Human Nature	3	Dynamic	Static	Static	
Social Realm	Low 4	Subjective and Objective	Objective	Subjective	
Social Change		Evolution			
Origin		Dialectical	Equilibrium	Genetic	
Process		Revolution			
Death		Dialectic	Mechanicism	Interpretive Understanding	
Social Science Methodology					

Diagram 1 (Continued)

Categories	Level of Generality	Premise States		
		Subjective and Objective	Objective	Subjective
Social Structure Class  Political Ramifications		Major unit of analysis		Minor unit of analysis
		Socialism		Capitalism
				Pre-Capitalist

shown with Merton), as well as predicting low level premise states from higher levels.

It is possible to predict, for example, that any theorist holding an idealist perspective at the ontological level will invariably see cultural reality in subjective terms. This doesn't mean that it is possible to predict the explicit content of societal premise states, but it is possible to predict a direction or a tendency.

Moving in the opposite direction, i.e., from a low level of generality to a high level, is called inference. It is more precise because the number of premise states possible at the higher levels is limited. Lower levels allow for a greater diversity of responses.

Diagram 1 on page 115 gives the reader an idea of what the model actually looks like. The four alternatives at the ontological level can be seen in a historical perspective, beginning with "Religious Idealism" and proceeding left to "Dialectical Materialism".

"Religious Idealism" is no longer a serious alternative in contemporary social thought. "Mechanical Materialism" is a transitory stage between capitalist ideology and the development of socialist ideology. Some of the categories within the "Mechanical Materialism" alternative are not filled in simply because no such theorist was examined.

## Chapter 8

### MAX WEBER

The purpose of examining another theorist is to evaluate the model in relation to data which was not used to generate the same model. This will provide a crude validating mechanism.

Choosing Max Weber is a decision based partly on the availability of his work to the author. However, Weber appears to be one of the most important social theorists to understand. His work and his thought are the basis for much of contemporary American sociology. People as diverse as Parsons and Mills have acknowledged Weber's work and have themselves been strongly influenced by it.

In addition, Weber is one of the people mentioned by Zeitlin who debated Marx's ghost. As in the case of Mannheim, Weber is often seen as an extension of Marx. The following examination will demonstrate that Weber is fundamentally opposed to Marx at every level of analysis.

#### Ontological Premise

Weber rejects outright the materialist conception of empirical reality.

The so-called materialistic conception of history as a Weltanschauung or as a formula for the causal explanation of historical reality is to be rejected most emphatically (Weber, 1949; p.68).

Historical or cultural reality is not materialistic, but rather fundamentally subjective. Natural reality is fundamentally objective. This the dualism which places Weber in a secular idealist camp. Weber himself rejects pure idealism (Mannheim did as well ), but his dualis-

tic alternative is simply a modified form of idealism.

Unlike Mannheim whom he preceded, Weber does not deal at any length with the natural realm. Instead, he includes discussion of the fundamental duality within the cultural or social realm. This division constitutes the basis of the contradiction he sees within the social world.

Because of this different approach, the discussion will have to pursue a slightly different path. The categories within the natural realm will be included in the social realm.

#### Human Nature Premise

Weber does not explicitly state his view on the biological basis of human nature. The following statement illustrates what can only be called a strong intuition. "To begin with, in principle, there are three inner justifications hence, basic legitimations of domination (1946; p.78). These three inner justifications are the habitual, the affectual and the rational-legal. Interestingly enough these inner justifications embody within them the dualism of Weber's weltanschauung (ontology). The habitual form merely opposes itself to conscious action. Both the affectual (emotional and irrational) and the rational-legal can either be habitual or conscious.

In most cases his action is governed by impulse or habit. Only occasionally and in the uniform action of large numbers often in the case of few individuals, is the subjective meaning of action, whether rational or irrational, brought clearly into consciousness (1949; p.112).

The affectual is the subjective component and the rational-legal is the objective factor.

These inner-justifications compete for a position of dominance in a social setting. There is a development from a traditional society (dominance of the habitual) to the present rational-legal society.

Human nature seems, then, to change. Yet, as in the case of Weber's modified idealism, he also has a modified fixed view of human nature. Human nature is bound by certain fixed parameters (inner justifications) within which change can occur.

That change leads, as it will be shown latter, to an increasingly contradictory state. The greater the contradiction, the less likely change can continue to occur.

Weber sees the natural (in this case the biological) sphere as being separate and parallel to the cultural sphere. Consequently, there is no biological causation of human behavior. Nonetheless, he does believe in the inherent primacy of the individual in a competitive social unit.

All typical struggles and modes of competition which take place on a large scale will lead in the long run, despite the decisive importance in many individual cases of accidental factors and luck, to a selection of those who have in the degree, on the average, possessed the personal qualities important to success (1949; p.133).

This seems to indicate that Weber could be labelled a nominalist in the common usage of the term. He definitely severely limits the social and learned aspects of human nature, subordinating them to fixed or semi-fixed factors.

#### Societal Premises

Weber's work has a consistency which is manifested throughout by his dualism. For Mannheim, the duality lay between the natural and

social worlds. For Weber, the duality occurs within the social realm.

There are many terms which Weber uses and which allude to this dualism: objective versus subjective, empirical versus ethical, scientific versus cultural, factual versus normative, logical versus psychological, reason versus emotion, matter versus form and finally rational versus irrational. Of all of the terms used above, it is the rational/irrational dichotomy which best expresses Weber's point of view,

It [rationalization] might be defined as the organization of life through a division and co-ordination of activities on the basis of an exact study of men's relations with each other, with their tools and their environment, for the purpose of achieving greater efficiency and productivity. Hence, it is a purely practical development brought about by man's technological genius (Freund, 1968; p.18).

Rationality here refers to quantifiable means used to achieve qualitative ends or goals. Weber splits the concept into two distinct parts.

By the unfamiliar term "formal rationality" he means the extent to which it is possible to carry through accurate rational calculation of the quantities involved in economic orientation .... By "substantive rationality", on the other hand, he means the extent to which it is possible to secure what, according to a given system of values, is an adequate provision of a population of goods and services, and in the process remain in accord with the ethical requirements of the system of norms (Parsons, 1949; p.35).

Weber's own usage indicates that substantive rationality is an extension of formal rationality.

In addition [to formal rationality]. it is necessary to take account of the fact [that] economic activity is oriented to ultimate ends of some kind..... substantive rationality cannot be measured in terms of formal calculation alone, but also involves a relation to the absolute values or to the content of the particular given ends to which it is oriented. In principle, there is an indefinite number of possible standards of value which

are "rational" in this sense (Weber, 1947; p.185).

Substantive rationality indicates that there is no way ultimately to be rational. This is the basic irrationality which Weber observes.

... his deep belief, ... was that life and the world are fundamentally irrational..... as rationalization increases, the irrational grows in intensity (Feund, 1968; p.25).

Thus increasing rationalization and intellectualization transform the dialectics of the inner and outer world into that of a real void and an imaginary plenitude. All meaning crumbles and only irrational appearances are left (Freund; p.22).

This fundamental irrationality is based upon the nature of the goals to be achieved. Because they are absolute values, they can only be achieved through a subjective and affectual process. Therefore, it is inevitable that there will be conflict in the selection of values.

Social science methodology. Weber's methodology also manifests his ontological dualism. Because social reality is fundamentally subjective, then the method used to understand it also becomes subjective. This is how the "ideal-type" must be seen.

An ideal-type is formed by the one sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena which are arranged according to those one sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct (Weber, 1949; p.90).

Weber is part of the historical school of thinkers (historicism). The historical school believes that history is a series of non-comparable constellation of facts which cannot be periodized into stages or be explained by laws.

Every individual constellation which explains or predicts



[a law] is causally explicable only as the consequence of another equally individual constellation which has preceded it. As far back as we may go into the far-off past, the reality to which the law applies always remains equally individual, equally undeducable from laws (1949; p.73).

It is not difficult to relate such a view of social history to Weber's subjective ontology. What is problematic is the fact that this is considered a scientific position. How is it possible to be subjective and yet be scientific? Weber answers the dilemma posed in the following statements.

The objective validity of all empirical knowledge rests exclusively upon the ordering of the given reality according to categories which are subjective in a specific sense, namely, in that they present the presupposition of our knowledge and are based on the presupposition of the value of those truths which empirical knowledge alone can give us (1949; p.110).

The objective validity of all empirical knowledge rests on value presuppositions which only empirical knowledge can give us. For Weber, this is an unacceptable position. Weber cannot conceive of defining the cultural aspect of reality as being basically material.

These evaluative ideas are for their part empirically discoverable and analyzable as elements of meaningful human contact, but their validity cannot be deduced from empirical data as such. The "objectivity" of the social sciences depends rather on the fact that the empirical data are always related to those evaluative ideas which alone make them worth knowing, and the significance of the empirical data is derived from these evaluative ideas (1949; p.112).

Action, motive, meaning and understanding. There are a plethora of concepts which Weber uses in his discussion of social organization. Consequently, all that can be attempted here is an explanation of what appear to be the most basic terms in relation to both Weber's conceptual framework and to the conceptual scheme outlined above.

Weber's approach is not only subjective, but it is also individualistic (or particularistic). His accent upon the individual is a consequence of the constellation of the terms, action, social action, motive, meaning and understanding. All of them focus around the subjectivist perspective which is logically dependent upon the individual person as its unit.

In action is included all human behaviour when and insofar as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it. ... action is social insofar as, by virtue of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individuals, it takes account of the behavior of others and is thereby oriented in its course (Weber, 1947; p.88).

Action, then, is subjective meaning, and "social" involves the orientation of action to others. What, then, is subjective meaning?

..... processes or conditions, whether they are animate or inanimate, human or non-human, are in the present sense devoid of meaning insofar as they cannot be related to an unintended purpose. That is to say, they are devoid of meaning if they cannot be related to action in the role of means or ends but constitute only the stimulus, the favoring or hindering circumstances (1947; p.93).

By definition, meaning is subjective since it involves purpose or intentions (motives), involving both means and ends. Subjective in the way Weber utilizes it doesn't appear to involve consciousness.

In the majority of cases action goes on in a state of inarticulate half-consciousness or actual unconsciousness of its subjective meaning (1947; p.111).

What subjectivism involves, and what it appears to be synonymous with, is the individual unit. It also is intimately related to the "inner justifications" and the outer related states of these expressions. However, it is, as it shall be shown, the actual focus of all activities, including the collective ones. Social science is:

a (type of) science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects (1947; p.88).

"Interpretive understanding" is the basic aspect of understanding which embodies all the different kinds of understanding under it. It does so by virtue of the concept of subjective meaning being associated with interpretive (1947; p.96). This is due to Weber's dualistic weltanschauung and his consequent division of reality and science into the natural and the socio-cultural. This interpretive understanding is associated only with the socio-cultural sciences.

Understanding may be of two kinds: the first is the direct observational understanding of the subjective meaning of a given act as such, including verbal utterances (it may be rational or irrational). ..... Understanding may however, be of another sort, namely explanatory understanding. Thus we understand in terms of motive the meaning an actor attaches to the proposition twice two equals four, when he states it or writes it down, in that we understand what makes him do this at precisely this moment and in these circumstances. .... In all these cases understanding involves the interpretive grasp of the meaning present in one of the following contexts: (a) as in the historical approach, the actually intended meaning for concrete individual action; or (b) as in cases of sociological mass phenomena the average of, or approximation to, the actually intended meaning; or (c) the meaning appropriate to a scientifically formulated pure type (an ideal type) of a common phenomenon. (1947; pp.94-5).

By referring back to Weber's weltanschauung and nature of science premises, the third concept, i.e., the ideal type - is the device by which the historical and sociological factors are understood, especially in relation to themselves and each other.

Which of these two concepts (the historical - the collectivity - the sociological - the individual) is given primacy in Weber's scheme?

But for the subjective interpretation of action in socio-

logical work, these collectivities must be treated solely as the resultants and modes of organization of the particular acts of individual persons since those alone can be treated as agents in a course of subjectively understandable action (1947; p.101).

However, Weber does not reject collectivities as extant, or even as devoid of any "meaning". His solution is to treat collectivities as if they were individual units.

For still other cognitive purposes as, for instance, juristic or practical ends, it may on the other hand be convenient or even indispensable to treat social collectivities, such as states, associations, business corporations, foundations, as if they were individual persons (1947; p. 101).

The primacy of the individual person and the individual (particular) is clear.

The concept of charisma serves to underlie Weber's view that all men everywhere are not to be comprehended merely as social products.... so for Weber, the potentially charismatic quality of man stands in tension with the external demands of institutional life (Mills, 1946; p.73).

The conflict which exists at the societal level, is a tension between the individualistic and the institutional. It is parallel and logically derivable from Weber's view of the tension between the historical and the sociological and his general weltanschauung which is split into the rational and the irrational. The embodiment of the societal conflict occurs in the "wertrational" form of action which he defines as:

In terms of rational orientation to an absolute value (wert-rational), involving a conscious belief in the absolute value of some ethical, aesthetic, religious or other form of behaviour, entirely for its own sake and independently of any prospects of external success (Parsons, 1947; p.14).

The conflict occurs between individuals due to what is the inevitable conflict between ultimate values, values which are not objective

and of the natural scientific character, but rather which are subjective and non-scientifically derivable. The conflicts are pervasive, inasmuch as they have occurred and will continue to occur and because they are not historical in nature but transhistorical.

The idea of "freedom" fits into this scheme as the idea of the freedom of the individual to act, not "rationally", but "creatively". Freedom transcends science, and exists more as a component of awareness, antithetical to the compulsive system of economic institutions (Girth and Mills, 1946; p.73).

The subjective locus, however, is not strictly psychological.

It is fundamental to the understanding of Weber's relation to this problem to realize that the situational (adaptation to external environs) and relational (internal coordination) categories which constitute the parts of the generalized social system inevitably enter directly into his formulation of his specific ideal-type concepts. But to each of these in turn corresponds directly a complex of typical motivations in Weber's sense. Hence the "subjective" point of view is as essential to the description of social structure as it is to the action of the individual. Weber's motives are not, as he himself saw clearly, "psychological" entities. Their concreteness relative to the psychological level is precisely defined by the fact that they include socially structured definitions of the situations, and hence articulate directly with the structure-functional analysis of social systems which means the variability of social systems (Parsons, 1947; p.22).

Thus, according to Parsons, Weber is attempting to "bridge the gap" between the subjective and the objective. While Parsons claims that Weber could have overcome the contradictions by adopting the structural-functional approach, Weber is assertive that the contradiction is not conceptual, but rather existentially rooted. In this way, any "verstehen" of Weber at this level, must either be Weberian and thus interpretive, i.e., subjective, or objectively critical for the components cannot be

separated from his theoretical framework and examined independently of each other.

Weber sees the interaction in terms of the primacy of the subjective motives of individuals. The origin of these motives is primarily internally derived and only partially a response to external phenomena.

Social change. Weber, due to his attempt to incorporate both the "sociological" and the "historical" schools of thought, deals with change in two diametrically opposed ways. Firstly, there is the sociological, which although it rejects the idea of laws, still accepts the concept of generalization, albeit with the contradiction of the ideal-type (i.e., primarily as a heuristic device rather than as something existential in quality). Therefore, Weber can talk in terms of trends and the social trend is towards rationalization.

One of the most important aspects of the process of "rationalization of action" is the substitution for the thinking acceptance of ancient custom, of deliberate adaptation to situations in terms of self interest (Weber, 1947; p.123).

It is interesting that the social process of the trend is one in which the interests of individual units come more into conflict with the collectivity. The more (formally) rational one becomes as an individual, the more efficient one becomes at aiming toward and possibly achieving ends which are inherently conflicting. Therefore, the collectivity becomes more unstable.

The historical approach is concerned with the individual and particularistic aspects of identity. Since the collectivity is treated as an individual unit, its changes are at least non-rational. However, the modified historical approach, coupled with Weber's modified idealism

(dualism) yields an ultimate irrationality, a level of contradiction which is not transcendable, i.e. a state can only become more irrational.

History, then, becomes the examination of a series of almost independent and unrelated social epochs. There is little if any relationship between these historical epochs.

There are several consequences which arise from this perspective. First of all, there can be no evolutionary approach with stages arising out of each other. Therefore, there is no rational historical development. There can be no generalization of experiences across periods. If A causes B in time 1, there is no reason to believe that this relationship will continue in time 2. Each period is highly particularistic (individualistic) and therefore contains an individualistic configuration of factors.

It also follows from this that there can be no laws, i.e., statements about or concerning changes across periods. There can of course be statements about non-changing factors and about how these non-changing factors are not the basis of change. Finally, it becomes apparent that in order for such a position to be adopted, it would be highly improbable that the individual would hold a materialistic position at the ontological level. Idealism is more amenable, since it allows for the existence of certain a priori assumptions, which the historical school must have in the establishment of independent periods. Materialism seeks to explain historical periods in terms of each other and views periods as being somehow interrelated.

However, Weber does not adopt a pure historical approach. He attempts to modify the extreme position which states that there can be no generalizations, or what he terms "sociological" elements.

This is more of a technique than the expression of an extant reality. As it was noted before, such generalizations are merely heuristic devices and do not represent an actual reality. As a consequence, Weber's approach to history is the embodiment of such a position. His actual style proceeds in the following manner: First of all, he states all the logical possibilities about a particular relationship; Next, he emphasizes one of these factors as being more basic. If the issue deals with transhistorical variables, he demonstrated this fact; Then he shows how that variable is no longer the same and how it has changed so radically that it can no longer be a fundamentally causative variable. However, he does concede (this is where he differs from the historical school) that this transhistorical factor is operative in the relationship.

Social class. Class for Weber is not a social change concept as it was for Marx. Weber splits the idea of class into two distinct classifications which reflect very well his ontological dualism.

In strict Weberian language, there are two forms of stratification; social class and status honor. Both of them "are phenomena of the distribution of power within a community" (Weber, 1946; p.181).

Class is a function of whether an individual possesses or does not possess property (1946; p.182). Therefore, it "... is, on this sense, ultimately [a] market situation" (p.182).

Class stratification is purely an economic concept. In this sense it is a rational (formally) component. Class action, then, is defined as being "social action", or action which "..... is oriented to a rationally motivated adjustment of interests" (p. 183).



The idea of class interest is not considered by Weber to be a fundamentally objective component. In fact, Weber terms this a "pseudo-scientific operation" made by that "talented author" (Marx) in which a class as a whole can be infallible about its interests (pp. 184-5).

For Weber, there is no objective factor that can be more basic in analysing human behaviour than a subjective factor. Therefore, it is that basic subjective reality of communal action which is most critical and which brings forth class situations.

Weber argues that, "The communal action that brings forth class situations, however, is not basically action between members of the identical class; it is an action between members of different classes" (p.185). Here, the basic unit of action is the status group. "In contrast to the purely economically determined 'class situation' we wish to designate as 'status situation' every typical component of the life fate of men that is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of honor" (p. 187).

Honor is a class transcending factor. Individuals who are members of different classes, i.e., the propertied and the propertyless, can be members of the same status group. This type of association Weber does not interpret as false class consciousness, as Marx did. Rather, he merely called it "A classic example of the lack of class antagonism.." (1947; p.426). This he considers to be a positive state of affairs, implying that antagonism is associated with the impersonal, economic and rational and therefore, undesirable.

With some over-simplification, one might thus say that classes are stratified according to their relations of the production and acquisition of goods; whereas 'status

groups' are stratified according to the principles of their consumption of goods as represented by special life styles (1946; p.193).

In so far as these concepts relate to the basic dualism of Weber, it can be expected that the two can come into difficulties with relation to one another. Such a prediction is accurate for, as Weber states:

As to the general economic conditions making for the predominance of stratification by 'status', only very little can be said. When the bases of the acquisition and distribution of goods are relatively stable, stratification by status is favoured. Every technological repercussion and economic transformation threatens stratification by status and pushes the class situation into the foreground. Epochs and countries in which the naked class situation is of predominant significance are regularly the periods of technical and economic transformations. And every slowing down of the shifting of economic stratification leads, in due course, to the growth of status structures and makes for a resuscitation of the important role of status honor (1946; pp.193-4).

Political ramifications. Given Weber's ontological dualism, it can be expected that he will oppose socialism and somehow support capitalism.

Unlike Mannheim, Weber is more concrete in his analysis of politics. It is not necessary to infer a political perspective from his writing, for he is fairly explicit about his position.

That position, as it was predicted from the model, is highly critical about the possibilities of the development of socialism as a superior system to capitalism.

For Weber, capitalism is the highest form of rational operations; yet it is implemented by two irrationalities: the remains of an originally religiously anchored attitude: the irrational calling and drive for continuous work; and modern socialism, seen as the 'utopia' of those who cannot stand up under what seems to them the senseless injustice of an economic order which makes them dependent upon prop-

ertied entrepreneurs.(Girth and Mills, 1946; p.68).

It is not possible to be any more rational than capitalism because that system has carried the fundamental contradiction between rationally chosen means and irrationally chosen ends or goals to its breaking point. Socialism would merely increase the fundamental irrationality since it improves the efficiency of the means for arbitrary ends.

In his discussion on Imperialism, Weber states:

The situation would hardly change fundamentally if for a moment we were to make the mental experiment of assuming the individual polities to be somehow 'state-socialist' communities, that is, associations supplying a maximum amount of their needs through a collective economy. All political associations of such a collective economy would seek to buy as cheaply as possible indispensable goods not produced on their own territory ..... from communities that have natural monopolies which these communities would seek to exploit. It is probable that force would be used where it would lead easily to favorable conditions of exchange: the weaker party would thereby be obliged to pay tribute, if not formally then at least actually (1946; p. 169).

Imperialism, i.e., the domination of one national unit by another for the purpose of economic gains, is a transhistorical phenomena which will occur just as easily in a socialist state as it did in early history. Girth and Mills point out that for Weber, the ultimate unit is the nation state, a unit which cannot combine into any international whole (1946; p. 48).

The lack of politically democratic leadership is also what he calls an "ethical paradox", an irrational condition which is too deep seated to be eliminated by political action. If socialism were to take power then:

Emotional revolutionism is followed by the traditionalist routine of everyday life; the crusading leader and the

faith itself fade away, ..... For here, as with every leader's machine, one of the conditions for success is the depersonalization and routinization, in short, the psychic proletarianization, in the interests of discipline. After coming to power the following of a crusader usually degenerates very easily into a quite common stratum of spoilsman (1946; p.125).

Charismatic leadership, which is one of the principle forces of social change, occurs in every historical and political period. Therefore the utopianism which ushered in the metamorphosis, inevitably becomes "routinized", i.e. becomes standardized into a routine pattern of events, which are also formally rational and hence dehumanizing.

This phenomena of increasing the irrationalism of a society by introducing socialism is totally pervasive. It extends into every facet of institutional life. Bureaucratic organization, which is the personification of rational and efficient means, could even possibly be intensified.

A socialistic form of organization would not alter this fact [concerning bureaucratic efficiency]. It would be a question whether in a socialistic system it would be possible to provide conditions for carrying out as stringent bureaucratic organization as has been possible in a capitalistic order. For socialism would, in fact, require a still higher degree of formal bureaucratization than capitalism. If this should prove not to be possible it would demonstrate the existence of another of those fundamental elements or irrationality in social systems - a conflict between formal and substantive rationality of the sort which sociology so often encounters (1947; p.339).

What Weber is saying amounts to this: socialism would definitely not mean an improvement over capitalism, and there is reason to suspect that it may even exacerbate the fundamental irrationality that human societies face. Since there is no reason to believe that socialism would not provide an improved alternative, no matter how bad capitalism

may seem, then there is little purpose in transforming capitalism from its present state.

#### Summarizing Max Weber

Weber's perspective fits into the idealist alternative that the conflict model specified: Ontologically, he is dualistic, splitting and separating cultural-historical phenomena from natural phenomena. He is much closer to Mannheim than he is to Marx. Both of them share similar views on every major issue, (category) which the model examined.

In chapter 7 five general observations were made from the content of the main debates. None of these statements were found to be inadequate in the analysis of Max Weber. Neither were any of the categories found to be problematic. Finally, it wasn't necessary to make any additions for issues that had not been foreseen.

## Chapter 9

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the theorists examined within the thesis, the relationships which were made in chapter 7 were found to have a definite predictive value. In particular, the causal primacy of the ontological category and its relationship to the methodology utilized in social science, both appeared to be consistently accurate. In every case examined, ontological dualism led to the utilization of a subjective methodology in the social sciences, whereas ontological monism from a dialectical position led to a subjective and objective approach.

In addition, the societal premises also appeared to follow a close pattern in their relationship to the ontological category. Ontological dualism consistently led to subjective interpretations of social structure and social class. A subjective interpretation of social structure involves the placing of attitudes in some primary position, or shared beliefs. In relation to the idea of class, status held an important position for it utilized the attitudinal structure as its base.

Whenever ontological dualism occurred, social change was always interpreted in terms of system modification or adjustment, but never as objective structural change. Subjective structure could change, it seemed, without any objective structural change. The political implications of holding such a position were always the same; capitalism was always selected over socialism.

The ontological position of dialectical materialism (monism) had what is considered here to be the opposite effect on the social prem-

ise states. Social structure was viewed as being both subjective and objective. This position involved defining the structure in terms of political economy. From this perspective, it became important to define whether or not the structure was feudalist, capitalist or socialist. The relationship of subject to object in such a structure varied according to what structure it was examined in.

Class took an analogous position. As a unit of the structure it also had subjective and objective properties. It was not status that constituted the subjective part, but rather class consciousness. Class did not exist until the subjective element emerged with the objective conditions.

Change and social history as well follow a unique pattern. Structural change defined in the above sense was inevitable. When change did occur, the process of change itself was changed, for as it was noted above, the relationship of the subjects to objects began to take on a different appearance.

The political implications were also clear. The fact that structural change was inevitable meant that the death of capitalism was also inevitable and the consequent rise of socialism was imminent.

The forces of opposition in the dialogue against Marx take on a variety of forms. In general, these different forms can be seen as variations upon a common ontological theme, namely dualism. While our original formulation of these alternatives were seen from the point of view of how they reacted to Marx, i.e., non-acknowledgement, distortion, and convergence, they also can be seen from the point of view of how they formulate their actual alternative.

The historicists, such as Weber, Mannheim and more recently Berger, differ in their approach from the empiricists, such as Durkheim and more recently Merton. The latter, who are direct descendents of positivism, take on the appearance of being materialist. However, empiricism in itself is not a sufficient factor for a materialist position, especially a dialectical one. The historicists were also willing to allow for the existence of objective factors in their interpretation of cultural-historical reality, and therefore, were willing to be empirical in this sense. Empiricist methodologies can be grounded upon dualist ontologies without any difficulty.

The factor which distinguishes their methodologies is their use and interpretation of history. Dualist empiricism will also tend to be abstract empiricism, eliminating history and studying attitudes. Monistic empiricism or radical empiricism, will examine social reality in historical terms. It will not necessarily eliminate the study of attitudes from its domain, but it will attempt to examine them over time and in relation to more basic structural factors.

However, as Tiryakian pointed out in his article (1965), there is a unity between the two reactions, which have been politically right wing, to Marx. That unity is what has been called their ontological dualism.



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