

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE
FINE ARTS

by

Aubrey M. Neal

A thesis
presented to the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
History

Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1984

(c) Aubrey M. Neal, 1984

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE
FINE ARTS

by

Aubrey M. Neal

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

© 1984

Permission has been granted to the LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA to lend or sell copies of this thesis, to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film, and UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS to publish an abstract of this thesis.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

ABSTRACT

This thesis follows the development of a cultural approach to social history beginning with Hegel and Marx and ending with the work of Thomas Kuhn and Gregory Bateson. While tracing this development it offers an explanation of the cultural unconscious which lies behind ideal form, a society's stylized representations of seemingly natural aesthetic significances.

The key event in intellectual history which permitted the development of a cultural approach to social history was Structuralism, begun by Ferdinand de Saussure and Max Weber at the beginning of the twentieth century. Their work made possible the discussion of the social "field" which signifies all signs and gestures and gives art its quality of intrinsic emotional relevance.

An overview of structural aesthetics since Weber and Saussure indicates a new paradigm of cultural reason emerging from the work of Fredric Jameson, Michel Foucault, John Berger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Theodore Adorno and others. This new paradigm links cultural and political history through a dialectical model which describes social behavior as a unified emotional and intellectual whole.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iv
--------------------	----

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE WESTERN CULTURAL SPLIT	9
III. THE IDEALIST HEGELIAN HERITAGE	56
IV. THE MATERIALIST MARXIST DISSENT	88
V. THE CULTURAL DIALECTIC	129
VI. STRUCTURALISM	164
VII. THE CULTURAL PARADIGM	207
VIII. CONCLUSION	247
BIBLIOGRAPHY	253

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Critical consciousness in social and political history has reached a degree of sophistication, inclusiveness and explanatory power far beyond the critical system which still applies to aesthetic theory and the history of the Fine Arts. On this account a more expanded and inclusive approach to cultural history is both possible and necessary. This thesis follows the development of an existentially conscious approach to ideal forms, a society's stylized representations of seemingly natural significances. By following this development we intend to contribute to the methodology for reading the social content of the artistic symbol.

Conventional intellectual history has relegated aesthetics to its own special province where it functions according to its own special laws and enjoys its own, supposedly unique, existence outside the history of politics, economics and class struggle. Normally, art history, for example, is not found in the Faculty of arts, but in other jurisdictions of the university campus. Such physical separation is evident as well in the detachment of academic discussion of the arts from the teaching and application of professional artistic techniques. The conventional approach has thereby

disintegrated the unity of thought and feeling, detaching and abstracting the former while silencing the latter. Under the conventional method, the Fine Arts have, in effect, been placed on a pedestal where their idealization acts out a fundamentally bad faith which obscures their social importance. Just as the American slave holder idealized his bondsmen's freedom from responsibility, so the idealization of the arts exalts in order to manipulate and appreciates in order to control. Historical studies has been slow to address this cunning of unreason, therefore emotion and feeling have been separated from social and political history. The time and opportunity to redress this grave oversight has not been overlooked in critical theory, anthropology, phenomenology and the history of science. An historical perspective which synthesizes these findings would be an asset to cultural studies.

Because all symbols are social, art is a social text which stands for an historical context. Human existence would be impossible without the unconscious mediation of cultural signs irradiated in history. The magical collective illusion of primary meaning which anneals body and soul onto a collective life-world arises from the historical correspondance between a sign and its symbolic social function. This relation, simultaneously private and collective, is perhaps the most important social network affiliation which any member of a post-scarcity society ever undertakes.

If this earth is to be truly our home, then it is not only the flesh, but, as Artaud said, "the equilibrium of the flesh,"¹ that must be understood. There exists an historical dialectic within as well as without and the pyramid of time upon which each of us is an apex requires revolutionary introspection as well as revolutionary elan.

The arts do not suffer, primarily, from the monopolization of their ideal forms and the mass suppression of their supposedly timeless message. The arts suffer, and therefore human nature suffers, because the life cycle of artistic change, the mental and emotional ecology between culture and history has been interrupted. The commodity culture raises idols out of past exemplary forms and with these idols interdixts the process of cultural evolution. Industrialization and class conflict have damaged the emotional ecology between culture forms and social process. The ideal forms which could help balance, humanize and sensitize the industrial life-world have been thrown awry. As William Morris lamented, "The well of art has been poisoned at the spring."²

¹ Antonin Artaud, "Fragments of a Diary from Hell (1925)," Selected Writings. Susan Sontag (ed.) trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976) p. 93 Artaud anticipates Lacan: "I retort that the Self and the Other are two distinct terms which should not be confused, and are precisely the two opposing terms that maintain the equilibrium of the flesh."

² William Morris, "Art under Plutocracy," Industrialisation and Culture 1830-1914. Christopher Harvie, Graham Martin and Aaron Scharf (ed.), (London: Open University Press,

The Greeks had no word for our idea of culture. The Inuvik have no word for artist or the Fine Arts. These highly individuated peoples could not artificially separate the ways and the means of their life experience as facilely as we do. The tragedy of Western Culture begins when the work of art is stolen out of history and betrayed into the general rootlessness and technical abstraction of Western thought. Robbed of its social and political significance, the art object is profaned in the very act of its worship. By studying the structural relation between art and history, we can invigorate our cultural imagination and permit the discussion of culture to be once again coterminous with its real subject. That is the principle challenge with which our civilization confronts our culture.

Giving a date to specific elements of a phenomenon, cataloguing a procession of productions or events upon a calendar, certifying the originality or authenticity of a work: these accomplishments serve the extremely important function of defining a territory which must still be evaluated. If, however, these accomplishments become the be all and end all of historical investigation they are, Foucault writes, "harmless enough amusements for historians who refuse to grow up."³

1970) p. 331 A lecture delivered at Oxford with John Ruskin in the chair, 14 November, 1883; published in Architecture, Industry and Wealth (1902).

³ Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge. trans. by

The emotional and cultural system of a nation should be just as important as its political system, but the aesthetic and emotional side of social life has been considered "soft" by traditional analysis. The feeling-tone or ethos of a culture has been thought to be unsuitable for the rigors of "hard" documentary scholarship. In this belief, scholarship has been alienated into its own tools, leaving unsaid a vital component in all human life.

If we broaden art's historical perspective, in order to include an understanding of the structure of historical contexts, it might be possible to increase our knowledge of our society and ourselves while at the same time bringing about meaningful political change.

It appears that the old models of political and intellectual history are pretty much mined out. The reduction of politics to individual biography and the rationalization of individual behavior by a simplistic psychology suitable for anecdotal narrative can result in descriptions which lack effective explanatory value.

Classically, symbolic systems were thought to be rational impositions upon raw nature. Pure form was considered a process of mind over matter and therefore directly amenable to conscious direction. Twentieth Century structuralism has

significantly qualified this view. Social contexts differ considerably from the positivist ideal of nineteenth century mechanics. The symbolic forms of any (small c) cultural environment, including the culture forms of art and leisure, are beginning to appear to us in the late twentieth century as language in embryo, the pre-formation system for rational discourse.

There are at least five special area discourses through which to approach the theory and method of an existentially conscious criticism:

1. The Hermeneutical Tradition (Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Gadamer)
2. Phenomenological Literary Criticism (Sartre, Bachelard, Williams, Eagleton, and Jameson)
3. Phenomenological Philosophy (Husserl, Adorno, Sohn-Rethel, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Foucault, and Baudrillard)
4. Cultural Anthropology (Malinowski, Meade, Benedict, Bateson, Levi-Strauss, Sahlins and Harris)
5. Communications Psychology (Hill, Stierlin, Haley, Bateson, Palazzoli and Stoller)

Synthesizing all five is an exercise that leads to a new methodology for reading the art object in social history.

Objective style forms (poetic meters, symphonic forms, perspectives in painting, etc.) are, in themselves, histori-

cal texts. The critical capacity to "read" the art text emerges as one of the principle common conclusions of the special area dialectics that have been developed in the late twentieth century. Aesthetic experience can be returned to unity from its schizoid life as either technique or ideal.

Our project of reading the art object as an art text in social history requires blending special area dialectics as much as possible into a plain prose discourse which is accessible to the non-speciality reader. This restoration of the art object to the general grammar of history involves the use of plain prose language in order to resituate aesthetics in social history.

The double objective of restoring both aesthetic theory and dialectical analysis to plain prose historical narrative has in great measure determined the structure of the thesis. The thesis structure rotates, for clarity's sake, upon its own logical ball and socket, pivoting between a discussion of nineteenth century dialectics and an explanation of twentieth century methodology. This dual strategy has been chosen out of concern for the general reader who would like to enter one of the mainstream special area discourses as quickly as possible. This desire has become a particularly strong motive to those who have become deeply concerned over the social meaning and historical importance of our Western Fine Arts Culture.

We believe that the reader will find the rotating structure of the thesis to be of use in his own reading of contemporary dialectical discourses because a plain prose discourse for general history has inadvertently been left behind in the gaps between speciality areas. This thesis succeeds if it helps to bridge the gap between critical theory and cultural history, making twentieth century structural analysis more accessible to the general reader.

Chapter II

THE WESTERN CULTURAL SPLIT

Cultural studies has to begin in agreement with Kroeber and Kluckhohn that:

Culture in explanatory importance and in generality of application is comparable to such categories as gravity in physics, disease in medicine, evolution in biology.⁴

Unfortunately, in specific usage, this generality of importance has been achieved by employing a universal ambiguity, for today the word "culture" has two sometimes separate, sometimes overlapping meanings. In one sense the word has extensive anthropological force denoting everything "extra-somatic" and interpersonal within the field of human relations. In the other, more restricted meaning, "Culture," usually with this capital C, refers to a classical canon in the Fine Arts.⁵ If the Fine Arts, capital C Culture is to be taken seriously, there is no reason why for Homo Sapiens,

⁴ A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, Culture, A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions (New York: Random House, 1952) p. 3

⁵ "We have noted two uses of the term culture which can be taken as the extreme poles of its use. In one, it denotes the aesthetic domain of, in particular, Art and Literature and the relations between them. At the other end of the spectrum are anthropological uses of the term to denote the 'whole way of life' of a society, often construed in an idealist way as founded upon meanings, values and so on." Tom Bottomore (ed.) A Dictionary of Marxist Thought (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983) pp. 109

the species which evolves culturally, this distinction should exist at all.⁶

Raymond Williams has distinguished three general usages of the word, culture:

1. a developed state of mind --- as in "a person of culture,", "a cultured person."
2. the process of this development --- as in "cultural interests,", "cultural activities."
3. the means of these processes --- as in culture as "the arts" and "humane intellectual works."⁷

In the above senses, general usage muddles a significant distinction. Williams has pointedly asked since his early work in 1957 whether capital C, Culture, implies an immaculate "informing spirit" outside political and economic reality or whether capital C, Culture means "the signifying system through which necessarily a social order is

⁶ "The concept of culture can also express an attempt to break down these distinctions." Ibid., p. 110 "There is a concept of culture that can serve as an important instrument of social research because it expresses the implication of the mind in the historical process of society. It signifies the totality of social life in a given situation, insofar as both the areas of ideational reproduction (culture in the narrower sense, the "spiritual world") and of material reproduction ("civilization") form a historically distinguishable and comprehensible unity." Herbert Marcuse, "Affirmative Character of Culture," Negations. trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968) p. 94

⁷ Raymond Williams, Culture (Glasgow: William Collins & Sons, 1981) p. 11

communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored."⁸ William's latter meaning is the same as the modern ethnological sense of culture as "the consenses, the patterns... that arise out of the analysis of human custom."⁹ Ethnologically, culture comprises all the relations of social reproduction and therefore means the concrete and distinct way of life for a whole people in a specific historical social order.¹⁰

The capital C, Fine Arts Culture, has been a hallmark of the West since the Greeks, but the social history of its changing styles and forms has fallen between the traditional disciplines. Ethnology looks outside the West at the culturally exotic and unfamiliar. Musicology and the History of the Arts study technical and intellectual influences. The broader social value of these artistic forms exists in an unnamed domain of practical convergence between the ethnological definition of culture and the capital C, Fine Arts Cultural experience. There is no traditional disciplinary pigeon hole, hence no familiar methodology for turning back to a broader base and reading the social history contained

⁸ Ibid. p. 12

⁹ Melville J. Herskovits, Man and his Works (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948) pp. 9 & 483

¹⁰ Williams, Culture p. 10

Webster's Twentieth Century Unabridged dictionary defines ethnology as, "The branch of anthropology that deals with the comparative cultures of various peoples, including their distribution, characteristics, folkways, etc."

in Western Fine Art forms. Studying the social content of Cultural form is not history which follows politics, nor Fine Arts which concentrates on techniques, nor sociology of knowledge which has staked out for itself the history of ideas. We call this unnamed interdisciplinary area, Cultural Studies. This thesis in Cultural Studies investigates the practical domain where high C Fine Arts and low c, ethnological C/culture converge.

Cultural studies becomes the area where historical consciousness critiques its own emotional ground of being. Marxist economic critique has acquainted us with the discrimination and totalization of political contexts. Weber's work began the same movement for intellectual history. Cultural studies would work at the same level of logical inclusiveness as Marxist politics and the application of sociology to the history of ideas. The methodological premise for cultural studies synthesizes Marx and Weber and applies that synthesis to formal culture.

Kant was the first to use the word, culture, in its full modern ambiguity which crosses the husbandry of nature concept with the Fine Arts connotation of social cultivation and savoir faire. Kant's straddling of the fence between Kulture in the Fine Arts sense and Kultivieren still haunts the discipline of History, although Anthropology and Sociology opted for ethnological precision early in the twentieth

century. As we will have occasion to see, Kant began the modern schism between culture and social history.

Kroeber and Kluckhohn note that the modern ethnographic sense of the word culture first appeared in Gustav E. Klemm's Allgemeine Kulturgeschichte der Menschheit. The first volume of Klemm's work appeared in 1843 and declared that it would follow Voltaire's lead who:

Put aside dynasties, king lists, and battles, and sought what is essential in history, namely culture, as it is manifest in customs, in beliefs, and in forms of government.¹¹

Cultural studies centers upon this historical relation between "customs, beliefs and forms of government," and an "entire process of self-formation,"¹² of which the individual remains unaware; but to which he owes his socialization into the general consciousness.

The ethnological meaning of "culture" was established in English by E.B. Tylor's Primitive Culture in 1871. Kroeber and Kluckhohn write:

Tylor, after some hesitation as against "civilization," borrowed the word culture from German, where by his time it had become well recognized with the meaning here under discussion, by a growth out of the older meaning of civilization.¹³

¹¹ Ibid. p. 14

¹² Jurgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests. trans. Jeremy Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970) p. 13. See n. 74 for the "epistemological dilemma" of idealizing this relation.

¹³ Kroeber and Kluckhohn, Culture. p. 11

High culture has been a weapon of revolution, a palliative, a placebo and, more recently, even a reactionary. Over the last century the "pure" Arts have played no small part in everything from "bohemianism" to rebellion to helping to preserve the status quo. Since the rise of the bourgeois orchestra and the establishment of public galleries early in the nineteenth century, the conservative influence of High, Classical Culture has perhaps been predominant.

The partnership between conservative politics and the Fine Arts has certainly not been an innocent one. "Pure art, Kenneth Burke wrote, "tends to become a social menace in so far as it assists us in tolerating the intolerable."¹⁴ This potentially reactionary influence is not exclusively a twentieth century phenomenon. One of the boldest announcements of this influence was made over a century ago by Matthew Arnold:

Culture is the most resolute enemy of anarchy, because of the great hopes and designs for the state which culture teaches us to nourish.¹⁵

Though inspired by other sources, anthropology and the sociology of mass culture have turned toward intensive critical analysis of the ethnological implications behind Arnold's bold principle. Historical studies have virtually ignored the Western Classical Culture to which Arnold explicitly re-

¹⁴ Kenneth Burke, "The Nature of Art Under Capitalism," Nation. December 13, 1933, p. 677

¹⁵ Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932) p. 204

ferred.

In the history of classical culture, a serious credibility gap has opened between social history and her sister disciplines. To preserve our own integrity as well as to further knowledge, this gap should be addressed formally. The comparative reluctance of historians to do so signifies a grateful forbearance, but it also indicates a dangerous and misplaced nostalgia for the absolute which can jeopardize the integrity of knowledge.

Aesthetic values are important, but not as important as the social content of aesthetic experience. If the correct blend of theoretical and empirical perspectives could be brought to bear upon this problem, culture--without ceasing to be culture--could be immunized from some of the negative and reactionary side-effects which it has fostered in the years since Arnold's bold deployment of it on the side of law and order.

That art grows out of time and history is not the view which has dominated aesthetics over the past 200 years. The Magna Charta of aesthetics for this period was written by Immanuel Kant. According to the era for which Kant spoke, there were two incommensurable and forever separate ways of knowing. For Kant, "All cognition is either rational or historical."¹⁶ To Kant's mode of perception, the historical

¹⁶ Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason. trans. J. M. D.

is by definition, irrational, and the rational is categorically ahistorical. For this dualistic, ahistorical mode, knowledge of the arts "is the aesthetic judgment as a faculty to select with universal validity."¹⁷ Georges Lefebvre explains that Kant:

Rehabilitated the emotions and outlined a metaphysics that endowed emotion with the ability to attain the absolute through intuition while denying reason such access.¹⁸

By virtue of this dualism, aesthetics can be shunted off into "the sphere of pure reason" where "there is, accordingly, no proper polemic."¹⁹ We assert, quite simply, that Kantian judgment is in error. There are extremely important polemics proper to the so-called sphere of pure reason.

The bourgeois era for which Kant spoke continues to live the split between history and rationality which Kant divided a priori. It hopes to survive in history, but it pretends to live its emotional life outside of it. Its fundamentally escapist attitude toward the material world leads it to assume that the positive content of the arts lies outside of history, beyond struggle, politics and ordinary comprehen-

Meiklejohn (London: George Bell, 1878) p. 505 First German edition, 1781.

¹⁷ Immanuel Kant, Anthropology from a Pragmatic Viewpoint, trans. Walter Cerf (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963) p. 64

¹⁸ Georges Lefebvre, Napoleon: From 18 Brumaire to Tilsit, 1799-1807. Vol. I. trans. Henry F. Stockhold (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969) p.11

¹⁹ Kant, Critique p. 460

sion. In bourgeois aesthetics, history exists only to be transcended. For it, history never enters into the artwork, history confronts art and suppresses the "human end-in-itself" to which art supposedly speaks.

The dualism and inconsistency of bourgeois aesthetic judgment has led the historian, David Lowe, to conclude that the act of perception should be discussed as an event in political history. Lowe proposes "the history of perception as the intermediate link between the content of thought and the structure of society."²⁰ Lowe, and others, argue that social being penetrates the body senses, orienting them in ways which correspond to the relations of production and the intentional context growing out of those relations.

²⁰ Donald M. Lowe, History of Bourgeois Perception (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) p. 1 "The field of perception determines the content of knowledge; but that field is itself determined by society as totality...Knowledge is the intentional consciousness within a perceptual field (pp. 14-15)." See

1. Michael Polanyi and Harry Prosch, Meaning (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975) "All knowledge is either tacit or rooted in tacit knowing (p. 61)...Thus the ideal of pure objectivity in knowing and in science has been shown to be a myth (p. 63)."
2. Aron Gurwitsch, The Field of Consciousness (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1964) "What is the ground of aesthetic perception? If one agrees with G.H. Mead regarding the aesthetic, then the ground is the social context in which the event emerges as meaning and communication (p. 113)."
3. David L. Miller, George Herbert Mead: Self, Language, and the World (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1973) "The aesthetic experience is

Historical structuralists since Weber believe that this correspondance is extremely important and that aesthetics may be its principle element. Terence Hawkes' view is that modern structuralism:

reveals to us...the confirming, supportive, problem-resolving nature of all art. It thus strengthens the notion that art acts as a mediating, moulding force in society rather than as an agency which merely reflects or records.²¹

Though the Kantian psychology and anthropology which consecrated the bourgeois rise to world power was set aside early in this century, the practical, political and emotional problems of its divided consciousness and mercenary ethical system still remain. These also ought to be accepted as historical problems of a specific era of production.

Anthropologists, following Marvin Harris and Kenneth Pike, argue two levels of social interaction: an "emic" or factual level of explicit behaviors and an "etic" or structural level which carries the rationale and intentional sys-

one in which a person experiences his own role-performance as essential to and as an integral part of social behavior (p. 218)."

4. Edmund Husserl, The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology. trans. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970) "All souls are united not externally but internally, namely through the intentional interpenetration which is the communalization of their lives (p. 255)."

²¹ Terence Hawkes, Structuralism and Semiotics (Berkeley: University of California, 1977) p. 56 Hawkes' work is a basic introduction to the field. A splendid summary of a most difficult topic.

tem of the society.²² The social insider normally perceives only the explicit "emic" dimension of his behavior and misses the "etic," structural one in which the significance of his behavior is embedded. Lowe, Mead, Gurwitsch, Polanyi, and others contend that Western history has been written and understood only in terms of its explicit, factual "emic" side. The "etic" dimension of Western behavior is perceived by the Westerner in the same way any other person sees his own society's collective behavior: he sees a domain of "pure reason" which is unreachable by mundane speculation. This self-deception in an advanced industrial society amounts to an incalculably dangerous act of collective hubris.

Western perception is framed by two severe "etic" limits, both of which were definitively articulated by Kant: a belief in objective space-time and the postulation of individual personality as objective and ahistorical. "These beliefs," Lowe writes, "were ideological because they deflected the alienation and estrangement of bourgeois society into various compartmentalized activities."²³ Kant's sub-dividing of existential wholeness consummated a politicization of the senses.

²² Marvin Harris, Cultural Materialism (New York: Random House, 1979) pp. 31 ff.

²³ Lowe, Perception. p. 161

For some, the political implications of these aesthetic questions might seem to be taking Fine Arts Culture too seriously. To such an objection, we can only point out that since cultural behaviors are the descriptive category which distinguish our species from all others, it is hardly possible to be too serious about them. The history of cultural behaviors raises significant qualitative questions which extend over far broader issues than the private life of the individual mind.

The desire to dodge these questions derives in large part from a misrepresentation of what is truly indeterminate about culture. Though personal taste is indeterminate and unpredictable, historical styles are another matter. The historical parameters within which "arty-facts" occur are not arbitrary. Though taste may often disobey consensus, the art of each age manifests a high degree of stylistic uniformity. Common practice and informed discussion have always aimed toward defining this historical consensus. No responsible interpretation refers its judgment to personal taste alone.

This issue forms one of those proverbial situations where the obvious trees often obscure the extent of the forest. Practical judgment often overlooks a crucial aspect of experience and in doing so has by-passed an important area of historical investigation. When one judges that the Beetho-

ven Fifth Symphony, for example, is "great," or that Manet's Dejeuner sur l'herbe begins a new era in painting, or that the Mahler Second Symphony ends an era in music, the first crucial question is not whether such specific judgments are correct, but on what grounds can one debate such propositions? Even as we acknowledge the debatable nature of such judgments, we "appreciate" the value of making them. The historical problem is the interdisciplinary one concerning how we can even make such judgments at all.

A narrative problem exists around how we know what we say that we know about the Fine Arts. As the sociologists of knowledge say, we need to inspect the legitimacy of this domain of knowledge. This basic question underlies the discussion of Culture, and in most cases, it has been ignored or buried under cliches. Ignoring or whitewashing this larger question of the historical "legitimacy" of Cultural judgment has become one of the social symptoms of an overall impaired historical judgment. Culture witnesses--just as patently as politics--the generalized unwillingness to confront issues and weigh effective long range solutions.

In more precise terms, the ambiguity of the word "culture" mobilizes an illegitimate totalization of the significance of cultural behaviors. A discriminating, total approach to C/culture views Capital C Culture as a major representative form of lower case, ethnological "culture."

In evaluating Culture, traditional interpretation has been satisfied with instrumentally ideal judgment, rarely referring Culture to a larger and more inclusive category appropriate for political history and the sociology of knowledge.

The insufficiency in question has nothing to do with sensitivity, talent, personal insight or intellectual comprehension. Without doubt, personal sensitivity and cultivation remain a primary area of individual accomplishment. Cultural studies ought to augment these qualities by reintegrating them with social history. We want to discuss an impersonal insufficiency, one which amounts to a psycho-social impairment at the higher levels of collective judgment. The ambiguity of language dramatizes the problem with great force. Indeed, the double meaning of the word "culture," reveals a collective unwisdom, a studied unwillingness to judge Culture as a social form of historical experience.

I would like to suggest that, in general, we encounter five types of impaired judgment which all have a bearing upon the historical study of C/culture. They are: Incapacity, Incompetence, Insufficiency, Indiscrimination and Illegitimate Totalization. Each type is concentric within the next, defining hierarchically inclusive domains of practical judgment which expand upon the previous ones. The categories of judgment are defined negatively because failure of judgment exhibits its own logical Peter Principle. The ca-

capacity for judgment always grows to its highest level of incompetence.

Incapacity:

The primary level of impairment is genetic or pathological. Incapacitated judgment means that a physical or psychological factor impairs adequate perception. To be incapable of judgment implies that a neurological or psychological factor indisposes judgment. To assert that one is incapable of judging, categorically denies the possibility of any short term improvement in performance capacity.

Incompetence

The second level of impairment is environmental incapacitation. Like incapacity, incompetent judgment cannot cope, but in true incompetence, physical potential has been thwarted by deprivation. The subject lacks appropriate skill development, physical nourishment or adequate working conditions. The adolescent worker often provides typical examples of true incompetency. Practically, it is very difficult to distinguish incompetence from simple incapacity. Incompetence forms the domain of pedagogy. With a combination of professional insight and cognitive expertise, the teacher must constantly contextually redefine acts of incapacity as temporary moments of incompetence. Controlling the context of judgment in this manner, is a constant and persistent pressure built into the nature of the work.

Insufficiency:

Insufficiency makes up the instrumental and economic category of incompetence. Insufficient judgment means a challenge is too complex or an exigency too unique for available resources. Everyone regularly experiences a low level of impairment within this category. One finds that resources of experience or tools which are normally adequate, break down in a particular and unforeseeable situation. Capacity and competence are, by any objective measure, present; but for some reason they are not adequate or appropriate for the puzzle at hand. A poor business investment or emergency medical treatment may be examples of insufficient judgment. Insufficiency begins the kinds of crisis-

es related to higher judgment. The category of Insufficiency marks the shift from mechanical dexterity and manipulation to an estimation of meaning and significance. The category remains mechanical, but its application involves the calculation of consequences. Computers, if properly programmed, can make sufficient judgments. In human situations, a Chess or Bridge Match probably offers the clearest examples of steady-state exercises in this category.

Indiscrimination:

Indiscrimination, the fourth category, assumes that capacity and competence are sufficiently applied. Indiscriminate judgment is a political and intellectual category where sufficiency overlooks the significance of its subject. A fetish offers an example of indiscrimination. Pedantry is by definition indiscriminate. Single issue lobby groups and trans-national corporations exemplify indiscriminate judgment. When egotism or self-interest limit judgment to simple sufficiency and larger social issues are at stake, then decision making lacks adequate discrimination. Unlike Insufficiency, Indiscrimination implies an estimate of historical value: the judger takes responsibility for the human consequences of having made instrumentally sufficient judgments in the past. Unlike the medical patient who is once again on his own when he heals, discriminate judgment only begins in the context of a functioning life-world. Euthanasia and quality of life issues are questions which require discriminate judgment. Bureaucratic judgment is indiscriminate. Replacing the marketplace with a bureaucracy only collectivizes indiscriminate judgment. Market and bureaucratic adjudications remain instrumental and impersonal. The contradiction of market society lies in the way it permits the market to make its discriminate judgments. No matter how sufficient the capacity of individuals, the capacity to make socially discriminating judgments remains irrational under pure market conditions. Indiscrimination discovers meanings, but they always remain personal ones. They are rarely broad and inclusive enough to be socially rational. Self-interest will always judge the social interest indiscriminately. Indiscrimination begins the categories of impaired judgment which corresponds to politics and Cultural history. In contrast to a condition of sufficiency where judgment has been effective; Indiscrimination makes effective judgment irrelevant.

Illegitimate Totalization

Illegitimate Totalization forms the historical and philosophical category of impaired judgment. With this category, lack of discrimination becomes an historical problem. Totalization, the level of judgment Gadamer calls "operant historical consciousness,"²⁴ ultimately appeals to conceptual unification of a total life system. Historical or philosophical validity is traced to the paradigm, episteme or gestalt of meaning upon which it rests. Illegitimate Totalization accepts interpersonal significance as a legitimate ground for meaning, but does not discriminate broadly and inclusively enough. The "Moral Majority" and "Renaissance" political groups offer examples of this category of judgment. The political economy of bourgeois society teaches Illegitimate Totalization to even its most conscientious members. Questions of legitimate totality often raise issues of categorical and absolute paradox. Some typical questions are: Is a private enterprise legal system not a priori a conflict of interests? Is not schooling which emphasizes conformity a violation of the root meaning of the word, education, meaning to "lead out," from the Latin, educare? Practically all human beings learn to skate gracefully between the first three categories of judgment without even being aware of the formidable problem of logical typing going on pre-consciously as a prerequisite to discourse. Discrimination and totalization of context present a much greater challenge.

In considering categories of judgment, prudence agrees with the great moral philosopher, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "one does not hunt sparrows with a shotgun." Most questions of everyday judgment are instrumental issues of sufficient judgment, not worth the trouble required to discriminate and totalize them. A persistent "totalizer" would become a Parsifal, a Wagnerian fool who has abjured human contact. We

²⁴ Richard E. Palmer, Hermeneutics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969) p. 193

may note this theoretical problem in passing, but the empirical evidence indicates little to be feared. Public discourse, even at some very learned levels, demonstrates a persistent and studied incapacity to accept discussion above the level of instrumental sufficiency. The clearest examples of this "learned incapacity" occur in discussions of Culture.

For the conventional approach to Culture, which stops at instrumentally sufficient judgment, cognitive knowledge exists without social understanding, and this paradox creates a serious problem. In Cultural matters, insufficient judgment relies upon the transcendent power of the Fine Arts. As a famous idealist has written, "Culture may be best described as religion with the critical intellect superadded."²⁵ This critically narrow attitude believes in an imaginary cultural radioactivity: the artform radiates a power which permeates those who are exposed. Joining the art object with a pedigree or performance canon presumably invokes a spirit, a Zeitgeist of universal reason upon whose goodness the communicants may rely after including another instrumental formula into their shamanic stock and store. There exists a cognitive bind at the center of conventional judgment. Simple instrumental sufficiency cannot define the historical relation between individuals whose authentic

²⁵ Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold (New York: Meridian Books, 1955) p. 241

aesthetic community is historical and social, not technical and individualistic.

Declarations like Ernst Gombrich's that nature is the lock for which art holds the masterkeys,²⁶ teach an attitude which scorns the contextual categories of judgment. Idealism appears to have composed Gombrich's judgment prior to its vocalization. Instrumental sufficiency rules that the question of the historical epoch is out of order. Judgments in this category treat questions of interpersonal validity and historical context as vague issues, not worthy of scholarship.

Of course, instrumental idealism has been denounced by Marxists and others. That tough-minded American progressive, John Dewey, complained that it resulted in a Western individual who, "Had been revealed to be sceptical, disintegrative and malicious."²⁷ Disintegrative individualism becomes characteristic of judgment which fetishes all higher questions into the logical level of instrumental sufficiency. Dewey indicted the resulting myth of a "transcendental supra-empirical self" which was an inevitable conclusion

²⁶ E. H. Gombrich, Art and Illusion (London: Phaidon, 1960) p. 304

The quotation is, "The history of art may be described as the forging of masterkeys for opening the mysterious locks of our senses to which only nature herself originally held the key."

²⁷ John Dewey, Experience and Nature (New York: Dover Publications, 1958) p. 225

when individuality was not conceived as "historic, intermediate, and temporally relative." He continued:

When this movement terminates with a "community of selves," the circle has returned to the empirical fact with which it might properly have started out; [Dewey's emphasis] but the intervening insertion of a transcendent ego remains as a plague. It isolates the community of selves from their natural existence.²⁸

Dewey's brilliant discursion upon Western intellectual history could spawn several dissertations were the historical problem of which he spoke accepted as a logical point of departure for formal investigation. The instrumental approach to judgment, culturally reproduces that very transcendent ego which Dewey called a "plague." With this carcinogenic camouflage, it hides its tracks within the jungle of a total life environment with which it is totally compatible. This problem has assumed many forms and has affected us in many different ways. In aesthetics, lumping questions of social discrimination and historical totality into the category of instrumental judgment forces the Fine Arts to perform the dirty business of teaching normalization and social control. The instrumental level of judgment collaborates in its own thematization within the transcendence system of malicious rivalry and disintegrative individualism.

²⁸ Ibid.

Aesthetics are only one part of a very large transcendence system which tends toward scepticism, disintegration and malice. Because of the functional similarity between many "pure" aesthetic experiences and other aspects of Western individualism, it seemed reasonable to Dewey that aesthetic experience was likely a shared historical experience rather than anything "supra-empirical" and universal. Following Dewey's observation relocates the significance of aesthetic experience in "the empirical fact with which it might properly have started out."

Conventional instrumental analysis conceals the knowledge that social experience enters aesthetic perception. Where the categories of judgment are limited only to developing instrumental skills, a false objectivity carries the hidden curriculum of the transcendent ego. The private market's indiscriminate social and historical totalizations, thrive upon this restriction of judgment. A "supra-empirical, transcendent" ego-system has created a dangerous cultural bottleneck. Like the sea crab, whose primitive frontal context surrounds his esophagus, an expanding "supra-empirical" ego threatens to strangle itself. Pure, instrumental aesthetic judgment helps provide the private minds²⁹ upon which many manifestations of collective irrationality depend.

²⁹ On this point see Alfred Sohn-Rethel, Intellectual and Manual Labor, A Critique of Epistemology (London: Macmillan, 1978)

Instrumental judgment remains understandably loathe to discuss the indisputable evolution of art forms at the level of inclusiveness with which Marx analyzed political economy and with which Weber wrote intellectual history. Discussing the collectively unconscious bonds of this relation would undermine the myth of the transcendent ego, one of the surest pillars upon which consumer society and bourgeois politics have been emotionally based. The immediacy of aesthetic experience has found a new level of judgment when social history replaces the "supra-empirical self" as a basis for relevance. The arts share their existence with all other areas of our psychological, political and economic lives. It does not demean them to be appreciated at these levels as well.

Conventional, instrumentally sufficient judgment, has been quite correct to locate form as the carrier of significant content. Suzanne Langer, the high priestess of instrumental judgment in this century, writes that, "Art, however simple or imperfect, is made in order to realize the form."³⁰ The methodological flaw in this approach is that it privileges the instrumental form above the social and historical relationship which the form signifies. Instrumental judgment like Langer's is not wrong, its error is that it does not take its own precepts seriously enough. The art

³⁰ Suzanne K. Langer, Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling. Vol. I (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967) p. 143

work's form is indeed important because the form is structurally homologous to its historical context. Instrumental judgment intuits the significance of an art work, but it has attributed significance to technical and instrumental capacity. Though vital, the techniques of artistic production are not as important as the historical relationship which those techniques formally embody within the material structure of a work of art.

Works of art are emotional records of collective historical experience. Art contextually baptizes the communicant back into the process of his own becoming. With great art, duree, phenomenologically absorbed, recreates the social time of man, the only known species who evolves both physically and conceptually. "Art," Adorno insists, "Says it like it is."³¹ When we recognize ourselves, through the languages of art, this startling discovery has been gleaned across a broad and inevitable historical detour. Art permits us to participate individually in all that history has permitted us collectively to be.

Culture mediates between the body and its environment and therefore performs for human beings the same function as instinct in the lower animals. Cultural signs embed the individual in the general consciousness and simultaneously transform general existence into individual terms. Because

³¹ Theodore Adorno, Asthetische Theorie (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970) p. 200

the two-dimensional sign-system functions autonomously in this binary way, the methodological challenge it poses to historical analysis is often side-stepped. Classical logic always leaves one side of the cultural context outside its view. The species and the specific are always a silence within one another, meeting each other in opposition, negation and conflict. There is only one perspective from which to inspect both axes of existence and that is from a position within the cultural apparatus itself. The complementary cycle of person into system and system into person takes place in the semiotic domain of the Culture.

The symbolic social environment exhibits, as Foucault declares, "a specifically discursive apparatus" which is the means by which

Power relations can materially penetrate the body in depth, without depending even on the mediation of the subject's own representations. If power takes hold on the body, this is not through its having to be interiorized in people's consciousness.³²

Human significances are carried and tacitly communicated through the aesthetic symbols which comprise a shared social sign-system. In this way, aesthetic experiences operate dualistically as both personal symbols and collective signs.

³² Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge ed. Colin Gordon. trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980) p. 186

The difference in meaning between "sign" and "symbol" which complicates discussion and contributes to misunderstanding, defines the frontier of artistic creativity. Artistic expression inhabits the no-man's land between the syntactically logical sign and the emotionally emblematic symbol. Without dual citizenship in two domains of human experience, any arcane, private or neurotic symbol would be art, and traffic signs would rank as the highest cultural expressions.

Viewed subjectively, from the side of experience, a cultural form feels like a symbol because it carries an aura of universal and necessary truth. Viewed objectively, from the side of social behavior, a cultural form acts like a sign with an unconscious and reflexive power homologous to (but, of course, not as binding as) genetic coding in the lower animals. Through structural analysis, cultural studies attempts to decode³³ sign-symbols by establishing the context or, in Umberto Eco's words, the "given state" to which the symbol refers. Cultural studies wants to know how this happens: How do aesthetic symbols operate as social signs and, conversely, how can social signs by-pass consciousness to

³³ Umberto Eco defines a "code" as, "a rule coupling some items...which establishes that a given array of syntactic signals refers back to a given state." The cultural symbol, which is often mistaken as a code, in itself, "conveys many intertwined contents and therefore what is commonly called a message is in fact a text whose content is a multilevelled discourse." Umberto Eco, A Theory of Semiotics (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1976) p. 57

engrave themselves symbolically upon the emotions?

An emotional infrastructure is indispensable to cooperative enterprise and for this reason, the relations of material production include a body of social values, intentions and affects. Cultural forms organize and denote these collective values and therefore are part of the foundation of all social relations. Adaptation and survival would be impossible for human beings without this ability to codify collective values into an easily ingested symbolic code. A cultural form is a symbol to experience, a sign to behavior, and through both functions, the means of survival for the group.

Classical formalism like Langer's and Gombrich's carries a deliberate indifference to the social context which pre-consciously determines collective values. This determined indifference to context is, in part, responsible for the extreme social vulnerability which has, in industrial societies, superseded physical vulnerability to a capricious state of nature. Under conditions where consciousness remains indifferent to context, techniques of mastery and manipulation harbor a blind spot right at the center of objective enlightenment.

Symbolic communication derives its meaning from the "vivid present."³⁴ Metaphysical detours are unnecessary. Ade-

³⁴ Alfred Schutz, Phenomenology and Social Relations (Chica-

quate formal interpretation follows the intentional system tacitly embedded in the sign into the vivid present which artist and beholder share. This vivid, tacitly shared present gives the artwork its social content.

"There would be no beauty," Theodore Adorno wrote, "without thinking oneself into history."³⁵ The meaning of art rests upon the history which has been embodied within it. What an artist chooses to depict may represent the chronological events of day to day individual associations, but the art form he employs embodies his society's mode of social adaptation and species survival. Whatever its representative content all art embodies such a relation. The formal meaning of a work of art glows with a timefully vivid message, a communication livid with the social context in which it was composed.

Culture constitutes an "informing spirit," but the crucial mistake of conventional instrumental judgment has been to suppose, or act as if it supposes, that its content lies outside history. Where the concept of an "informing spirit" finds explanation in Noumena, Archetypes, Platonic forms, moral imperatives or any other variation of absolute ideal-

go: University of Chicago Press, 1970) In the Chapter, "Music and Communication," Schutz writes, "The beholder, thus, is united with the composer by a time dimension common to both, which is nothing other than a derived form of the vivid present (p. 211)."

³⁵ Theodore Adorno, Asthetische Theorie (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970) p. 102

ism, then political closure has been worked upon the art object, because its social meaning has been limited to the instrumental reproduction of an ideal form. Idealizing a form closes the social significance of the art object, stopping its most intimately interpersonal voice. The idealization of form prevents adequate discrimination of valid art. The idealization of form is a myth of the transcendental, "supra-empirical" personality that Dewey called "malicious and disintegrative." The severe political limitations upon its judgment rise out of an implicit code of status and collectibility. The emotional marrow of the most human of all collective experiences is reamed out by an implicitly political one. The historical relation which the artform mobilizes is replaced by a consumer one. The objective content of the artwork and the aesthetic signification of that content lose the quality of a living relationship and become instead an economic one.

The interpretation and explanation of symbolic texts is called hermeneutics. Conventional hermeneutics has not adequately explained the social content of Fine Arts forms. "We need," Janet Wolff writes, "to supplement hermeneutics with a sociology of knowledge."³⁶ Hermeneutics alone are not enough. The hermeneutical insight that art "discloses in a joyous and frightening shock: Thou must change thy life,"³⁷

³⁶ Janet Wolff, The Social Production of Art (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981) p. 103

expresses a beautiful sentiment, but it is an insufficient principle of judgment. The art work also demands that we change our social and political life. Arresting aesthetic judgment at a technical and instrumental level of classical forms limits aesthetic knowledge to purely personal experience. Social and historical judgment requires more inclusive categories than individual subjectivity can provide.

Formal instrumental judgment is insufficient to appreciate the ethnological value of the arts as "a distinct way of life for a whole people," because it idealizes individuality and denies the power of a historical context to signify and confer value. The social significance of art is kept secret.

In his famous discussion of Art as Experience, Dewey reasoned that the conventional approaches to art contain:

A reinforced bias, and one, which, most unfortunately is just the one most fatal to aesthetic understanding. For the uniquely distinguishing feature of aesthetic experience is exactly the fact that no such distinction of self and object exists in it, since it is aesthetic in the degree in which organism and environment cooperate to institute an experience in which the two are so fully integrated that each disappears.³⁸

Dewey's pragmatic approach defines Culture as a socio-historical totality. This concept of judgment transgresses the institutional fissures which commemorate the fragmentations

³⁷ Hans-Georg Gadamer, Philosophical Hermeneutics. trans. and ed. by David E. Linge (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976) p. 104

³⁸ John Dewey, Art as Experience (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1934) p. 249

and specializations of instrumental knowledge.

Historical interpretation of cultural signs requires access to a broader area of criticism--an area, in fact, of phenomenological interpretation. To suture the unproductive dualisms of Kantian idealism reunites aesthetics with the historical ground of its emergence. Culture, thought of in this way, adds a psychological dimension to history,³⁹ because, as David Lowe writes, "It shifts the locus of the unconscious from within the self to beyond it." He adds:

Within the sign [any cultural symbol, language, artwork, status need] the signifier [the social force of the "vivid present"] dominates over the signified [social history determines the significance of social form]...Hence, instead of the constancy of the sign, there is "an incessant sliding of the signified under the signifier."⁴⁰

Lowe is using the language of existential psychology to indicate that symbolic meaning is just as subject to change or co-optation as any other social relationship. The Culture is phenomenally related to, one might even say it phenomenolizes, the social.

³⁹ "The concept of culture is at the heart of the conception of consciousness as conscious existence, in which consciousness is seen both as bound up with an existing state of affairs and as a condition which makes it possible to change that state of affairs." Tom Bottomore (ed.) A Dictionary of Marxist Thought (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983) p. 110

⁴⁰ Lowe, Perception. p. 121 In this passage Lowe is quoting the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan for whom, "The unconscious is the discourse of the Other." Jacques Lacan, Ecrits. trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977) p. 193

The vivid social present pre-consciously penetrates the emotions. Berger and Luckmann conclude:

What remains sociologically essential is the recognition that all symbolic universes and all legitimations are human products... Primary socialization thus accomplishes what may be seen as the most important confidence trick that society plays on the individual.⁴¹

The ideal of the autonomous ego amounts to a sociological tone poem for the bourgeois system of production. The emotional and cultural life cannot be evaluated without the additions to the personality that are derived from continually introjecting historical intentional structures.⁴² Social significance incessantly "slides under" social symbols and redetermines them. No traditional sign stands immune to the incessant process of recoloration and co-optation. Raymond Williams suggests that even in Marxism:

It is not "the base" and "the superstructure" that need to be studied, but specific and indissoluble real processes, within which the decisive relationship, from a Marxist point of view, is that expressed by the complex idea of "determination."⁴³

⁴¹ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1966) pp. 118 & 124

⁴² Bruno Bettelheim noted in his study of the Kibbutz: "Nowhere more than in the Kibbutz did I realize the degree to which private property, in the deep layers of the mind, relates to private emotions. If one is absent, the other tends to be absent as well." Bruno Bettelheim, The Children of the Dream (New York: Avon Books, 1969) p. 281

⁴³ Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature (London: Oxford University Press, 1977) p. 133

Shared social intentionality determines an active political unconscious,⁴⁴ which perpetuates the meaning system which has been perpetrated upon it. The split between aesthetic experience and critical consciousness brings on the eternal return of the historically repressed. Where cultural values lose their social memory, critical amnesia thrives upon its own redundancy.

The circular, recursive and internally linked relation between ideal meaning and the social world poses a direct methodological challenge to critical interpretation. Roland Barthes, with his incomparable talent for simultaneously voicing and dissecting, paints the terms of the confrontation between the two forms of analytical reason:

Thus with its designating, silent movement, a pointing finger always accompanies the classic text: the truth is thereby long desired and avoided, kept in a kind of pregnancy for its full term, a pregnancy whose end, both liberating and catastrophic, will bring about the utter end of discourse.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Fredric Jameson, The Political Unconscious (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981) In a society, such as ours, "saturated with messages and with 'aesthetic' experiences of all kinds, the issues of an older philosophical aesthetics themselves need to be radically historicized, and can be expected to be transformed beyond recognition in the process (p. 11)...The assertion of a political unconscious proposes that we undertake just such a final analysis and explore the multiple paths that lead to the unmasking of cultural artifacts as socially symbolic acts (p. 20)."

⁴⁵ Roland Barthes, S/Z, An Essay. trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill & Wang, 1974) p. 62

The methodological challenge refines down to an unfortunate, but unavoidable confrontation between a fragmented, disarrayed and idealistic hypostacization of surface contents and a unified, in-depth, socially responsible one. With no capacity to handle the social content which signifies cultural forms, a Kantian-linear interpretation suppresses historical consciousness. Phenomenological analysis can intrude upon this tacit conspiracy of silence, because "for phenomenology, the intentionality of consciousness is the starting point to unravel the world." Lowe continues:

Marxism is correct, in that there is always more than consciousness; and totality determines that consciousness. However, phenomenology is able to clarify the perceptual connections in the world, connections which (conventional) Marxism is unable to perceive.⁴⁶

We require an epistemological change in our approach to aesthetics, a change conducted in the original sense of the Greek verb epistamai, meaning to put oneself "over" or "higher" in order to better observe something. A Kenneth Burke word pun catches the essence of this proposed shift. Burke points out that the substance of an issue is its substance,⁴⁷ the ground upon which its visible structure rises.

⁴⁶ Lowe, Perception. p. 173 "If dialectic is the structure of totality in transformation, intentionality is the subjectivization of that dialectic structure (p. 173)."

⁴⁷ "The concept of an act's, or a thing's, 'sub-stance' refers immediately to the ground on which it stands, to its context. The nature of a thing is intrinsic and extrinsic at the same time. Scientific materialism, following Locke's epistemological empiricism, avoids this paradox by studying the extrinsic conditions only. Burke, by

The sub-stance of conventional criticism is instrumental and individualistic. It is epistemologically insufficient for an ethnology of our own Western Fine Arts Culture.

To strike an ethnological "sub-stance" which links Fine Arts culture to "a distinct whole way of life," it is necessary to establish a "theory of valid knowledge." Jean Piaget's work in epistemology indicates that this task requires "a method which attempts to reach knowledge mechanisms at their source and development."⁴⁸ If successful, such a method accomplishes "the passage of a lesser to a greater validity." The problem for the method, Piaget continues:

Is not a purely formal one but means determining how knowledge reaches reality hence which relations exist between subject and object.⁴⁹

Cultural studies can fulfill Piaget's description of valid knowledge by starting with the form of appearances and undoing the identity process it represents. In Piaget's theoretical, but extremely useful view:

Identity is then to be considered a product--the product of the composition of direct or reversed operations--and not a point of departure.⁵⁰

contrast, proposes to face this paradox squarely in its full ambiguity; for in it he discovers 'a strategic moment, an alchemic moment, wherein momentous miracles of transformation can take place.'" Armin Paul Frank, Kenneth Burke (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1969) p. 136

⁴⁸ Jean Piaget, Psychology and Epistemology, trans. by Arnold Rosin (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971) p. 21

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 8

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 36

The theory of knowledge in question, Piaget continues, "is therefore essentially a theory of adaptation of thoughts to reality."⁵¹ Valid knowledge of the kind Piaget is describing can only be reached by tracing a form back to the ground of its being, and locating its identity in the interpersonal context which constitutes it. The key revision requires the use of formal appearance as a point of access back into the "sub-stance" of the form. In the case of aesthetics, art-forms should mark out the beginning of a larger and more inclusive context of judgment.

Cultural studies can recover the "sub-stance" of the Fine Arts by starting with style and form and "undoing" the identity relation which they re-present. Cultural identity can be reversed back across its operational field to its social point of departure. This structural reversal relates an historical form of consciousness, "a communicating vessel," in Breton's words, back to an historical society. Without this more inclusive category for aesthetic judgment, the human world which should be open to experience, becomes a satellite of power. Adorno's brooding, Swiftian genius mused

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 24

cf. Dewey: It seems wonderful that man should have a capacity of thinking and knowing, so that he is elevated far above nature and seated with angels... The wonder should be transferred to the whole course of things. Only because an arbitrary breach has previously been introduced... does it appear passing strange that after all the world would be just what it is. The world is subject-matter for knowledge, because mind has developed according to the structures of the world in which it exists. Experience and Nature, p. 277

that:

The totem which in the art work is carried into power...is the potential presence of the collective in the work....In each improvement (of form) to which the composer feels compelled, often enough in conflict with that which he considers his primary impulse, he works as the agent of society....Since the late Beethoven, the artist mobilizes disintegration.⁵²

The historical relation which Adorno called, "the potential presence of the collective in the work," exerts an undeniable magnetism upon the artist. All who have painted, composed or performed have in one way or another been forced to labor against the secret social totem mobilized within the artistic form. For those who have turned from art to aesthetics, proper, this problem becomes the central one for culture and society.

By linking meaning to form, Adorno intended the "mobilization of disintegration" to mean the agenda, the "hidden curriculum" of the late Romantic to Modern style forms themselves. The artist is working to unhinge the tightening noose of impersonal instrumental judgment. Since the Romantics, the technical structure of the art work has carried this meta-message. The human paradox is that the meta-message of the structure and form is emotionally a subliminal one. Cognitive structures are unconsciously internalized through the underlying organization of the cognitive form. This unconscious dialectic between perception and

⁵² Adorno, Asthetische, pp. 71 & 73

the ordering principles of a society forms the subject of Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

Adorno is asking the first legitimate question, the one which locates "style" and "form" as historical phenomena mediated through the creative talents of individual artists. This is the basic question which must be asked about the foreclosure of perspective in painting and the breakdown of triadic harmony in music. Instrumental judgment regards modernism as an intellectual response to the sciences and industrialization. This explanation presupposes a didactic and medieval etiology for art. It assumes that artists paint, write and compose according to what they consciously know. It seems much more likely that just the opposite is the case. Artists paint, write and compose according to what they unconsciously know.⁵³ They act out in imagery that which is otherwise peculiar and strange. The "mobilization"

⁵³ Herbert Read notes that, "Culture can never be wholly conscious-- there is always more to it than we are conscious of; and it cannot be planned because it is also the unconscious background of all our planning." The Tenth Muse (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957) p. 93

Compare also, John Cage, who by virtue of his musical reputation and run-on sentences has to be regarded as the Casey Stengel of the musical Avant Garde: "One thing I think that we do that we don't know that we do as we think, is we move from one idea to another; but we don't go, as it were, straight from the idea to the next idea, but rather we go back to something which is not idea at all, but from which ideas can be generated." Source, Music of the Avant Garde, #4, July, 1968, p. 11

The roaring debate not indicated by these two very diverse tributes concerns whether the aesthetic "unconscious" is social, archetypal or some combination of both. We wish to explore the social "unconscious" of aesthetic behaviors.

of this content cannot be reduced to a feeble, non-verbal attempt to comment upon the latest scientific revolution in knowledge. This "mobilization" refers to a structure of knowledge which includes its own technical content but which, historically, is much greater than individual subjectivity. Through the course of this thesis we will discuss how a work or art brings to the surface of experience an immediate social content which surpasses the veneer of a technical or scientific surface content. As we shall see, scientific revolutions offer us a model for the way perception (aesthetic or otherwise) mobilizes experience, but the content of scientific and technical revolutions is not the content of a work of art.

The discussion of artistic content should be related to how the art work speaks of the whole social context still resonating in it as a living presence. To undertake the question, one must follow Piaget's advice. Undo or reverse the structure of appearances and follow its conceptual path back to the "sub-stance" or epistemological bedrock of genetics or history. This in-depth epistemological relation is the first relation and ultimately the central one.

The historical knowledge mobilized in an artform represents a collectively structured, historical way of knowing. Adorno thought that he read implicit, formal, social-structural decadence in the way artforms had "mobilized" knowl-

edge since the industrial revolution. In his opinion, nineteenth and twentieth century art illustrated the decay of civilization since the take-over of the relations of social production by the bourgeoisie.⁵⁴ Sometimes, Adorno's Marxism got the better of his aesthetic sensibility. In this case, he has reduced the artist to an illustrator: a tympanic membrane or camera lens on the political economy. Although Adorno overgeneralized the wrong example he was correct about the larger issue: The formal mobilization of a social content is central to the relation between art and history.

There are two perspectives on this issue and both are intrinsically related. The first, primarily a theoretical one, is called the phenomenology of form: how and in what way the artist centers the presence of the collective in his work. This theoretical perspective is internal to the artistic event. One might call it the artistic perspective. The phenomenology of the form mobilizes the dialectic of raw material and aesthetic form into one living realm of social signification.

This structural dialectic within formal appearances acts out Goethe's definition of the art object as "illustrating the universal in the particular," but does so with a material resignification. The "universal" becomes a socio-histor-

⁵⁴ "The revolt of art, teleologically placed in its 'objective setting,' the historical world, has become a revolt against art. One prophesies idly whether art will survive." Adorno, Ästhetische, p. 13

ical reality instead of a Kantian noumenal one. The phenomenology of the formal event confirms the temporal meaning and significance of artistic process. Goethe's intuition proves to have been correct, but in the modern ethnological sense of cultural significance as a "distinct whole way of life."

Jacques Lacan has defined the phenomenology of form in his radical re-reading of Freud. Going back to the famous dictum, translated, "Where Id was, Ego shall be," Lacan writes:

The true meaning of Wo Es war, soll Ich werden would seem to be the following: I emerge from this very locus in so far as it is a locus of being. I emerge from "it"--- I become on the spot of "it," not the "it," but the general pervading 'it.'⁵⁵

Lacan's revision allows for a phenomenology of thinking experience, an approach to transcendent ego within history.⁵⁶ It preserves the creativity of the artist while freeing that creativity from an idealistic and egocentric cage. The totalizing link between art and the general, pervading locus of being distinguishes the aesthetic experience from all other kinds of communication.

⁵⁵ Jacques Lacan, Ecrits, A Selection. trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977) p. 128

⁵⁶ In rejecting the solution to his own Hegelian blind-alley, Adorno nonetheless defined the crux of the issue which had tied Lukacs and himself in knots: "The objection against the phenomenology of art is less that it would be anti-empirical than the reverse: it establishes a thinking experience." Adorno, Asthetische, pp. 186-186

A vast analytical literature in existential theory, gestalt psychology, the treatment of Anorexia Nervosa, the study of sexual perversion and the family in schizogenic transaction links the phenomenology of form with a display of "thinking experience." The form "speaks," it "acts out" the ground of its emergence. The therapeutic evidence supporting this expanded category of judgment is, quite simply, revolutionary.⁵⁷

Of course, if art did not differ from a neurotic repetitive compulsion, it could not hold the significance for us which it manifestly does. The difference between artistic "thinking experience" and neurotic "thinking experience" parallels our categories of judgment. The neurotic display remains an asocial and insufficient gesture. Art discrimi-

⁵⁷ For therapeutic evidence supporting a "phenomenology of form" see:

R. D. Laing and A. Esterson Sanity, Madness and the Family (London: Tavistock Publications, 1964)

Gregory Bateson, Don D. Jackson, Jay Haley and John Weakland, "Toward a Theory of Schizophrenia" Behavioral Sciences, Vol. 1, #4, October 1956

Hilde Bruch, The Golden Cage. The Enigma of Anorexia Nervosa (New York: Random House, 1978)

Mara Palazzoli et. al., Paradox and Counterparadox. trans. by Elizabeth V. Burt (New York: Jason Aronson, 1978)

Robert Stoller, Splitting, a Case of Female Masculinity (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1973)

_____, Perversion, the Erotic Form of Hatred (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975)

nates interpersonal situations and, at its best, totalizes historical contexts. The neurotic gestures solely to himself, the artist for himself and others.

The other perspective upon the social content of aesthetic form is primarily an empirical one of political aesthetics: meaning the narrative strategems employed by the dominant political perspective to deny, suppress and foreclose the social meaning of the symbolic gesture. The political and the phenomenological together constitute an historically unified event. Instrumental judgment denies the social meaning of the artistic gesture. It "closes" the artistic gesture from history. Idealizing instrumental sufficiency can become political suppression in the areas of Native Studies and the culture of minority nationalities and create trauma for creative children in the public schools. Instrumentally sufficient judgment turns culture into a fetish by denying the larger historical question posed by the temporal significance of the form, itself.

Whether the art event is approached from the standpoint of its suppression by ideology or its mobilization of a social content, neither standpoint can entirely exclude the other. The politics of art and art's phenomenal formal reality are locked in life and death struggle. A denunciation of the insufficiency of instrumental idealism cannot proceed very far without an illustration of more inclusive catego-

ries of aesthetic judgment, nor can an extended discussion of the phenomenology of form take place without justifying the critical need for such a complex revisionist approach to the subject.

No cultural world exists apart from the "real" one. Accepting this fact does not concede a vulgar "reduction" which demeans the life of the mind and excludes the possibility of individual will. "The mind," Sartre wrote, "does not produce its own sensations and hence they remain exterior to it; but on the other hand, it appropriates them to itself by living them."⁵⁸ The will to live upon a "locus of being," as Lacan put it, "on the spot of the general pervading it," is neither a degraded concept of unilateral self-assertion nor the reduction of mind to sensation and instinct.

The means and the ends which determine existence have always been reconciled by an act of will. Hannah Arendt has suggested that, beginning with Aquinas, the West lost this mediating concept by permitting the will, itself, to be determined under either the means or the ends which its task had once been to reconcile.⁵⁹ Arendt's crisis of the Western intellectual will defines the general crisis of which the

⁵⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, trans. Hazel Barnes (London: Methuen and Co., 1957) p. 313

⁵⁹ Hannah Arendt, The Life of the Mind, Vol. 2: Willing (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovitch, 1978) pp. 113-125

Western split C/cultural experience is only one manifestation. The higher capacities for judgment have been systematically undermined by the passive assumption that techniques ultimately determine value. Her study leads to the conclusion that cultural judgment suffers from a general degradation of the will, not its loss.

The structural dialectic within a work of art confronts contemporary society, because the will within the work of art remains undegraded and embodies a willful act of reconciliation. In its means (praxis) the dialectic of art and society has been obvious: no society has ever existed without its own aesthetic forms. The debate circles about the question of ends. We suggest that in its ends (poiesis) the dialectic of aesthetic experience is profound: through the aesthetic, history is incorporated into the senses of the body.

For art, the ground of emergence, "the general pervading it," is a given, not to be dominated, but to be reconciled to life by a mediating act of symbolic transformation. Judgment which divides ends from means, sundering the dialectic of body-mind, recapitulates the historical degradation of the will and remains insufficient to bring aesthetic experience to the surface of language. This poverty of experience must be one of life's most demoralizing truisms.

The contemporary fragmentation of experience causes unhappiness and maladjustment because it is irrational. Erich Fromm proposes:

We call rational any thought, feeling or act that promotes the adequate functioning and growth of the whole of which it is a part, and irrational that which tends to weaken or destroy the whole.⁶⁰

Ernest Becker warns that, without this broad commitment to rational unity, "we are in danger of overlooking the Protean forms that any structure of domination can have over the human spirit."⁶¹

The best critical students of culture: Williams, Foucault, Baudrillard and Berger, depict major political and social problems as also areas of cultural conflict. As Becker advises, "Much human misery, even--or especially--on the everyday level, is a problem in basic aesthetics."⁶² Aesthetics is the basic area where the pernicious problem of consciousness and society comes together in one structural whole.⁶³

⁶⁰ Erich Fromm, The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973) p. 263

⁶¹ Ernest Becker The Lost Science of Man (Toronto: Doubleday, 1971) p. 67

⁶² Ernest Becker, The Structure of Evil (New York: Free Press, 1968) p. 209

⁶³ Every political revolution and every great social transformation has accomplished its own "symbolic quest" in which, "At the point where the irresolvable conflict is brought to its most excruciating tension...then what Jung called the reconciling symbol may present itself." Charles Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1969) p. 30 The arcana of Whitmont's

Culturally, each human life is thousands of years old, and knows this background as a positive tension which can be symbolically translated into the present. When, with uncharacteristic boosterism, Sartre remarked, "I believe that a man can always make something out of what is made of him,"⁶⁴ he had colloquially described the dialectic of aesthetic reconciliation. Fine Art, Folk Art, "pop" Art, all art, deserving of the name, takes the ground of its being as a given and appropriates this historically dictated relation in order to dramatize, materially, a corresponding human one.

Art has always exalted the individual and worked for his sensory liberation; but the highest priority of art since the first shamanic incantation, has been to make that liberation a sociable one. Discriminating the historical totality of an art work does no disservice to the artist, and restores to art the unity which art restores to us.

Two formidable, but related challenges face the social history of aesthetics.

1. To de-Platonize artistic form.
2. To provide an historical explanation for the emotional relevance of artistic imagery.

definition does not invalidate the event. The point is to find a more logical and historically plausible basis for it.

⁶⁴ Istvan Meszaros, The Work of Sartre, Vol. 1: Search for Freedom (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979) p. 73

These challenges must be met in terms that are specific enough to be a contribution to the methodology of cultural studies, but which are also general enough to potentially include all the Arts. Chapters Three, Four and Five discuss the de-Platonization of artistic form. Beginning with the Marx-Hegel debate in Chapter Three, we look at the strengths and weaknesses of a materialist theory of culture.

Chapter III

THE IDEALIST HEGELIAN HERITAGE

Part of the historian's task involves the improvement of method. Yet, as Weber observed, "Among these problems we find the relationship between 'theory' and 'history,' which is still problematic in our discipline."⁶⁵ The methodological problem of the relation between history and theory raises some of its most vexing problems in cultural studies. Cultural questions have been left relatively obscured in their Hegelian haven, an absolute mythic tension in critical discourse.

For Hegel, the high priest of the "supra-empirical self," culture was the triumph of the Ideal at the expense of its human agents.⁶⁶ The individual encounter with an absolute Ideal caused an "unhappy consciousness." Hegel defined this sad state of being as:

The alienated Soul which is the consciousness of self as a divided nature, a doubled and merely contradictory being.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. and ed. Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Glen-coe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1949) p. 87

⁶⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. M. B. Baillie with a Foreword by George Lichtheim (New York: Harper and Row, 1967) p. xxi

⁶⁷ Ibid., p.251

In Hegel's opinion, human consciousness was condemned to be unhappy for a very long time. On the surface of things, we can agree with Hegel's definition (if not with his fatalism), because a divided and fragmented nature is not only depressing, it ultimately symptomizes clinical madness.

The need to revise Hegel's critical approach grew out of contact with history. Since we approach the "unhappy consciousness" post-Marx, and even, some say, post-industrial, it must be dealt with as an historical problem, not an ideal one. This revision requires rethinking how the absolute Ideal becomes conscious. Marx, of course, began this structural revision.

Marx agreed that the "unhappy consciousness" suffers from a divided nature, but he insisted that its divided condition was not an alienation of self from pure reason, but an alienation of self from its own being in history and society. Marx achieved a simple, but monumental reversal of the Hegelian context which led inescapably to an analysis of subjectivity based upon the reality of concrete physical existence.

The motor of unhappy consciousness lay in a phenomenon which Hegel called negation:

Just because the concrete fact is self-divided, and turns into reality, it appears as something self-moving, self-active....This is the portentous power of the negative: that what is bound and held by something else...should obtain an existence all its own, gain freedom and independence on its own

account.⁶⁸

The negation requires mind to experience its own fragments as external objects, but this fragmentation carries a Telos, or purposeful role. In the Hegelian order of things, the negation is not haphazard or accidental, it objectifies for thought and experience that which consciousness must reintegrate in order to overcome unhappiness. Thus, unhappiness is overcome by mastering the absolute truth immanent within all individuals in its externalized, reified forms.

Divided mind comes to its whole self after first perceiving its partial consciousness objectively. Hegel reasoned that:

Mind consists in the process of becoming an other to itself....Experience is called this very process by which the element...externalizes itself, and then comes back to itself from this state of estrangement, and by so doing is at length set forth in its concrete nature and real truth, and becomes too a possession of consciousness.⁶⁹

For Hegel, as well as for Marx, consciousness cannot be raised without first experiencing this process of negation. Awareness embarks upon a dialectical adventure "which consciousness executes on itself...in the sense that out of it a new and true object arises."⁷⁰ This new, but "true-er" object always confronts the divided consciousness as something

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 93

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 96

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 142

alien and even threatening. Hence, consciousness begins in an unhappy experience of its own condition and nature. Hegel said:

It is only this necessity, this origination of the new object...which offers itself to consciousness without consciousness knowing how it comes by it...that to us is to be seen going on, so to say, behind its back.⁷¹

Consciousness begins in a stage of negation where, "I distinguish myself from myself....I, the self-same being, thrust myself away from myself."⁷²

These speculations are from Hegel's famous disquisition upon the Master-Slave relationship. Marx called this passage, "the true birthplace and secret of the Hegelian philosophy."⁷³ Marx seized this secret center, bringing it down to earth and redefining the integration of consciousness as a political and economic moment in social history. Marx reversed the intellectual polarity of the Hegelian process of negation, centering the unhappy consciousness within historical process. With this epochal achievement, did Marx solve all questions of social and cultural consciousness? Clearly, he did not. What questions, then, did he not solve and why?

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 144

⁷² Ibid., p. 211

⁷³ Paul Connerton (ed.), Critical Sociology (New York: Penguin Books, 1976) p. 40

First of all, let us understand that Marxist materialism shares much in common with its Hegelian forerunner. For one thing, Marx was deeply convinced that history would go on. His faith in the fate of mankind was almost religious, certainly millenarian. Eschatological overtones ring strongly through Marx's appeal to the proletariat and his prophesies regarding the ignoble fate of the capitalist system. Marx's profound ethical and moral idealism should not obscure the fact that Hegel's ghost still haunts Marx's critical method. In fact, the whole Hegelian dialectic in either its philosophical ideal or its dialectical materialist form harbors the same "epistemological dilemma."⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Kurt Wolff, Surrender and Catch (Boston: D. Reidel, 1976) p. 136

Anthony Giddens exclaims bluntly that, "In many respects Marx's writings exemplify features of nineteenth century thought which are plainly defective when looked at from the perspective of our century." A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981) p. 1

Jurgen Habermas carries this critical observation further: "The Marxist epistemology presumes to take nothing for granted except its pure project of radical doubting. In truth it bases itself on a critical consciousness that is the result of an entire process of self-formation. Thus it is the beneficiary of a stage of reflection that it does not admit and therefore also cannot legitimate.... Thus positivism could forget that the methodology of the sciences was intertwined with the objective self-formative process (Bildungsprozess) of the human species." Knowledge and Human Interests. trans. Jeremy Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971) pp. 13 & 5

The "entire process of self-formation" ought to be placed in relation to politics and economics.

Both the Hegelian and the traditional Marxist way of knowing contain the same crucial vulnerability. Marx could not have anticipated that the dialectic of negation and return was vulnerable to manipulation and control. In Marx's time, faith in the survival of mankind was perfectly justified. Who could have anticipated our modern distress where the very instruments which promised freedom from want and liberation from fear have become tools of crisis and anxiety? Marx could not have anticipated advertising, megadeath, mass alienation, media mindlessness and status anxiety; nor can one reasonably expect his historical critique to protect contemporary consciousness from these disabilities.

The twentieth century world presents a savage dichotomy along Marxist class lines, but denouncing the cleavage of the world system of physical production does not indict the culture which perpetuates this injustice. In response to this critical oversight, Jean Baudrillard proclaims that "the dialectic lies in ashes" because it interpreted history as "the separated [Baudrillard's emphasis] order of material production."⁷⁵ One of the weaknesses of a rigid, orthodox dialecticism is that it hides the complicity of cultural behaviors with politics. Industrialism was developed during a time when critical theory rigidly separated social process from cultural form. This preliminary separation left polit-

⁷⁵ Jean Baudrillard, For A Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign. trans. Charles Levin (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981) p. 166

ical dissent with the untenable assumption that the relations of production could be changed without altering the ideal cultural forms which correspond to them.

The Marxist vision of dialectical process validly challenges Hegelian political idealism but it has, at the same time, tolerated the separation of aesthetics from the labor of social reproduction. Traditional dialecticism misses the role the ideal form plays in confirming the attitudes, tactics and interpersonal relations necessary for the continuation of any system of production. The traditional critique can be used to condone the separation of the processes of exploitation from the cultural forms which denote, teach and confirm those processes.

Marshall Sahlins calls this blind spot in the traditional dialectic "the anthropological crux" and cites it as a lacuna in orthodox Marxist theory. He writes:

What is missed by Marx is that men begin as men, in distinction to other animals, precisely when they experience the world as a concept.⁷⁶

This oversight in traditional Marxist theory has led other stern critiques like Jean Baudrillard to suggest that the traditional mode of dialectical critique "has reached a moment of deadlock."⁷⁷ Baudrillard announces this harsh decision because the original negation enacted between base and

⁷⁶ Marshall Sahlins, Cultural and Practical Reason (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976) p. 142

⁷⁷ Baudrillard, Critique, p. 182

superstructure/ use and exchange/ proletariat and capital/, are all preliminary separations within what has become a culturally integrated industrial socio-economic system. Marx's early, rigid dialectical separations conform to the only psychology of the sign upon which he could draw--the Hegelian process of unhappiness, negation and return. These vitally useful descriptive separations were accurate at the early stages of industrial production and still serve an invaluable heuristic purpose. However, unless the enormous evidence of social anomaly which Marxism has accumulated is translated into a new cultural experience, Marx's original critique can be emasculated and co-opted.

Robert Levine has explained the "epistemological dilemma" of conventional dialectical analysis using an example from natural science:

Suppose we were investigating coloration in a population of flatfish on the assumption that an animal's color is an innately fixed response to the illumination in its normal environment. Having made this assumption we take one snap-shot of each fish in its setting and discover a strong correlation between the paleness or darkness of the fish and the amount of illumination in its setting. We conclude that we were right: There are pale fish and dark fish, their differences in coloring having developed through natural selection in settings of different illumination. Our method of data collection failed to take account of the possibility of flexible response in coloration, so it led us to a false conclusion based on facts... Thus our snapshot data reflected the past phylogenetic experience of flatfish as well as their responses to the conditions of their surrounding environment at the moment the snapshot was taken, but in a form in which the two influences could

not be distinguished.⁷⁸

LeVine's parable of the flatfish is a homily on cultural studies since Kant. To study the cultural habitat of industrial society, social process and cultural form need to be epistemologically related by a method which comprehends "the epistemological consequence of adaptation."⁷⁹ Rigid, orthodox dialecticism yields snapshot data in which the truth has very high descriptive value, but only a limited explanatory one. The categories of traditional dialectical critique describe the truth in a way which cannot distinguish social process from adaptive response. Such dialectics are snapshots which take cultural experience to be fixed (or "fixable") as a category of existence instead of a social and historical relation. All such representative snapshots impose closure upon the discussion of historical totality because they deny the dialectical relation of the body-mind to its social system.

If a flatfish could express itself in the language of the Western "supra-empirical self," it would say that nature has given it the freedom to choose its adaptive coloration. Cultural studies must take the historical forms of the Fine Arts more seriously than the musings of an obstreperous flatfish, but the methodological problem is approximately

⁷⁸ Robert A. LeVine, Culture, Behavior and Personality (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co, 1973) pp. 179-180

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 179

the same. Every indicator points to an epistemological consequence of social adaptation operating in the cultural as well as the natural sphere.

In the anthropologist, Roy Wagner's words, "Culture is invented by experiencing and creating the reality from which it takes its objective characteristics."⁸⁰ Culture behaviors are always snap-shots of objective truth. However, social and political reality determines their adaptive value.

Symbols and symbolic associations are always valorized according to interpersonal historical contexts. Cultural studies requires a full appreciation of meaning as a function of the ways in which human beings create and otherwise experience these contexts. "Apart from this kind of ideological commitment," Wagner asserts, "there is no 'primary' meaning.... Culture, in the more restricted (Opera House) sense, stands as a historical and normative precedent for culture as a whole."⁸¹ Even the Western Fine Arts culture participates in the ideological framework of capitalist society. Marshall Sahlins has asserted succinctly that "Culture is business on the scale of society."⁸² His professional foil and ideological antagonist, Marvin Harris, declares in agreement that "the idealist expropriation of culture is

⁸⁰ Roy Wagner, The Invention of Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975) p. 59

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 29 & 23 [Wagner's parenthesis]

⁸² Sahlins, Practical Reason. p. 15

not a matter of whim or taste, but a recurrent product of persistent ideological condition."⁸³

It is becoming clear that no logically linear, separated formal order can comprehend the meaning of dialectical process. Culture exists in any society, at any time, only in reciprocation with the techniques of social reproduction. There is no question here of 'refuting' or in some way demurring from the great Marxist dissent. That would be ridiculous. What is in question requires carrying that dissent forward in keeping with the rest of scientific knowledge. The history of science, logic and anthropology indicate that mechanical relations of production may have been universalized across the total meaning system of industrial society. There is no rest, solitude or escape from its total and potentially alienating processes.

The question is: Do we not in effect "consume the code" of capitalist society and "reproduce the system" of capitalist relations in the body and being of our cultural, emotional and social lives?⁸⁴ Regardless of our economic affiliation with it, do we not maintain the system as long as we protect, justify and pay for the kinds of socio-cultural relations which are the epistemological consequences of adap-

⁸³ Marvin Harris, Cultural Materialism (New York: Random House, 1979) p. 284

⁸⁴ Baudrillard, Critique. from the Introduction by Charles Levin, p. 5

tation to it? Dallas Smythe has dealt with this problem in a very concrete and practical way in Dependency Road. He explains:

The prevailing Western Marxist view today still holds the incorrect assumption that the laborer is an independent commodity producer of labor power which is his to sell. [Smythe's emphasis]....In fact, the system used labor unions, religious organizations, and community arts organizations to turn the "high culture" from Greece on down into a means of attaching workers loyally to the system....The clear dichotomy between base and superstructure was no longer possible under monopoly capitalism, with the Consciousness Industry buying audiences comprising virtually the whole population to aid it in managing demand for its commodity output.⁸⁵

Smythe is describing "false consciousness" with a new historical wrinkle. He locates the process of victimization and control inside the culture! That is, inside the emo-

⁸⁵ Dallas W. Smythe, Dependency Road (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Co., 1981) pp. 48-50

The information sector which manages the consciousness industry comprises 47% of the workforce and earns 53% of total employee compensation (p. 6). Smythe also writes that "cultural hegemony took advantage of the systemic blind spot which the ideology of capitalism had embedded in the consciousness of bourgeois society....Possessive individualism and pluralism thus masked the fact that what was now to be produced was collective action by audience members in the service of the ideology of corporate capitalism. That bourgeois and Marxist intellectuals alike were victims of this blind spot made the task of monopoly capitalism infinitely easier because its left and left-liberal "progressive" opponents were effectively disarmed ideologically (p. 160)."

Content analysis which calculates subliminal chauvinisms, sexism, consumerisms and the like only bring the Hegelian paradox full circle. Marx began, in anger, at the Biblical exegesis of the Young Hegelians. The content of cultural forms are not as important as the forms themselves. Cultural forms reproduce value relationships.

tional, adaptive "fit" internalized through leading a life in capitalist society. An "audience commodity" perpetrates hegemony upon itself through the politics it absorbs in the form of cultural attitudes. Smythe leads us to conclude that a major problem in the Hegelian dialectic still holds materialism in thrall. Smythe, who declares his politics unequivocally with the proclamation, "Unless 'red' prevails over 'expert,' bourgeois class relations will be reproduced,"⁸⁶ also reluctantly laments:

It is not clear now how Marxists will resolve the anomalies in their theory as it applies to core area of monopoly capitalism, especially because current Marxist theorists do not recognize that the audience commodity even exists.⁸⁷

No matter which way critique divides cultural form from social process, the subject's way of knowing takes place in bondage. Servitude remains the basis for self-realization. For Hegel as well as orthodox Marxism:

The truth of the independent consciousness is accordingly the consciousness of the bondsman.... For this reflexion of self into self the two moments, fear and service in general are necessary.⁸⁸

This analytical problem is much more urgent than the exegetical reduction of art to a "hidden persuader" and clever salesman for false consciousness.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 299

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 51 Smythe was apparently unaware of Stuart Ewen's Captains of Consciousness, but his emphasis is correct. Critical theory has been reluctant to consider class conflict as also a form of self-victimization.

⁸⁸ Hegel, Phenomenology pp. 237 & 239

As long as the historical totality of social process and cultural form remains separated in critique, neither material production nor Marxist dissent can fill the human hollow, the awful absence enacted in bondage to an absolute ideal.

The tyranny of the ideal, in either its Hegelian or Marxist modes, invites the closure of critical reason and the silencing of speech. The task, Baudrillard writes, "is to liberate not objects and their value, but the reciprocity of speech that everywhere today is being eradicated by the terrorism of value."⁸⁹ Marx's application of Hegel's cognitive categories can lead to the "terrorism of value" if the communication paradoxes of its rigid dialectical logic are repressed.

Marx created a political phenomenology by injecting Hegel's cognitive categories into social history. Class society corresponds to negation (the externalization of a part of self), class conflict replaces unhappiness (the encounter with self as Other) and the triumph of the proletariat represents the conscious reassimilation of the material ideal. In theory, the insufficiency of the bourgeois system forces the oppressed proletariat to discriminate new and more inclusive economic and political relationships. In practice, Marx and Hegel share the same communication dilemma. Their basic terms, the "substances"⁹⁰ of their thought system fall

⁸⁹ Baudrillard, Critique p. 212

outside of their system of knowledge.

Marx based his analysis upon the existence of a "realm of necessity."⁹¹ Marxism criticizes the socially determined relations established on the basis of this natural realm of need. The practical effect of this logical critique produces a paradox. In an industrial society, the forces which control the determination of need, also indirectly control the effectiveness of the nature-based critique.

Outside of a real, physical state of nature, purely instrumental values are unreflective and demonstrate little ability to discriminate between adaptive responses to social contexts. The honest fundamentalism of the appeal to nature is out-witted by the multiple value contexts of an industrial social milieu. The negative commonality of "necessity" defines a hollow, absence and void perpetually vulnerable to the politics of desire.⁹² Hegel's ghost has its revenge in

⁹⁰ See n. 45

⁹¹ Marx wrote, "The realm of freedom actually begins only where labor which is in fact determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus in the very nature of things (my italics) it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production....Beyond the realm of necessity begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis." Karl Marx, Capital (New York: International Publishers, 1977) Vol. III, p. 820

⁹² The critique of industrial society confronts "signification" not "necessity." Lacan evokes the paradox of cultural signification in the following passage:

So runs the signifier's answer, above and beyond all sig-

this ideological double bind: the perpetually deferable promise of freedom negated by a morbidly crippled sense of ethical and emotional reciprocity.

As the primary historical traumas of secular Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution recede, the paradoxes confronting social consciousness grow. Marx accepted the Hegelian telos of unconscious struggle toward the conscious reintegration of opposites, accepting Kantian nature as materialism's existential ground of being as well as its Romantic promise of fulfillment. This ground is both the fundamental strength and the fundamental weakness of the Marxist critique. Class conflict may raise consciousness where physical necessity drives the phenomenological cycle, but how can the material ideal raise the consciousness of the affluent? A nature-based critique cannot locate the point at which class conflict becomes status rivalry. Nor the point at which need becomes resentiment. How can an Enlightenment critique which appeals to a primary "nature of things" escape its own pre-bourgeois origins? How can it keep from becoming just another bourgeois system of adver-

nifications: "You think you act when I stir you at the mercy of the bonds through which I knot your desires. Thus do they grow in force and multiply in objects, bringing you back to the fragmentation of your shattered childhood. So be it: such will be your feast until the return of the stone guest I shall be for you since you call me forth."

Jacques Lacan "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter,'" Aesthetics Today. Morris Philipson and Paul J. Gudel (ed.) (New York: New American Library, 1980) p. 407

sary relationships?⁹³ How can the validity of the critique escape merely confirming in the long run the bourgeois context which it condemns? Only cultural critique can untangle these paradoxes. E. P. Thompson has cogently addressed this problem:

What Marxism might do, for a change, is sit on its own head a little in the interests of Socialism's heart. It might close down one counter in its universal pharmacy and cease dispensing potions of analysis to cure the maladies of desire.⁹⁴

Marx shares Hegel's intellectual lineage. Hegel's ghost can only be exorcised from Marx's political phenomenology through an analysis of the reciprocal relation between Culture and political history. The emotional relations of the bourgeois system of social reproduction are just as formidable as the economic ones, perhaps more so, given the paucity of research into this dimension of historical experience.⁹⁵

These objections to Marx's political phenomenology do not invalidate radical critique. Marx was so systematic that even his gaps are clues how to continue. We can follow the

⁹³ See, for instance, Robert L. Heilbroner, Marxism, For and Against (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980). Heilbroner professes to believe that the modern form of Marx's political phenomenology is collective bargaining.

⁹⁴ E. P. Thompson, William Morris, Romantic to Revolutionary (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976) p. 807

⁹⁵ "No one has begun to look into the mechanism through which culturally determined constraints on cognition affect an individual's ability to interact and cooperate with others in particular everyday tasks." John J. Gumperz, Discourse Strategies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) pp. 14-15

system of Marx's thought by imagining him working through Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind chapter by chapter, turning it upon its head until death forced him to cease. It is even possible to figuratively locate the page where Marx stopped. In the last paragraph of Hegel's chapter entitled, "Culture and its Realm of Actual Reality," Hegel wrote, "But only by self-consciousness being roused to revolt does it know its own peculiar torn and shattered condition."⁹⁶ It is as if methodologically Marx stopped here in his war with the angels, leaving his Jacob's ladder firmly in place. In the opening sentence of the very next chapter Hegel announces the keynote for an era of post-bourgeois consciousness. He asserts:

The spiritual condition of
self-estrangement exists in
the sphere of culture as a
fact.⁹⁷

Our cultural history has passed this form of "unhappy consciousness" on to us.

Marx brought idealism down to earth, but he did not solve its methodologically split personality which has become an emotional and cultural split in the twentieth century. The conventional disciplinary study of the Fine Arts still conveniently forgets to consider that the triumph of the Ideal also inscribes the individual into a network of bourgeois

⁹⁶ Hegel, Phenomenology p. 548

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 549

emotional relationships. The social history of culture must describe a more sociable process than individual acts of genius and the triumph of pure form. If social and intellectual forms have a general basis in experience, there must be a normative historical process from which they spring. This existence-based view contrasts sharply with the poverty of idealism. Simple instrumental judgment backed by the ad hoc idealism of cultural conformity closes off consciousness from its synchronic web of complicity with the material and political world. The poverty of idealism isolates a potentially sociable self in a mode of reflection which leads inescapably to totalitarian control.⁹⁸

Jean Baudrillard laments this blindspot as the closure of the dialectic of the sign where reason identifies itself with only one of the two terms that always compose it. He comments that idealism "moralizes the sign and confers an ethical and metaphysical status to meaning itself...." Today, he continues:

this vision amounts to a long sermon denouncing the alienation of the system, which becomes, with the expansion of this very system, a kind of universal discourse."⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Wolff, Surrender p. 142 The idealisms of an age are usually the ideologies of the social totality. By the middle of the twentieth century these forces have become so great that "subjectivity, bourgeois or otherwise, is in mortal danger." Theodore Adorno called this situation, "the face of totalitarian unity."

⁹⁹ Baudrillard, Critique p. 160

The "authentic values" moralistically affirmed "are largely derived from the bourgeois system of individualist values."¹⁰⁰ The preliminary separation of formal sign from social process conforms to Hegelian idealism and confirms a new style of secular fundamentalist oratory which persists in the transcendental idealization of "use-value" or "need." There is no defense for the ideal, without first realizing that all "value" is a satellite system in solidarity with social process.

The transcendental perspective expels from speech the integrity of its own analytical enterprise. Baudrillard asserts that, "Any basis for a crucial interrogation of the cultural sign must be situated from the perspective of what it expels and annihilates in its very institution."¹⁰¹ A truly crucial interrogation of the cultural sign begins its work at the emotional bed rock which grounds the social system of signification.

The trumped up immediacy of things which implies the "beauty," "transcendence" or "truth" of a form, in itself, omits all the vital questions of relation to social history. In this way, classical knowledge, Foucault writes, "is articulated along lines that do not isolate, in any way, a specific domain proper to man."¹⁰² In this way also, materi-

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*

alism has remained a classical Enlightenment critique, bound to the mechanics of its "natural" laws. Extending the Marxist ecrasez into a critique of cultural reciprocity would win the language of necessity back from the politics of desire. Physiocracy of the Kantian mind would give place to a physiognomy of the existential heart.

If there is a cultural crisis (and there surely is), it has infected the side of reason and language not the side of feeling and art. It has grown from the side of politics and economics, not the side of emotion and creativity. If there is a crisis, it is perpetuated from the side of dominance and vested interest, not the side of scarcity and marginalization. If there is a crisis in culture, the historical and political reason lies behind the insufficiency of the old critical language to explain and clarify the relations between the arts and the rest of the world. Language can reach such rigidity that it becomes, as Barthes implied, Fascist. The space for speech can close down as tightly in art as it has sometimes been closed down in electoral politics.

Marx's dissent began a new way of seeing and being in the world. Marxist doubt broke the old web of affiliation and began the sequence toward the articulation and internalization of a new cultural paradigm. The act of submitting,

¹⁰² Michel Foucault, The Order of Things (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970) p. 309

"surrendering to" the radical Marxist system of analysis yielded a new mode of practical knowledge. The issue from the crucible of radical doubt: this "catch," as Kurt Wolff calls it, expresses a new feeling tone for humankind and their cultures. One may not see eye to eye with Marx, but after a serious encounter with him, one always "sees" differently.

In Hegelian terms, Marx stands to classical enlightenment as its rational negation. Marx's original work and the forms of dissent which it has spawned serve judicial injunction upon the ideal, definitively indicting the value paradigm of bourgeois culture and society. Marx initiated the rebellion within Enlightenment discourse against the socialized silence of the cultural ideal.¹⁰³

Louis Althusser's contribution to cultural studies remains a contentious issue, but Althusser has turned a phrase which appears very appropriate or, at least, easily adaptable to our present discussion. Althusser has observed that,

¹⁰³ Even Michel Foucault acknowledges:

It is impossible at the present time to write history without using a whole range of concepts directly or indirectly linked to Marx's thought and situating oneself within a horizon of thought which has been defined and described by Marx. One might even wonder what difference there could ultimately be between being a historian and being a Marxist.

Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980) p. 53

"The knowledge of history is not more historical, than the knowledge of sugar is sweet."¹⁰⁴ As E. P. Thompson has urged, "Let us tease this brave epigram a little." Through it we may be able to penetrate the symbolic politics of idealist culture. Althusser's epigram clearly, even if negatively, associates a question of taste with an understanding of history.

The epigram is deceptively complex. Althusser subdivides knowledge into two elements: scientific and subjective. Manifestly, with this division Althusser proclaims the necessity of subsuming the latter under the former. Only when subjective impressions are related to an objective structure can they be discussed as a field of knowledge.

Arranging knowledge involves some complex decisions. Each different arrangement will culminate in a different effect. Althusser seeks social knowledge of history, hence his epigram implies that there is an analytical arrangement of subjective experience which will yield objective historical knowledge of human society.

Having attempted to comprehend Althusser's intention thus far, we are entitled to ask with E. P. Thompson, whether the epigram does not constitute a strange and inappropriately mixed metaphor? For although we can agree that historical

¹⁰⁴ E. P. Thompson, The Poverty of Theory and other Essays (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978) p. 31

knowledge of social subjectivity is important, what kind of structure completes Althusser's metaphor and yields objective knowledge of (or like) the objective knowledge of sugar? If such a structure exists, has not Althusser abstracted and objectified his own admirable challenge by implying that social history is as simple and determinable as a chemical formula for one of nature's simplest compounds?

This kind of objection, often levelled against Althusser, may be unfair, because the structure which completes the metaphor is economic. Althusser means that historical knowledge is to the personal experience of history as the production of sugar under monopolistic control is to its taste. Consumption defines a structural parameter which gives coherence to Althusser's epigram. How sugar is collectively produced and consumed yields social knowledge which has only indirect bearing upon the subjective experience of sweetness. The same relation applies to history. How history is produced, made palatable and collectively consumed is more important than one's subjective experience of history in the making.

Althusser appears to have coined a most evocative metaphor for cultural studies, because the arts comprise a major social form of historical memory. Cultural forms are saturated with historical continuity. They serve up, make palatable and consumable a society's significant past. Cultural

"taste" is emotional shorthand for "How people organize their experience conceptually so that it can be transmitted as knowledge from person to person."¹⁰⁵ To reduce "taste" to individual subjectivity takes the social history out of aesthetic experience and turns cultural studies into a harmless status game for snobs.¹⁰⁶

Althusser's epigram leads to a hard line, but one that fits. Normally, personal subjectivity reciprocates between an individual and his society's collective signs. Cultural studies is historical to the extent that its analysis encompasses individual taste within a larger and more inclusive field of social behavior. When a method which is adequate penetrates the reciprocity between history and its cultural signs, it finds a new underworld of social meaning. By "historical knowledge" Althusser means knowledge of this inner structure between objective events and their subjective experience. At this depth, "Structuralism," Sahlins observes, "offers a statement of culture in praxis."¹⁰⁷ The political phenomenology through which Marx divulged the

¹⁰⁵ Michael Cole, John Gay, Joseph Glick, Donald Sharp, The Cultural Context of Learning and Thinking (New York: Basic Books, 1971) p. 9

¹⁰⁶ Cf. A classic subjective reduction: "We have, not pleasures, but experiences which are pleasant... The obtuse person has not learned to interpret his general bodily consciousness in any systematic fashion." I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism (London: Kegan Paul, 1928) pp. 92 & 100

¹⁰⁷ Sahlins, Practical Reason p. 3

structure of bourgeois economics can be broadened into a cultural phenomenology through which to divulge the structure of bourgeois values. This structural knowledge of the historical reciprocity of the sign uncovers what Baudrillard calls "the consumption of the code," an unconscious emotional thematization within the natural attitude of the epoch.

If a social contract is implicit and unarticulated, if a normative paradigm signifies in mute, hidden and reified form, many norms and mores may carry a silent covenant with political reality. When the social context is mystified, the cultural repertoire may carry a hidden agenda which all the participants can reflexively recognize through historical conditioning, even though they are unable to articulate the subliminal message.

Such a problem exists for us, and Horkheimer and Adorno described it as the problem of alienation into our own enlightenment.¹⁰⁸ Tackling this problem in its brute concreteness means locating ways in which the well-socialized self is culturally reinvested in bourgeois society. Inquiry into such a question means asking whether the intellectual assumptions of bourgeois society also have an emotional phalanx which promotes their unconscious internalization. Weber observed:

¹⁰⁸ Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment. trans. John Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1972)

The conscious discovery of uniquely aesthetic values is reserved for an intellectualist civilization. This development causes, the disappearance of those elements in art which are conducive to community formation... [The climax of this conflict is that] The rejection of responsibility for ethical judgment shifts judgments whose intention was originally ethical into an aesthetic key.¹⁰⁹

The cultural code transcribes an originally conscious and community-affirming relation into an emotional sign. The learning process is thus vastly accelerated, but a negative dialectic unfolds at the same time. The original quality of radical, life-affirming adjustment becomes frozen in stone. Consciousness leaches away and with it, the capacity for further adjustment and change. Aesthetics provides the fulcrum for this human dialectic of unconscious socialization and conscious change. Paradoxically, intellectualism privileges the symbols of its unconscious socialization over conscious critique and change. The "intellectualist civilization" which, in Weber's words, has shifted originally ethical judgments into an "aesthetic key," has mistaken the menu for the meal. It honors the ancient cryptogram and forgets the historical message. An intellectualist civilization escapes into the Mandarin management of symbols from which all ethical and community content has been drained. Unwittingly, classically canonized art thereby supports inertia and the status quo.

¹⁰⁹ Max Weber, The Sociology of Religion, trans. Ephraim Fischhoff with an Introduction by Talcott Parsons (Boston: Beacon Press) p. 243

Idealized art forms teach the organizational synthesis of high capitalism. In industrial societies, the formal power of Fine Arts culture is only a shadow of the former self which it never really was. This, an unconscious act of social anthropology, forms part of the context which the Canadian critic, John Fekete calls "the ideology of perpetual domination."¹¹⁰

North America has become the sacerdotal center of classical closure within permanent cultural negation. North American idealism's take charge aesthetic moves managerially across the aesthetic domain, invoking a fundamentally Kantian historicism in order to unilaterally define styles and interpretations. Traditional cultural history becomes Talmud and Gospel for the new industrial literal mind.

Reopening the relation between cultural form and social process demands a liberating investigation which follows the historical path of the negation, rather than one which longs nostalgically for an idealized vision of inner truth. Not surprisingly, the phenomenology of cultural closure structurally resembles industrial economic alienation. In spite of its life promise, cultural production and reproduction, like the industrial cornucopia, has rarely belonged to the material life of those who produce it, nor has it primarily benefited the lives of those whose work sustains it.

¹¹⁰ John Fekete, The Critical Twilight (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977) p. xxii

Formal idealism has capitalized upon the same recessed ideology as the Hegelian Master-Slave relation. North America suffers its most vulgar and explicit symptoms. In Kenneth Burke's formula, "realism plus money equals idealism:"¹¹¹ the most efficient example of alienation into enlightenment to date. Fekete has described the politics of this dialectic of dominance. He argues clearly that a modern intellectualist tradition has continued to evolve in a perpetually reified negation, with no real capacity for internal critique or ability to effect social change. Because contemporary theoretical aesthetics have lost a vigorous, conscious working concept of their own qualitative role, "They have developed," Fekete writes, "to an ideological position as the counter-revolutionary form appropriate to the governing technocratic design of neo-capitalist society."¹¹² Contemporary aesthetic subjectivity reifies an ideological context.

A system which hides the deep emotional relation between cultural forms and social process permits ideology, dominance and class bias to remain undetected. Without a working concept of historical totality, emotions are reified in the dominant ideological structure. "Whatever the epoch or topic of special study," Lukacs wrote, "the question of a

¹¹¹ Kenneth Burke, A Grammar of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945) p. 175

¹¹² Fekete, Twilight. p. 193

unified approach to the process of history is inescapable...

This is why only the dialectical conception of totality can enable us to understand reality as social process."¹¹³

Consciousness is a task, not a given. Lukacs applies that task to cultural studies with this maxim:

The essence of praxis consists in annulling
the indifference of form towards
content.¹¹⁴

Lukacs' observation appears well-nigh universally true. Meaning "means" the practical reunion of cultural form with social content. From banal office politics to high culture and aesthetics, this task is, for us, an inescapable responsibility.

Adorno lamented that the "perfect immaculate performance in the latest style preserves the work at the price of its definitive reification."¹¹⁵ The signature of the "barbarism of perfection" was for Horkheimer and Adorno, "the liquidation of the 'individual.'"¹¹⁶ With the cudgel of an ideal form, a-historical idealism flattens human relations into a pure mirror of the economic relations of production. In the

¹¹³ Georg Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1971) pp. 12-13

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 126

¹¹⁵ Theodore Adorno, "On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening," The Essential Frankfurt School Reader Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (ed.), (New York: Urizen Books, 1978) p. 284

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 276

resulting two-dimensional world, "the empirical whole is untrue."¹¹⁷ Adorno argued that a perspective on the historical totality of the aesthetic crisis of our time required that "cultural criticism become social physiognomy."¹¹⁸

Adorno and Lukacs proclaimed these challenges because the economic relations of production now make up only one-half of the social relations within a larger cultural paradigm of instrumental signification. The formal half of the paradigmatic relation is cultural idealism, the "deep play"¹¹⁹ which induces and reinforces the naked economic individualism of Western industrial relations of production. Culturally, the industrial West has been "in-formed" within this larger system of deeply structured symbolic relations. Without an expanded analysis, where art criticism becomes "social physiognomy," the instrumental critique of the relations of production materializes only one-half of hegemony and remains subject to subversion by the reciprocal context which it has not grasped nor offered up into speech. His-

¹¹⁷ Attributed to Adorno by Eike Gebhardt, "Alternatives in Aesthetic Theory" The Essential Frankfurt School Reader p. 220

¹¹⁸ Theodore Adorno, "Cultural Criticism and Society," Critical Sociology. Paul Connerton (ed.), (New York: Penguin Books, 1976) p. 271

¹¹⁹ Geertz credits Bentham's The Theory of Legislation with the concept of "deep play." It means "a kind of sentimental education." The subject learns his culture's ethos through the subject's own private sensibility. Socialization is spelled out aesthetically in an external, collective text. Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Culture (New York: Basic Books, 1973) pp. 432 & 449

torical knowledge must lead through political economy into the "political economy of the sign." That is the path we wish to trace in the next chapter.

Chapter IV

THE MATERIALIST MARXIST DISSENT

Marx's statement, "the more civilized his object, the more barbarous becomes the worker,"¹²⁰ is usually interpreted in a passive historicist way: The more civilized his object the more barbarized becomes the worker. This reading emphasizes that the relations of production alienate the worker from the fruits of his labor and the golden labor time of potentially productive leisure. The passive interpretation is surely correct, but a phenomenological interpretation is applicable, as well. That is, the consciousness and culture of the worker are negated in the Hegelian sense: the worker projects his own brutalization back onto the world and discovers it again in this externalized and brutally reified form. The barbaric contrast between the Arts Ideal of a better world and the ethos of its actual content, which often incarnates the existing system of free enterprise and bourgeois individualism confirms the vicious paradox which Marx described and extends the contradiction to the whole of society.

¹²⁰ Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1959) p. 70

When Marx brought Hegel's phenomenology of mind into social history, he took a first and extremely important step toward a general theory of culture. It does not detract from his accomplishment if there were aspects of a materialist phenomenology of the mind which he did not have time to explore. Truism though it may be, it is easy to forget that even Marx was an historical figure. "Marxism," Foucault writes, "exists in nineteenth century thought like a fish in water: it is unable to breath anywhere else."¹²¹ Foucault's mischievous remark reminds us that Marx was a nineteenth century classical thinker, and some of the problems of classical nineteenth century thought inhere in his work. Marshall Sahlins observes the same problem:

Language, for Marx, was a process of naming, the concordance of a social and a material text. The first classification men make is the distinction between things that are pleasurable and painful, edible and inedible. In language, it is nature itself that speaks, in the beginning without metaphor....[In the beginning] the human power of bestowing a value on natural differences is reduced to an echo of practical-intrinsic significance.¹²²

The first purpose of the name establishes a relationship between man and nature. Archaic man realized that speech extended his individual capacities and gave him a practically magical power over the world. Sahlins points out that Marx begins this archaic naming process all over again in rela-

¹²¹ Michel Foucault, The Order of Things, An Archaeology of the Human Sciences (London:Tavistock Press, 1970) p. 262

¹²² Marshall Sahlins, Culture and Practical Reason (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976) p. 142

tion to social nature. The power of the name is almost totemistic.¹²³ From Sahlin's anthropological perspective on the history of ideas, Marx is half shaman, half cultural anthropologist and he begins a new order of survival in a new (industrial) "state of nature."

Thus Sahlins (the Anthropologist) and Foucault (the Historian) locate a tension in Marx's thought which is also a tension of his age--a problem in the "sub-stance"¹²⁴ of nineteenth century thought. The Victorian form of Marx's economic Philipppics should not distract attention from this tension nor from Marx's incipient quarrel with the whole epistemological structure in which he was constrained to express himself. Marx's work mirrors a division in the whole classical system of knowledge.

Sahlins locates this schism in two historical 'moments' of materialist theory which appear to contradict each other. In the first moment, Sahlins writes:

¹²³ Ibid., "Marx's genealogy of conceptual thought is Malinowski's totemism." Sahlins intends the comparison to be a favorable one. "The savage totalizes....," Levi-Strauss writes, "It is in the intransigent refusal on the part of the savage mind to allow anything human to remain alien to it, that the real principle of dialectical reason is to be found." Claude Levi-Strauss, The Savage Mind (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962) p. 245

Strauss plays in this passage with Marx's and Mozart's favorite saying, a line from the Roman playwright, Terence: "I hold nothing human to be alien to me." All academics must be, in the Straussian sense, some kind of savage.

¹²⁴ See n. 47, for Kenneth Burke's concept of "sub-stance."

The ethnologist of the twentieth century finds himself on familiar ground... He recognizes in Marx's conception, a consciousness born of the structure of society, an historical given under which the material interaction proceeds.¹²⁵

Sahlins illustrates the first materialist moment with a passage from the German Ideology:

The mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individual. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are.¹²⁶

In this quotation, it would appear that an individual's attitude determines to a great extent the ability of the forces of production to exploit him. An historical, culturally created consciousness exists along-side the relations of production, even modifying them to an extent. However, there is a second moment, or aspect to materialist theory.

Sahlins writes:

Now the organization grows out of behavior, and the language of men is the voice of their concrete experience. The cultural concept appears as a consequence rather than the structure [emphasis added] of productive activity.....The practical experience of men is untranscendable, and from it they construct a world. Their thought and social

¹²⁵ Sahlins, Practical Reason p. 133

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 159 Marx also writes in the German Ideology:
 "Thus two facts are here revealed. First the productive forces appear as a world for themselves, quite independent of and divorced from the individuals, alongside the individuals: the reason for this is that the individuals, whose forces they are, exist split up and in opposition to one another, whilst, on the other hand, these forces are only real forces in the intercourse and association of these individuals [Tucker, (ed.) p. 154]."

relations in general follow from "the behavioral system of instrumental action."¹²⁷

The twin currents of behavior and culture are thus theoretically distinct, self-contradictory moments. The question Marx poses to cultural studies is whether materialism must choose one to the exclusion of the other? The answer reached in this chapter is, No. This seeming contradiction reflects the confrontation between mechanical and dialectical reasoning, rather than a division within the world itself.

Marx was the first secular thinker who consciously explored the structural limitation of Enlightenment discourse, and his thinking vibrates, indeed, literally oscillates, with its counterforce. The famous passage from the Thesis on Feurbach provides an example. Marx describes a life-world which is simultaneously externally determined and a subjective activity:

The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object of contemplation, but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively.¹²⁸

Marx avows a "thinking experience,"¹²⁹ a coming to consciousness through the material--not just intellectually, but politically, emotionally and ethically. "To be sensuous," Marx wrote, "is to suffer."¹³⁰ For Marx, sensuality

¹²⁷ Sahlins, Practical Reason p. 134

¹²⁸ Robert C. Tucker (ed.) p. 107

¹²⁹ See nn. 55-57

literally makes sense. The logical paradox of these two Marxes--the Marx of sense and the Marx of sensibility--has touched off over a century of debate.

The inner duality in Marx's thinking links Marx's structural analysis of the bourgeois relations of production with phenomenology. The paradoxes in Marx's thought (tensions hardly anyone denies, though few have called them paradoxes) point to the phenomenology of a deep structural relation between the history of politics and Culture.

Louis Althusser dismisses these paradoxes as "Hegelian-evolutionist" residues in Marx's thought and judges Marx's growth as a thinker by the degree to which he expunges them in his later, more "scientific" work.¹³¹ Althusser advocates that:

Marx's whole intellectual history can and must be understood in this way: as a long, difficult and painful rupture by which he moved from his petty-bourgeois class instinct to proletarian class positions.¹³²

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 94

¹³¹ Louis Althusser, For Marx trans. Ben Brewster (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969)

¹³² Louis Althusser, Lenin and Philosophy (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971) p. 101

See also, Perry Anderson, Considerations on Western Marxism (London: NLB Publications, 1976) Anderson views all philosophy as the corruption of praxis by reflection.

Althusser and his followers mistake Marx's development as a polemicist for growth as a thinker. Marx's justifiable political indignation compromised his system of knowledge and, Anthony Giddens adds, Marx's materialism can only be regarded as an indispensable contribution to social theory if the "snippets embodying a more abstract [and inclusive] theory of human praxis are gleaned from the diversity of Marx's writings."¹³³ The Althusserites who accentuate the concrete have dangerously over-simplified Marx and the world. The atmosphere of intellectual and emotional crisis which they churn up around them is, in the long run, counterproductive.¹³⁴ A more constructive attitude regards Marx less as a seer and more as an historical figure whose work represents a turning point in the development of contemporary critical consciousness.

Marx's contemporary relevance remains incontestable, and his historical contribution to the critique of bourgeois culture is pervasive. Marx began the conceptual shift in politics and society that is still being lived through to-

¹³³ Anthony Giddens, A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981) p. 2

¹³⁴ Stanley Aronowitz, The Crisis in Historical Materialism (New York: Praeger, 1981) Aronowitz declares that "Marxism has no theory of consciousness (p. 228)" and "is rooted in old, surpassed assumptions (126)." Aronowitz considers Althusser "the most advanced point historical materialism has been able to arrive at (p. 120)," but he has decided Althusser's work embodies "a fundamental will to dominate (p. 105)."

day.

Marx opened the discussion of social adaptation under the industrial system of production, and his work points toward the contemporary moment of critical structural insight which Baudrillard christens the "reciprocity of speech," a moment when one's in-dwelling within the political economy of the sign becomes alive to him. At this moment of self-revelation, a kind of socio-cultural cataract falls from the eye of judgment, a new and enlarged spectrum of vision opens up and judgment executes a critical about-face from its old point of view.

To adequately represent Marx's historical contribution to cultural studies, it seems advisable to re-emphasize two of Marx's basic concepts which have not received together the scrutiny they deserve:

1. exchange relations
2. divided consciousness

We shift our emphasis because acculturation to an industrial political economy depends more upon immersion in a system of "exchange relations" than membership in a sociological "class" or the capacity to dispose of liquid or reified capital. In the same manner, Marx's concept of "divided consciousness" resonates with contemporary experience far better than the conspiratorial images of an alienated, mystified or false consciousness.

These suggested shifts based on Marx's own terminology parallel a similar methodological movement in the sciences and permit a more accurate description of the way a tacitly political system of idealist knowledge invokes the ideological closure of cultural critique.

A concrete discrepancy between cultural experience and critical understanding sits at the center of conventional judgment. The chasm between culture consciousness and social consciousness betrays a methodological dilemma of snap-shot, low context rationalism.¹³⁵ A society without culture consciousness suffers a crisis in the quality of its judgment. Instrumental judgment mistakes the reciprocal nature of discourse and loses the existential content of dramatic gesture. The point is that mutual isolation links the tragedy of culture with the politics of industrial society. Riesman's famous "Lonely Crowd"¹³⁶ has no social voice because its knowledge of history omits the aesthetic values of its own culture.

The contradiction of socialized silence began to implode with Marx. Cultural studies needs to clarify those elements of Marx's thought which are relevant to it. In one of the most widely quoted passages from German Ideology, Marx

¹³⁵ See Levine's example of the methodological dilemma of low context analysis, n. 78.

¹³⁶ David Riesman, The Lonely Crowd (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1950)

wrote, "Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."¹³⁷ This statement illustrates Sah-lins' second materialist "moment," where "The language of men is the voice of their concrete experience." To take this statement literally would close down Marx's intellectual system. Intellectuality and culture would immediately be reduced to epiphenomenon. Marx certainly did not intend for his readers to reach that conclusion. Let us approach Marx's meaning through the context of a similar statement from another work. In the Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy Marx wrote:

It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.¹³⁸

In the same paragraph Marx also observes:

Therefore mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or at least are in the process of formation.¹³⁹

In the context of the whole paragraph, Marx is saying that social being is not life's prison, but the specific historical opportunity to understand a specific human condition. Social being provides critical consciousness with the material evidence by which it can be comprehended. This kind

¹³⁷ Robert C. Tucker (ed.), The Marx-Engels Reader (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972) p. 119

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 4

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 5

of consciousness is the only "real" consciousness and Marx calls it "consciousness of species."¹⁴⁰

The Hegelian concept of negation gave Marx confidence that the material order always embodies a specific historical social relation. It was possible, Marx believed, for critical thought to penetrate the negation embodied in a specific material order. This specific historical materialization would never be a static category. Were being an eternal and static sign, inverting the Hegelian negation would have made no difference to Marxism or any other theory. Perhaps the most significant corollary of the Marxist phenomenology is that an historical event always constitutes a specific opportunity to comprehend social processes as they externalize and reify themselves in a material form. Had Marx written no more than this, his contribution to historical method would have been substantial.

Critical consciousness means a vision of the species as a group. "It is only because he is a species-being," Marx wrote, "that he [mankind] is a conscious being."¹⁴¹ Physically, humanity lives in nature just as literally and basically as any other organic form. However, consciousness of his generic condition appears to be a unique human attribute. Species consciousness distinguishes mankind from all

¹⁴⁰ Marx, Manuscripts "In his consciousness of species man confirms his real social life." p. 99

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 73

other animals. The negative moment of economic dominance which suffocates species consciousness can also be viewed as the tragedy of culture: the alienated consciousness is numbed to the truth which cannot penetrate the deprived and emaciated spirit. If this one-sided and idealist view is not absolutely in error, it is certainly subject to internal contradiction. For, from whence do the original categories of truth derive, if not from society? If aesthetic "truths" are Platonic and timeless, materialism falls, if they are social, how can the question of "untruth" arise. On what grounds can the "truth" see beyond its determination by the material reality of everyday life?

Marx perceived this logical dilemma in the 1844 Manuscripts and attempted to deal with it:

Estranged labor reverses the relationship [between consciousness and activity], so that it is just because man is a conscious being that he makes his life activity, his essential being, a mere means to his existence.¹⁴²

Marx reasoned that life activity can colonize consciousness, or at least the capacity for it, by changing the intrinsic relation between essential being and its everyday life activity. Marx judged that bourgeois experience has made life flow backwards against the order of essential being and species survival.

¹⁴² Ibid.

In this speculation Marx anticipates the existentialists, but Marx remains an Enlightenment thinker who must mold his thoughts into a classical, linear ratio. He cannot generate a discourse across what Saussure will call "the inner duality of the sign," so he will deal with one problem at a time. He returns to this thought puzzle again in the Manuscripts. The second time he undertakes a longer definition of the problem:

In this consciousness of species, man confirms his real social life... [repeating] his real existence in thought... [On the other hand] my general consciousness is only the theoretical shape of that of which the living shape is the real community, the social fabric... At the present day, general consciousness is abstracted from real life [species life] and as such confronts it with hostility.¹⁴³

The paradoxes in Marx's classical language account for much of the difficulty in applying his ideas. The above passage is a powerful reduction of a phenomenological event into linear language. Because Marx strains at the limit of classical logic, he can always be read with the expectation that there exists a pivot word, a node of ambiguity across which the living inner duality of the dialectical sign functions. In the above passage, the word "real" functions ambiguously as a dialectical pivot for meaning. The concept "real" carries the semantic node of necessary ambivalence which opens Marx's thought onto the existential dilemma of bourgeois culture. Consciousness "is abstracted from real life" be-

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 99

cause it is embedded in specific economic operations that confront "real life" with hostility. The "real" denotes the living shape of universal responsibility for the community which has only a definitive form in thought. Marx has wrought a paradox into the passage. Species consciousness is "real social life" which the "real community" confronts "with hostility." Species consciousness is a reality which the economic order makes "abstract."

Everyday activity determines the common social fabric. This fabric constitutes the "real community" (now meaning a specific social order) which gives theoretical shape to the bourgeois ego and puts bourgeois man at odds with his "real life." "Real" life confronts the mere expedient because the social character of the "real community" is at odds with the only "real" values which could give social life any historical purpose.

In spite of its paradoxes, the ethical charge in this passage and many others like it, explodes at the base of normative bourgeois consciousness. The theoretical shape of bourgeois consciousness, its symbolic organizational system, has ceased to mediate between the general consciousness and the higher species consciousness. The "living shape" of the "real community, the social fabric" has colonized and achieved theoretical suzerainty over the living reality of species consciousness. The actual community of industrial society has destroyed the possibility for "real life."

Marx's determination to polarize being between natural and social, species and general, confesses his Hegelian heritage of classical Enlightenment. However, these historical limitations in the "sub-stance" of his language should not obscure the content of his thought. Marx defined in idealist language a modern problem which has excruciating significance in its newer and even more overpowering forms.

Bourgeois society suffers under the hegemony of an industrial order which has fragmented cognitive unity. Not only physical bodies, but collective consciousness has been thematized within an industrial-instrumental role. Only the appearance of a "real life" (species life) has been left to individuals whose consciousness has been put at odds with the real basis for existence. The dialectic of a living social being has been sundered and frozen against itself.

Horkheimer and Adorno continued this discussion in Dialectic of Enlightenment, a book whose title could just as easily have been "Dialectic of Dominance." Their reinterpretation of the Odysseus argosy holds out the mythic significance of the saga for classical Western thought. They write that with Odysseus, as well as his later incarnation, Crusoe, "their impotence in regard to nature already acts as an ideology to advance their social hegemony."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Max Horkheimer and Theodore W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, trans. John Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1972) p. 61

The Homeric image of Odysseus emotionally yielding to the Sirens while instrumentally bound to the mast of his closed society is "the prototype of bourgeois thinking.... Western music as a whole suffers from the contradiction of song in civilization."¹⁴⁵ For the divided consciousness, song, like the capital-intensive processes which support it, can fulfill its purpose while simultaneously denying it. These conclusions seem self-contradictory, but are quite in keeping with the warring consciousness which Marx attributed to the bourgeoisie in the 1844 Manuscripts.

It is idle to dispute that Marx is the historian par excellence of early bourgeois economic relationships and that his is the definitive analysis of the early period of capital accumulation. Many contemporary debates about Marx's analysis miss the major issue to which it points: How has the representative shape of capital relations changed? Though capital still dominates industrial societies, capital is now accumulated in forms which differ in content and appearance from the old accumulation forms of the nineteenth century. Capital relations have been transformed into cultural relations. The dialectical method which Marx brought down to earth now has to comprehend hegemony in its newer, cultural form.¹⁴⁶ As Marx wrote:

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 60

¹⁴⁶ The cultural significance [Weber's emphasis] of the money economy is not derivable from any "law"...We are concerned with the analysis of the cultural significance of

The real point, is that private interest is itself already a socially determined interest, which can be achieved only within the conditions laid down by society and with the means provided by society; hence it is bound to the reproduction of these conditions and means.¹⁴⁷

The contemporary crisis of "these conditions and means" becomes the cultural crisis of a capitalized cultural consciousness. A mercenary and divided consciousness chooses in the manner of LeVine's garrulous flatfish described in Chapter Three.¹⁴⁸ The bourgeois individual has little choice other than a camouflage dictated by his life-world. Like Odysseus before the panoptic eye of Polyphemus, sheep-like he chooses to be bureaucratic "Noman." Like Odysseus before the mast, he instrumentally "binds" himself to avoid the dire consequences of his dangerous intentional context. Many social and emotional problems in bourgeois society are a consequence of its highly capitalized cultural context.

the concrete historical fact that today exchange exists on a mass scale. Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. and ed. Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1949) p. 77 The cultural dimensions of the exchange relation have been one of the major questions in critical theory in this century. Adorno believed that "The universal domination of mankind by exchange value makes an untruth of the general principle that claims to establish the subject's predominance." Theodore Adorno, Negative Dialectics, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York Seabury Press, 1973) p. 178

¹⁴⁷ Karl Marx, Grundrisse, trans. Martin Nicolaus (New York: Vintage Books, 1973) p. 156

¹⁴⁸ See n. 78

Marx's accumulation of evidence for these anomalies in bourgeois society lays the groundwork for modern phenomenology. In the following passage Marx hints at the nature of the dialectic between social processes and cultural forms under the bourgeois instrumental "bind:"

From the side of its formal specificity, this process [bourgeois history] is a process of self-realization [by, of and for capital].... Self-realization includes preservation of the prior value, as well as its multiplication.¹⁴⁹

Marx describes capital in Hegelian language, predicating a nature to it as if the object had inherent qualities, but this limitation does not disqualify the historical significance of his argument. Marx argues that capital forms realize themselves through a social relation, a primary process and the cause of great misery and injustice.

For advanced industrial societies, capital-intensive processes have become a cycle of social reproduction where "need" merely codifies the individual into the relations of production. Marx had little opportunity to witness individual "needs" becoming a social fiction, but Marx emphasized a process which undergirded social dominance in its representative nineteenth century capital form. The basic social relation is simple exchange: Horkheimer and Adorno's famous

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 310-311 See also, p. 308, "Thus all the progress of civilization enriches not the worker, but capital," and p. 334, "Capital is the endless and limitless drive to go beyond its limiting barrier. Every boundary is and has to be a barrier for it. Else it would cease to be capital--money as self-reproductive."

"bargaining context." Marx wrote:

Production is determined by general natural laws.
Distribution by social accident.... Exchange
stands between the two as formal social move-
ment.¹⁵⁰

This simple statement suggests some far-reaching considerations. Each of its three terms is quite significant. First, Marx on production reveals the limitations of Enlightenment idealism. Production, itself, grows from a reciprocal signification within the social system. Production is no more natural than the second term, distribution. Marx on distribution declares the shocking anomaly within bourgeois society, where all talk of justice, fair-play and hard work stands contradicted by the pure social lottery with which it allocates resources. Marx on the third, term, exchange, opens onto existentialism and phenomenology. Capital colonizes consciousness through a social process which is also an emotional relationship. Marx states quite clearly that although industrial society rests formally on reified capital, it rests existentially on an interpersonal process:

Nobody can believe that a reform of the money market can abolish the foundation of internal and external private trade.... Exchange value is the general commodity alongside all particular commodities, so does exchange value as money therefore at the same time take its place as a particular commodity alongside all other commodities.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 89

¹⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 159 & 150 Also, "Money then exists as the exchange value of commodities alongside and outside them. It is the universal material into which they must be dipped, and in which they become gilded and silver-plated, in order to win their independent existence as

Here again, Marx strains Hegelian discourse to the uttermost. The semantic pivot point of ambivalence in his linear language is commodity, which serves a double function as a particular object and also as a general context alongside all particular objects. This mode of expression is open to criticism because it predicates or attributes (hypostatizes) qualities to specific objects. In addition, the duality of the language renders the syntax unnecessarily dense. Given these objections (which amount to no more than stipulating that Marx was a nineteenth century intellectual), the modern implications of Marx's conclusions would appear to be unmistakable. The rationale and basis of industrial society is exchange and no physical revolution of representative forms will, in and of itself, alter the normative paradigm of self-interest, nor prevent it from rising up, as if from nothingness, and destroying again and again the promise which has been written in blood and tears.

A close reading of the Grundrisse leads to the conclusion that Marx knew that exchange need not always take the form of capital accumulation. The social tragedy historically nicknamed "capital alienation" finds its locus in the process and intentionality of pure exchange. Marx writes:

Where exchange value is the basis, reciprocal necessity is mediated through exchange... This pulling-away of the natural ground from the foundations of every industry and this transfer of its conditions of production outside itself, into a

exchange values (p. 188)."

general context--is the transformation of what was previously superfluous into what is necessary, as a historically created necessity.¹⁵²

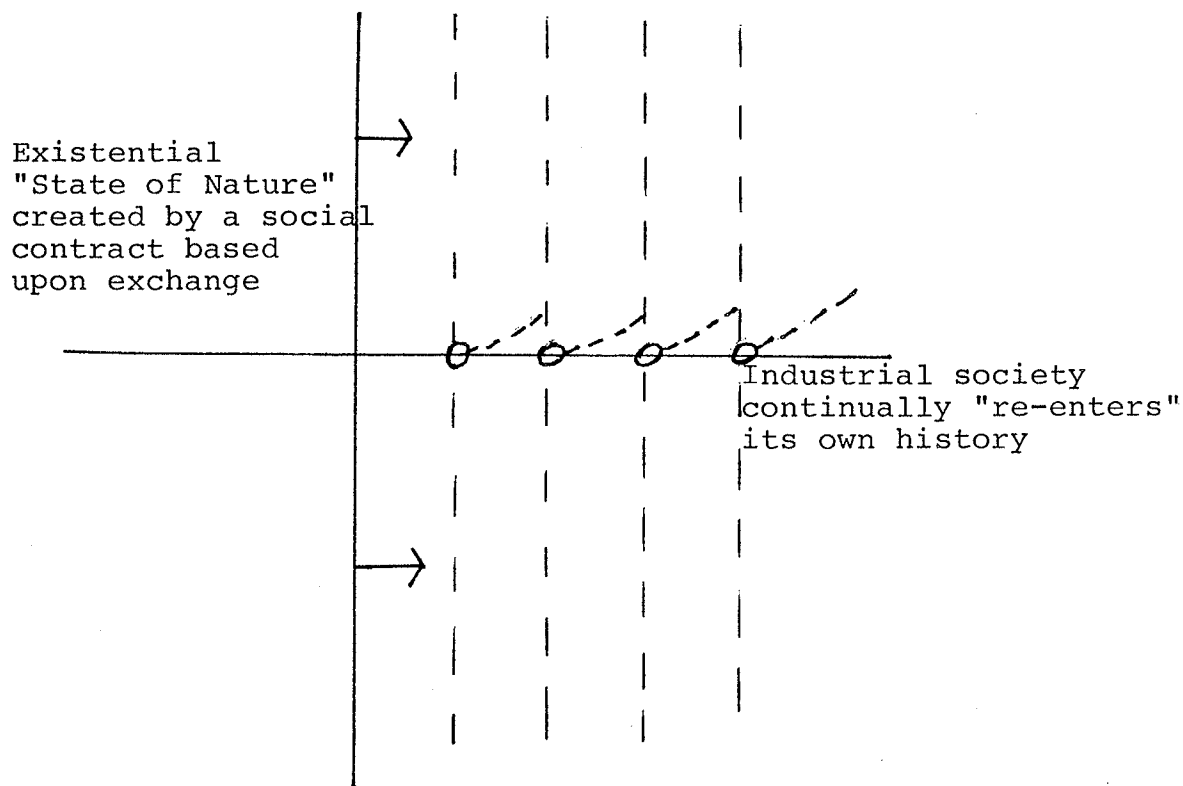
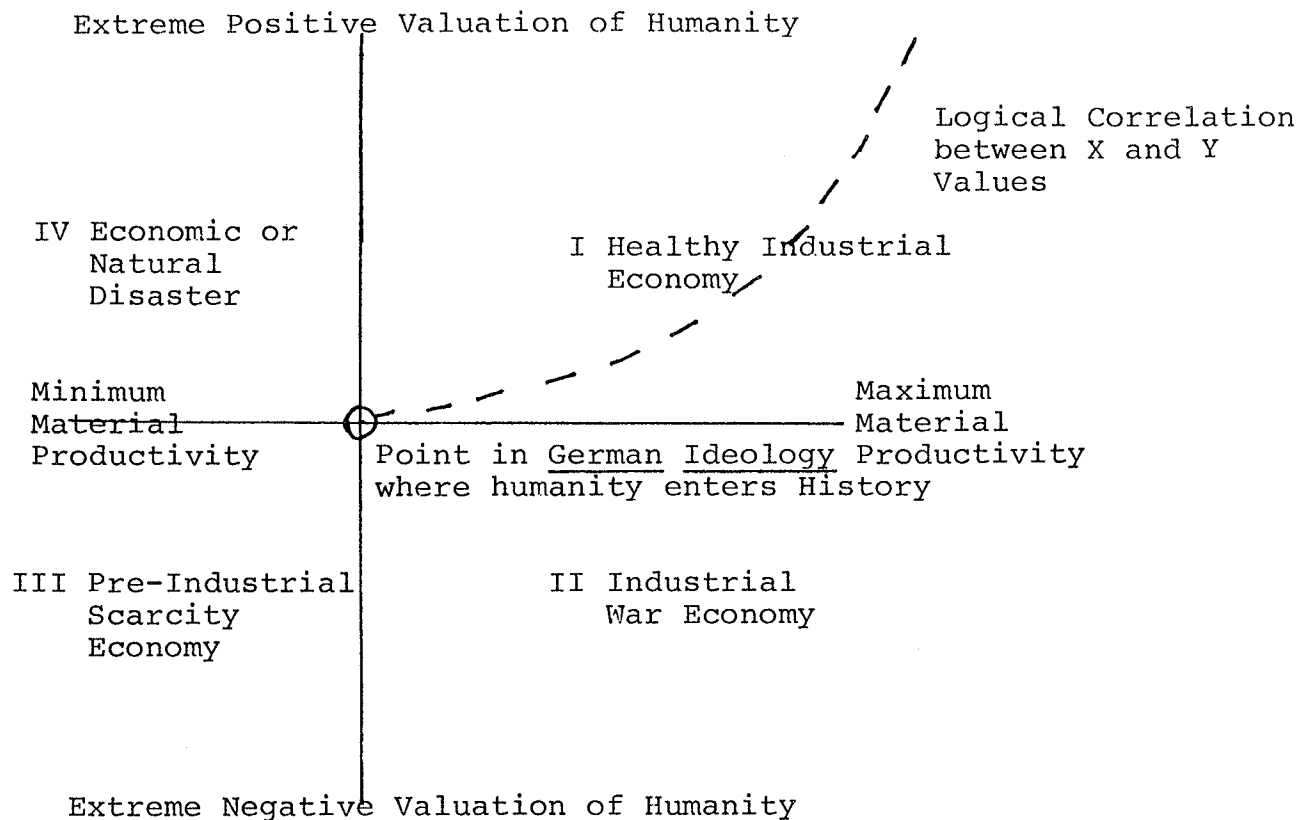
Marx's emphasis falls upon the reciprocal nature of necessity. Where need is mediated by a social relation, it becomes a potentially infinite category. Marx's concept of "historically created necessity" indicates that need may come to mean virtually anything which reproduces the basic social relationship.

The kernel of the above passage invites an authoritarian reading of the "natural ground" of production. Pressing Marx's phraseology to its logical limits often hides the revolution in discourse to which it points. For Marx, exchange permanently sub-divides the consciousness of the whole which is the "real life," and the "natural" life of man. Marx is suggesting, more or less evoking, in a dense texture of well-rounded classicism and incipient phenomenology, that labor as a reciprocal subject and object literally confronts itself in a potentially endless escalation of need. The social totality has been hidden by forms which appear to exist "independently of their opposite real moments." In this social reality of a bourgeois political economy, Marx writes:

The reciprocal and all-sided dependence of individuals who are indifferent to one another forms their social connection. This social bond is expressed in exchange value.¹⁵³

¹⁵² Ibid., pp. 527-528

Figure 3.1: A Quadratic Representation of the Relation between Species consciousness and Material Productivity



In bourgeois society, negation exists only within its thematization by exchange. The cultural context of exchange permits no complementary reintegration of the fragments of consciousness. It acts as an acid, a universal dissolvent of interpersonal relations which precludes consciousness of the whole. The phenomenon of reciprocal necessity cannot be grasped in its totality because exchange relations fragment actual, existential moments from their significance as "real" historical moments in the life of a people.

Capital accumulation remains the analytical key to geopolitics and Euro-America's continuing exploitation of the third world, but the assertion of capital accumulation as the key to Western social and political relations obscures Marx's relevance for cultural studies. Capital is an historical fact, but it is not a talisman, the totem of all historical evil. A society is a relation, not a thing.

Marx's concept of exchange relations and the crisis of consciousness they cause is illustrated graphically by the diagram, Figure 3.1. The X axis represents the development of a system of material production and the Y axis represents the level of species consciousness operating in the identified society. The intersection of the two axes is the point defined in the German Ideology where humanity enters history. The means of production and interpersonal consciousness

¹⁵³ Ibid., pp. 156-157

have at this point dialectically developed into the generation of a self-replicating domestic system of production. In this schematic, quadrant two corresponds to life situations resembling a war economy. Production is high, but human values are negative. Quadrant four corresponds to deep recession or natural disaster, where production breaks down but interpersonal feeling is temporarily stimulated. Quadrant three is pre-history, a time in which both productivity and species consciousness are negative values. Expressed as graphically as possible, the paradox of increasing brutalization ("the more civilized his object, the more barbarous the worker") under conditions of increasing production, translates into the question: Why does species consciousness fail to rocket up asymptotically in quadrant one? Why is the dialectic suggested by quadrant I apparently so elusive even to the world's most affluent industrial societies? Marx's indictment of bourgeois consciousness permits a graphic answer. A society based on exchange always experiences itself at the threshold of its own history. The existential effect of exchange on the cycle of production-consumption is represented by the lower half of Figure 3.1. The Y axis shifts infinitely to the right with each historical increase in real affluence. Even an industrial society which is infinitely distant along the X axis from its physical discovery of organized production still existentially experiences itself as a subsistence economy danc-

ing a macabre historical rondo to the phantom promise of "the American way of Life." The emotional effect of exchange value recreates the industrial take-off of a society for each incremental increase of physical production. Paraphrasing Marx, the exchange principle expropriates the "golden labor time" of increased productivity on behalf of its own self-realization.

Marx explicitly states that the political economy conceived as a specific form of capital accumulation is not the essential philosophical problem. Capital is the historical problem for a specific society, but, Marx writes:

It is not, as the economists believe, the absolute form for the development of the forces of production.... It itself, however, correctly understood, appears as the condition of the development of the forces of production as long as they require an external spur.... Hence the great civilizing influence of capital.... The contradiction between production and realization has to be grasped more intrinsically than merely as the indifferent seemingly reciprocally independent appearance of the individual moments of the process.¹⁵⁴

Marx's writing always teases together a blend of classical idealism and existential insight. Here he calls the intentional organization of consciousness the "intrinsic" relation between capital and production in order to claim that the sociological armature of industrial society is not the pure existence of capital, but the fragmentation of consciousness by pure instrumental exchange. Marx expresses this social and emotional premise as plainly as anyone

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 415. 409 & 415

could:

The power which each individual exercises over the activity of others or over social wealth exists in him as the owner of exchange values.¹⁵⁵

Marx clearly conceives this context to be both a political and an emotional relation:

Where exchange value and use-value relate to one another independently, positively, as in the case of the commodity which becomes an object of consumption, it ceases to be a moment of the economic process; where negatively, as in the case of money it becomes madness: madness, however, as a moment of economics and as a determinant of the practical life of peoples.¹⁵⁶

Baudrillard criticizes contemporary Marxism for naively predicating an inherent use-value to social objects. Bracketing the sociological limitations of Marx's Enlightenment logic, consider the poignant implications of his statement. What pain, need and deprivation did a society present where consumption could appear to "cease to be a moment of the economic process." A revolution in life-style since Marx has traded the ancient physical problem, to which Marx refers, for a modern existential one.

Again we encounter the structural ambivalence, the semantic pivot in an important passage, this time centering upon two forms of madness: economic madness (capital accumulation outside the cycle of consumption) and a practical madness--a madness which Marx saw creeping into the everyday existence

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 157

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 268-269

of peoples. Marx saw two aspects of life being merged into one form of madness. We now see only one--a "practical" madness which has joined accumulation to the cycle of consumption.

Building upon his own empirical research and the field work of Malinowski and Benedict, Gregory Bateson came to the conclusion that "a culture may standardize the affective make-up of individuals."¹⁵⁷ Bateson's suggestion, implicit in Marx's dissent, has been amplified by Jules Henry:

Psychosis is the final outcome of all that is wrong with a culture.... A culture is a unified whole, even unto psychosis and death.¹⁵⁸

Marx's dissent still stands an open invitation to consider Bateson's and Henry's admonitions in deadly political earnest.

The economic process of exchange and its corresponding culture are vectors from the same angle of dominance. Undoing the direction of either one alone does not undo the force which it stores and maintains in the living shape of its isomorphic analogue on the other side.

¹⁵⁷ Gregory Bateson, Naven (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936) p. 114 Bateson is discussing the term, Zeitgeist, especially as Ruth Benedict applies it. This old word, another of those Hegelian concepts which transcends itself has, regrettably, fallen into disrepute.

¹⁵⁸ Jules Henry, Culture against Man (New York: Vintage Books, 1963) p. 323

Gregory Bateson's post-war work with Jurgen Ruesch in communication therapy emphasized the social phenomenology which Jay Haley, Mara Palazzoli, Jon Schiller and others have applied with notable success. In those early days Bateson wrote:

We are, in fact, coining the beginnings of a set of formal categories for describing character structure.... derived not from what the subject has learned in the old simple sense of the word 'learning,' but from the context in which the simple learning occurred.¹⁵⁹

To give Marx's point a twentieth century therapeutic translation, we would say that the learning context of capital and its culture have become the same. Exchange relations are the context in which culture "learning" occurs. The real lesson "learned," (the social learning) inscribes the subject within the capital-intensive exchange process. The culture teaches the bargaining context.

By themselves, instrumental skills serve only to expand the sum total of trigger situations in which the individual recognizes his own social and political advantage. Subjectivity may learn to "interpret its general bodily conscious-

¹⁵⁹ Jurgen Ruesch and Gregory Bateson, Communication, The Social Matrix of Psychiatry (New York: W. W. Norton, 1951) p. 217

See also, Michael Cole, John Gay, Joseph Glick, Donald Sharp, The Cultural Context of Learning and Thinking (New York: Basic Books, 1971)

"Such learning is an extralinguistic process.... because so much of the 'meaning' of what is being learned is intrinsic in the context in which the learning occurs (p. 40)."

ness,"¹⁶⁰ with infinitely greater acumen, without altering the qualitative premises upon which consciousness is based. The famous study of the Kpelle by Cole and company, The Cultural Context of Learning and Thinking, to which we have already referred, documents the ineffectiveness of instrumental skills like farming, carpentry--even medicine--to alter the effects of collective acculturation. Context, a splendid CUSO/Peace Corps primer in the pedagogy of practical reason, concludes that to teach instrumental skills to third world peoples, the teacher must communicate in modes compatible with the indigenous cultural organization of experience. Since "the underlying organization of experience is reflected in communicative behavior," skill operations have to be defined in native cultural norms.¹⁶¹

Linear Enlightenment finds no difficulties in its own socio-cultural context. In a manner analogous to the proletarianization of third world labor, Enlightenment externalizes its own cultural problems. It discovers itself in negation, always realizing its other self on carefully selected grounds. Studies like Cultural Context serve their explicit utilitarian function, but they also mask a similar ideological catechism at home in the industrial West. Industrialized societies have an "underlying organization of experi-

¹⁶⁰ I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism (London: Kegan Paul, 1928) See n. 106, for a discussion of the reduction of taste to individual subjectivity.

¹⁶¹ Cole et al., Cultural Context p. 9

ence," too.

The context of bourgeois society is instrumental and ulterior. Marx originally discovered this "underlying organization of experience" in the reified form of capital, but any other abstraction can become a vested form for negation and unhappiness. The only prerequisite demands that the form serve the relations of production and not the consciousness of the producers. Under these conditions, liberal pluralism (equality under the law and free access to the marketplace) becomes merely the freedom to choose one's very own social incarnation as a thing.

Marx's description of the social behavior of capital perfectly describes its corresponding culture:

It is the inherent property of money to fulfill its purposes by simultaneously negating them.¹⁶²

The ulterior and instrumental context in which exchange culture performs, cannibalizes the social drama of all existential gesture. Little real issue exists between "pop" and "classical," drugs or alcohol, Bohemian or bourgeois, etc. Within a context of instrumental exchange, the freedom to choose is only a lever by which the individual is compelled into the general consciousness.

¹⁶² Marx, Grundrisse, p. 151 cf. Adorno and Horkheimer, supra p. 16, n. 21

The exchange context perverts self-actualization. Authentic hedonism is unknown under this skewed social logic. The tacit integration of social being by the logic of exchange leads to museums, cults, and double binds. Its cultural ethos is sadistically flawed. Ulysses, that stereotypical modern, knew it well:

All experience is an arch wherethrough
Gleams that untraveled world whose margin fades
Forever and forever when I move.

The eternal torment of an institutionalized epoch of Tantalus marks the economic end of the Neolithic.¹⁶³

The instrumental context of exchange generates an ideological field which neutralizes critique the instant it verges upon action. Exchange forces articulation into capital-intensive contexts where skills become the political ally of bourgeois individualism. By allying itself with exchange, instrumental knowledge devalues all naive gesture, no matter how original and powerful.

The historical content of the instrumental message poses a central question for historical analysis, but it is not possible, as conventional interpretation assumes, to address this question first. The ideological context filters all content through the very selective prism of exchange. Let

¹⁶³ Lines 20-21 from Tennyson's Ulysses are a successful evocation of reciprocity with the sign.

the content of a gesture be love, hope, beauty, brotherhood, murder, rapine--anything you like. As Marx said:

Let the pope remain, but make everybody pope.
Abolish money by making every commodity money.
The question here arises whether this problem does
not already pronounce its own nonsensicality and
whether the impossibility of the solution is not
already contained in the premises of the ques-
tion.¹⁶⁴

The real content, the social content of exchange relations communicates a mystifying social context: an epistemological Gestapo of universally reified relations policing the precincts of pure reason, itself.

The central concept of exchange brought Marx squarely to the question of social intentionality and intersubjectivity. At this point he suffered the lack of a phenomenology with which to discuss the positive reciprocity between the elements in those relations. Marx's approach to art and aesthetics betrays this limitation. Lacking access to an existential discourse, Marx resorted to hammering linear logic into paradox: chiseling into bold and angry relief the negated, the omitted, the lost and denied.

We have already encountered discursive ambiguity in Marx and have attempted to allow for it. Now, through Marx's concept of exchange we have reached a semantic pivot in Marx's whole world picture, the dialectical heart of a culturalist reading of the Marxist dissent. In the epoch of

¹⁶⁴ Marx, Grundrisse, pp. 126-127

bourgeois economics and perception against which Marx decisively dissented:

The complete working-out of the human content appears as a complete emptying-out. This universal objectification is total alienation.¹⁶⁵

In the above passage Marx describes a process of alienation which appears to correspond to a similar process in the Manuscripts. We recall Marx lamenting in the Manuscripts that, "at the present day, general consciousness is abstracted from real life." Another of those suggestive ambiguities which we have noticed before arises between these two quotations. What is the relation between the earlier phrase "consciousness abstracted from real life" and Marx's later concept of "universal objectification" in the Grundrisse?

Taken together, these two explanations of alienation entail a significant paradox. Marx's later statement is either a major qualification of his discussion of consciousness in 1844, or he is speculating that universal objective alienation proceeds in conjunction with a process of mental abstraction. Bracketing Marx's idealism again (the predicated "human content") which renders his work so vulnerable to an authoritarian reading, this paradox seems important, indeed. Read in the total context of Marx's consistently radical dissent, it is difficult to dismiss this paradox as an inadvertancy or an error.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 488

It seems likely that in the decade between the Manuscripts and the Grundrisse, that Marx had been wrestling with two aspects of the same phenomenon. The reversed, fragmented state of consciousness discussed in the Manuscripts comprises the same process discovered externally as universal objectification. Marx's own historical experience led him back from his personal marginalization within bourgeois society to the forms of argumentation which held the most pertinence for the divided consciousnesses in his anomaly ridden world. Marx's own participation in discourse led him autobiographically from the problem of fragmented consciousness to the problem of universal objectification. It seems probable that the Manuscripts and the later Marx may not conflict at all. The elliptical relation between "abstracted from real life" and "universal objectification" represents the staging of a real cultural process which Marx observed at first hand.

The seeming ambiguity between the Manuscripts and the later Marx takes on great significance in the history of culture. Marx built a defensive posture into his critical system, the value of which he could hardly have known. He lived a discursive dilemma and protected his own work from that dilemma with all the means available to him. The traces of this narrative bind are sedimented into the difference of emphasis between the Manuscripts and the later Marx. This curious difference between the emphasis upon

consciousness in the Manuscripts and the later emphasis on objectification in Grundrisse and Capital sketches the beginning of a critical phenomenology of bourgeois culture. Marx could not unite this difference in one discourse, but he left the separate threads woven in his own critique.

Formal, classical idealism has forced the pattern of this paradoxical relation upon the work of the early and the later Marx. Marx could not have known it, but the integrity of his intellectual life leaves its record to us. Bourgeois culture has "abstracted" all dramatic gesture (from neurosis to art) from its social origin. Its signs have been "emptied out" and "universally objectified" in fixed formulas which close off their social meaning.

The truth of all dramatic gesture rests upon its "reciprocal necessity" with its actual community, the social fabric. Bourgeois society mediates "the reciprocity of speech" outside itself into the general cycle of production and exchange. Its idealized style forms become commodity forms: both objectified and abstracted.

1. The objectified forms can be institutionalized, taught and rationally reproduced. The cultural context of bourgeois society teaches the instrumental value system of industry and exact design. It is a valuable lesson in many ways and not to be scorned. However,

2. In its abstracted form, the "truth" of art appears metaphysical, its dramatic utterance an irrelevant soliloquy, sealed off from social history. Bourgeois society has limited its high culture to one and only one lesson to the practical exclusion of the many others which a social context must reinforce in order to survive.

The secret which the "two Marxes" act out in lieu of an adequate critical discourse is that through cultural alienation, bourgeois emotions (both objectified and abstracted) become as alien and external as the physical relations of bourgeois social reproduction.

The phenomenology of Marx's critique acts out the force of an alienation more horrible in scope than the expropriation of economic surplus value. Bourgeois consciousness has been divided against itself and language, art and politics have been expropriated by the underlying organization of experience. Marx experienced this cultural crisis, but he was only able to write about one side of it at a time. The disciplinary tools for a unified critique had to await the twentieth century.

The divided consciousness collectively learned from the social context of exchange, created a logical contradiction in the Hegelian phenomenology. The (teleo)logical contradiction between the bourgeois intentional system and its

cultural ideals awoke in Marx a pen which was dipped in molten hate, but this most powerful of all social critiques still leaves the bourgeois split C C/cultural experience unresolved. Knowing the internal contradictions of the bourgeois value system does not by definition grant a space for aesthetic experience. To argue that aesthetic experience is impossible in bourgeois society sounds absurd, but without recourse to Platonic categories, a materialist phenomenology reduces art to either allegory or propaganda. Art must either compromise materialism's world picture or be relegated to the conscious tasks of cartooning the contradiction and selling a vision of the post-bourgeois order. The epistemological "sub-stance" of the materialist critique is caught between the Scylla and Charybdis of Platonic self-compromise and the fish eye of utilitarian reason. Neither alternative satisfies the characteristics of an authentic aesthetic.

A Marxist theory of culture finds itself snared in the paradox of the "human end-in-itself." The reference to "total alienation"¹⁶⁶ occurs within the following larger discussion:

Thus the old view, in which the human being appears as the aim of production... seems to be very lofty when contrasted to the modern world, where production appears as the aim of mankind and wealth as the aim of production. In fact, however, when the limited bourgeois form is stripped away, what is wealth other than the universality of individual needs, capacities, pleasures, productive forces,...the development of all human powers as

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

the end in itself...where man does not reproduce himself in one specificity, but produces his totality? Strives not to remain something he has become, but is in the absolute movement of becoming? In bourgeois economics-- and in the epoch of production to which it corresponds--this complete working-out of the human content appears as a complete emptying-out, this universal objectification as total alienation, and the tearing-down of all limited, one-sided aims as sacrifice of the human end-in-itself to an entirely external end.¹⁶⁷

Marx asserts a self-evident "human end-in-itself" as the a priori and indisputable truth. Human inherency will flourish if not denied. The human "end-in-itself," made very attractive by Marcuse's philosophy of emancipatory libido,¹⁶⁸ has proven perniciously vulnerable to "the underlying organization of experience."¹⁶⁹ History has underlined this point again and again in the failure of radical political rebel-

¹⁶⁷ Marx, Grundrisse pp. 487-488

In The German Ideology Marx writes, "The mode of life and activity of an animal or human individual are those in which its 'essence' feels itself satisfied... The millions of proletarians and communists will prove this in time, when they bring their 'existence' into harmony with their 'essence' in a practical way, by means of revolution [Tucker, (ed.) p. 132]."

¹⁶⁸ "Art and behavior spontaneously transcend their social determination and emancipate themselves from the given universe of discourse." Herbert Marcuse, The Aesthetic Dimension (Boston:Beacon Press, 1977) p. 6

¹⁶⁹ "All specifically Marxian 'laws,'" Weber wrote, "are ideal types. The eminent, indeed unique, heuristic significance of these ideal types when they are used for the assessment of reality is known to everyone who has ever employed Marxian concepts and hypotheses. Similarly, their perniciousness, as soon as they are thought of as empirically valid or real (i.e. truly metaphysical) 'effective forces,' is likewise known." Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences. trans. and ed. by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Glencoe, Illinois:

lion to win the subsequent social peace.¹⁷⁰

Bertell Ollman's Alienation¹⁷¹ and Carol C. Gould's Marx's Social Ontology¹⁷² are lucid interpretations of classical Marxism which run afoul of the paradox of human inherency. Their vigorous appeal to individualism and social change cannot efface the destructive chicken-egg controversy which exists within classical Marxist discourse. Which comes first, society or the individual? Appealing to the relations of production attempts to answer the question by blaming the nest. Consider Ollman:

Mutual recognition, the act of seeing oneself in others, extends each individual's awareness to cover the whole human race.¹⁷³

now Gould:

Marx views these individuals as independently real and thus not as coming into being as a result of their relations... Thus these individuals have fundamental ontological status.¹⁷⁴

The Free Press, 1949) p. 103

¹⁷⁰ The inhumanity of the Soviet revolution and its degeneration into Stalinism, the ineffectiveness of the Weimar Social Democrats, and the dissipation of the Radical Conscience of the 1960s are all examples which require qualification in situ, but which remain, nonetheless, profound historical disappointments. Humanity, the ultimate "end-in-itself" can justify any penultimate means.

¹⁷¹ Bertell Ollman, Alienation (London:Cambridge University Press, 1971)

¹⁷² Carol C. Gould, Marx's Social Ontology (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1978)

¹⁷³ Ollman, p. 82

¹⁷⁴ Gould, p. 38

A descriptively simple paradox poses an enormous puzzle to social history. How does one reconcile Gould's and Ollman's individualist optimism with Marx's many statements to the effect that:

The individual has an existence only as a producer of exchange value, hence the whole negation of his natural existence is already implied... This pre-supposition is historical and posits the individual as already determined by society.¹⁷⁵

Given the best will in the world, upon what ground is this hypothetically sane and socially conscious individual supposed to emerge? If Gould and Ollman could say, Woodstock would look like a Trappist monastery.

The problem is greater than Gould, Ollman or even Marx. It arises from the paradoxes of applying Enlightenment discourse to an industrial setting. The essence of the paradox lies in the classical concept of human inherency. Classical discourses in art, religion, critical theory, etc., wrap a twofold, binary operation into one sign. They skip a step. As Foucault has explained, classical names must also be an order of nature and "a continuity of being."¹⁷⁶ Industriali-

¹⁷⁵ Marx, Grundrisse. p. 248

¹⁷⁶ Foucault has proposed that:

"The essential problem of Classical thought lay in the relations between name and order: how to discover a nomenclature that would be a taxonomy, or again, how to establish a system of signs that would be transparent to the continuity of being. What modern thought is to throw fundamentally into question is the relation of meaning with the form of truth and the form of being." Marx's work shows the battlescars of this struggle with the classical system of knowledge. Foucault, Order of Things p. 208

zation has disrupted the unity of the classical sign. Its internal logic no longer has relevance for us. Marxism has been just as injured by this disruption as every other traditional discourse and until Marxists understand this breakdown (a communication problem artists have been screaming to us about for over a century) Russell Jacoby will remain correct: In the history of Marxism, "The basic rapport with industrial life paralyzed the critique."¹⁷⁷

The "human end-in-itself" creates the problem for a materialist aesthetic. Consciousness of contradiction proves the coral reef upon which this critical vessel flounders as a theory of culture. How can the divided bourgeois consciousness produce art? Without the aid of a theory of transcendence (Platonic forms, Kantian categories, Hegelian Ideals, Jungian archetypes, etc.), critical consciousness cannot account for the quality and appeal of "bourgeois" cultural forms like Romantic music and Impressionistic art. To combine a love for art with a materialist critique confronts logic with a vicious paradox. To combine aesthetic sensitivity with radical consciousness has become virtually impossible.

The twin problems of divided consciousness and the exchange relation have found pseudo-resolution in the closet transcendentalisms of the secular culture. A divided mind

¹⁷⁷ Russell Jacoby, Dialectic of Defeat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) pp. 27 & 31.

suffering under an ulterior ethical system idealizes its bad faith and blocks social change from the side of its cultural relations. Marx's great dissent empirically verifies this cultural negation, but it cannot protect us from it. The new critical consciousness which this crisis calls for must also be a new form of emotional reciprocity between social being and its cultural signs. Lasting and meaningful social change depends upon new cultural relations as well as upon new physical relations of material production. If cultural relations remain as they are: fragmented into individualistic units for purposes of exchange, then any emergent social world will be the same emotional world, merely a new sign system under the same old social signification.

Chapter V

THE CULTURAL DIALECTIC

In his Introduction to the Philosophy of History Raymond Aron locates a crucial paradox which cultural studies must attempt to resolve. Aron perceives that the historian does not study ideas and people as separate phenomena. "On the contrary," Aron writes, "He tends towards unity because ideas for him are the expression of human attitudes and social situations."¹⁷⁸ This compliment, which few historians would reject in principle, nevertheless has raised a contentious issue in cultural studies. The nature of the relation between the expression of human attitudes and social situations remains far from clear.

The historian's commitment to a unified narrative cannot avoid Aron's question of how consciousness enters society and how society enters consciousness. In cultural studies, the act of mediation between a body proper¹⁷⁹ and a social context raises the question of a unified narrative in the starkest and least avoidable format. Yet Aron concedes that, "The human event, as it occurs in consciousness, is inacces-

¹⁷⁸ Raymond Aron, Introduction to the Philosophy of History. trans. George J. Irwin (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948) p. 90

¹⁷⁹ See below, n. 235

sible."¹⁸⁰ This paradoxical situation, where consciousness appears extremely important, but cannot be accounted for, places cultural studies under considerable tension and leads Aron to conclude that:

The work of art is ambiguous in itself, since it exists only for minds and admits neither rational expression nor verification separable from living consciousnesses.¹⁸¹

Aron's conclusion permits the Fine Arts to be, in fact, the protagonist in various historical scenarios, but denies it an etiology in history. Conceived as an ambiguity in itself, the work of art is always counterpoised against the temporal, mundane world. The history of expressive forms as social forms confronts a methodological Manicheism from the beginning of its enterprise. Synthesis is a priori excluded from the domain of possibilities.

There are two orthodox approaches to this methodological dilemma, neither of which is adequate to the historian's synthetic task. The most idealistic approach is represented by the hermeneuticism of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Suzanne Langer and her mentor, Ernst Cassirer, along with I. A. Richards, Erwin Panofsky, Eugene Goodheart, Eliseo Vivas, and Ernst Gombrich to name just a few. Hermeneutics advances an intuitive argument on behalf of the ethical content of the Fine Arts. Its optimistic assertions that art tells us "to

¹⁸⁰ Aron, Introduction. p. 86

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 99

change our life," and that culture "is religion with the critical ego added,"¹⁸² have no answer to the symphony orchestra at Auschwitz.¹⁸³

Yet it would be a grave mistake to dismiss idealism. Hermeneutical idealists, their Pollyanna Platonism notwithstanding, rank among the great "knowers" of all time. Their detailed comprehension of their subject has developed in the same tradition which led J. H. Randall to write of Hegel that, "The amount he knows is simply terrifying, so overwhelming that we can only ask in amazement, how could he have been so silly?"¹⁸⁴ And, Randall muses, "The more we ponder it, the more we begin to wonder whether he was so silly after all."¹⁸⁵ The idealists remind us, in fact, hold before us like a blazon, that something in the art event, gives access to a deep systemic relation. Something in art "tips us off" to the highest levels of interpersonal validity and social signification.¹⁸⁶ The disciplinary challenge

¹⁸² Lionel Trilling Matthew Arnold (New York: Meridan Books, 1955) p. 241

¹⁸³ George Steiner, In Bluebeard's Castle (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971) "Where culture flourished, barbarism was, by definition, a nightmare from the past...We now know that this is not so (pp. 76-77)."

¹⁸⁴ John Herman Randall, The Career of Philosophy Vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965) p. 276

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p. 277

¹⁸⁶ The best idealist hermeneutics, like Panofsky's, are very difficult to separate from phenomenology. Panofsky writes of "intrinsic meaning," that "It is apprehended by ascertaining those underlying principles which reveal

to which Aron's paradox points is to be able to justify, or at least give credibility to this intense and sometimes even overwhelming experience of aesthetic significance.

The second orthodox approach to aesthetic significance is less idealistic and does greater justice to the political facts by arguing that the ethical and humanizing value of culture has been overwhelmed by the infrastructural forces of politics and economics. This "desublimation of culture" argument is the position of Arnold Hauser, Georg Lukacs, Edmund Wilson, Theodore Adorno, Ernst Fischer, Adolfo Vasquez, Herbert Marcuse and others. Its weakness is that cultural values remain an abstract concept introduced into social and political history from a realm outside positive knowledge. It does justice to the political facts at the expense of exempting cultural forms from social history. The desublimation argument relies upon an implicit attribution of value which cannot be justified without ultimately resorting to the same Hegelian or Kantian categories as the idealists.

the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion--qualified by one personality and condensed into one work." Erwin Panofsky, Meaning in the Visual Arts (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955) p. 30. A close reading reveals, however, that "The ratio [author's emphasis] of classical art is instinctive (p. 267)." The problem here is that the form is separated from content. The artistic form (its ratio and raison d'etre) lies outside social history.

The advantage of this more realistic critique links art and social history, drawing its depth and insight from a fundamentally Marxist or phenomenological orientation. Some realists, notably Theodore Adorno and Arnold Hauser, have laid a broad intellectual base from which to begin to rethink the whole structural relation between culture and society. However, the problem remains the same. Both the realist and the idealist hermeneutic suffer from an axiomatic dualism centering upon the question of form. Art forms appear as ahistorical emergents, sparks of promise from a better world, a pure secular logos made flesh. Hidden beneath the surface plausibility of the hermeneutic arguments lies a deep nominalistic default, an almost Medieval faith in the metaphysical synchronization of the universe. The dualism of these interpretive approaches demarcates a world which essentially remains incommensurate, schizogenic and depressing. Roy Bhaskar concludes that for them, "verstehen displaces faith as the means of access to an effectively noumenalized social sphere."¹⁸⁷

The synthetic task with which Aron challenges the historian, requires a monist view which combines the optimism of idealism with the realism of the desublimationist. Such an approach must be hermeneutical in unitary terms. For a monist hermeneutic to stand, a transcendent domain of being

¹⁸⁷ Roy Bhaskar, The Possibility of Naturalism (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979) p. 171

like the one hypostacized by the idealists must exist independently of cognizing experience; but this interpersonally transcendent world must be an emergent property of the real, physical and mundane socio-economic space recognized by the realists. The monist view, which attempts to avoid all closet transcendentalisms, has been called, "the realist theory of science, transcendental realism, or more pungently, fallibilist 'realism.'"¹⁸⁸

In this third approach, the object of historical inquiry is expanded to include social structures understood as "generative mechanisms."¹⁸⁹ These social structures form the intransitive objects of historical inquiry in which the real also carries the power of symbolic transcendence. This historically emergent "generative mechanism" does not "cause" empirical sequences, but it does define the necessary relationship between them. Roy Bhaskar, a leading exponent of this position explains:

Substituting an ontology of structures for one of events, and recognizing that social individuals are in general both complex and changing, provides

¹⁸⁸ Peter T. Manicas and Paul F. Secord, "Implications for Psychology of the New Philosophy of Science, American Psychologist 38, #4 (April 1983) p. 401 Other works found to be extremely helpful in the historian's synthetic task were: Janet Wolff, The Social Production of Art (New York: St. Martins' Press, 1981); Nicos Hadjinicolaou, Art History and Class Struggle (London: Pluto Press, 1979); Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, How to Read Donald Duck (New York: International General, 1975); Zygmunt Bauman, Culture as Praxis (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973)

¹⁸⁹ Bhaskar, Naturalism. p. 12

a way of avoiding at the outset the false oppositions, such as between theory and history or the universal and the unique, on which the hermeneutical dualisms turn.¹⁹⁰

Part of the historian's synthetic task must be to construct "ontologies of structure" which link cultural forms to social forms and back again.

The recursive, circular, "boot-strap" (or, if you prefer) dialectical relation between culture and society requires a "second order monitoring" of an historical complex which is "unavailable to direct inspection."¹⁹¹ We can know this "complex" through its unified historical effect. This kind of transformation model shifts the concept of historical cause from formal causes to structural relationships and therefore provides a logical basis for a transcendental realism. Bhaskar notes that Marx's analysis in Capital provides the first historical examples of such a procedure:

To understand the essence of some particular social phenomenon is to understand the social relation that made that phenomenon possible.¹⁹²

Cultural phenomenon can be grasped as a structural relation of production in the same way as other social phenomenon even though material cultural production appeals to the emotional rather than the logical life of the historical subject. Bhaskar explains:

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 26

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 66

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 65

The conception I am proposing is that people, in their conscious activity, for the most part unconsciously reproduce (and occasionally transform) the structures governing their substantive activities of production.¹⁹³

The Fine Arts can be comprehended as a mediated part of these same relations of productions.

A concrete example of Bhaskar's proposal can be found in Michael Meeker's analysis of Bedouin poetry. Meeker's analysis illustrates the "second order monitoring" which unifies the orthodox cultural dualism between culture and society. Meeker concludes that the rajaz meter of the Arabic hemistich is regulated by the natural rhythm of a camel's gait. Meeker believes that this unconscious structural relation acts out the vital symbiosis between man and camel on the Arabian desert. For this reason, an understanding of Arabian poetry:

Is a means of understanding the political experience of these peoples, just as an understanding of their poetry would hardly be possible apart from some consideration of their political circumstances.¹⁹⁴

It would be absurd to claim that the camel "caused" one of the metrical forms of Arabic poetry, but the relations between man and camel "signified" that meter from others and gave it a special appeal for the Bedouin which cannot be un-

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 44

¹⁹⁴ Michael E. Meeker, Literature and Violence in North Arabia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) pp. 127-128

derstood outside the economic situation in which he lives. Meeker's analysis has probed to the level of unity which Aron desired and which Bhaskar claims is theoretically possible. The task of cultural studies becomes one of regarding Western culture forms as part of a similar moment of dialectical symbiosis between person and political economy.

Anthony Easthope has, in fact, interrogated Western iambic Pentameter from just such a level of second order monitoring. He has asked to what extent the iambic exhibits a structural relation with the political and economic life of Western, English-speaking peoples. He begins with the simple question: "How are different meters historically 'specific?'"¹⁹⁵ Although English surrenders more gracefully to the alternating rhythms of the iambic (e.g., Miltons' "When I/consi/der how/ my light/ is spent.") than say, Hungarian or Chinese, the nature of English cannot be considered a sufficient cause for the advent of the iambic meter into the language.

Easthope writes that the iambic pentameter line was "promoted into dominance by the new courtly culture [of Tudor England], pentameter is an historically constituted institution. It is not natural to English poetry but is a specific cultural phenomenon, a discursive form."¹⁹⁶ The stresses of

¹⁹⁵ Anthony Easthope, Poetry as Discourse (London: Methuen, 1983) p. 52

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 55

English intonation (itself widely varied) are balanced in the iambic with an abstract rhythm pattern in order to produce a hybrid nature, a discursive form which results in a species of parlative counterpoint.¹⁹⁷ This "counterpoint," a structural duet between the nature of English and the logic of a superimposed rhythmic scheme, "is also determined ideologically," Easthope writes. He adds:

The meter can be seen not as a neutral form of poetic necessity but a specific historical form producing certain meanings and acting to exclude others.¹⁹⁸

After the English ear has been schooled to this parlative marriage between intonation and abstract pattern, the iambic "naturalizes itself as myth by disclaiming its ideological operation."¹⁹⁹

Summarizing Easthope's argument, we discover the ideological origins of the iambic in three historical elements, each one more complex and more ingeniously concealed than the preceding one. The three elements are political, social and epistemological. These three historical elements in the structure of the iambic combine to provide an historical "subject position" in which the reader (-speaker) may indulge, but of which he may remain blithely unaware.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 64, 73 & 61

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 64

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

The political element dresses itself in the same ideological clothing that John Berger has unstitched so skillfully in his discussion of David's Portrait of Madame Recamier.²⁰⁰ The iambic brings English speech into relation with a classical model. "So," Easthope writes, "a particular practice of the national tongue can dress itself in the clothes of antiquity and a bourgeois national aspiration may represent itself in the form of a universal civilization."²⁰¹ From the 16th century until into the twentieth, iambic rules as an hegemonic natural selector of cultural priorities in speech. The iambic identifies itself with "polish and reformed manners as against poetry in another metre which can be characterized as rude, homely, and in the modern sense, vulgar."²⁰² The iambic canon "asks for a clipped, precise and fastidious elocution,"²⁰³ which socially favors Latinate grammar and the manners of the leisured, educated and rich. The political and the social ideology of the iambic elide in hegemonic symmetry: social pretensions reinforcing political priorities and the aspirations of bourgeois national politics selecting those cultural traits which show it off to

²⁰⁰ "Classic texts, whatever their intrinsic worth, supplied the higher strata of the ruling class with a system of references for the forms of their own idealized behavior." John Berger, Ways of Seeing (London: BBC and Penguin Books, 1972) p. 101

²⁰¹ Easthope, Discourse. p. 65

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

best advantage.

A society always has to be backed up by a specific adaptive response, a socio-emotional package of values and attitudes which corresponds to its political economy. The political and social values of a specific culture cannot persist nor can a form like the iambic line serve its ethnological function without this corresponding "epistemological" base. The knowledge structure which lies behind the iambic confirms the values and attitudes of bourgeois society. The internal counterpoint between natural intonation and abstract schema reinforces one of the most salient traits of bourgeois individualism.

The structural tension between natural intonation and the abstract iambic meter emphasizes the psychological attitude of the bourgeois individual versus society. The enunciation of the iambic must always rely upon an individual performance which artfully synchronizes the two polar tensions juxtaposed within its structure. The cultural preference for iambic confirms and necessitates an emotional allegiance to the conformist individualism which bourgeois society demands. Considered as a knowledge structure (which, ultimately, all culture forms are), iambic acts out a pseudo-naturalism that is appropriate for the priorities of bourgeois society. The iambic imposes a management principle upon the natural linguistic chain. In this violent act

of "syntagmatic closure...the abstract pattern contains and overrides process as enacted in the intonation."²⁰⁴ The iambic enacts a corporate hegemony over language which legislates against mimetic disruptions from the rhythms of "lived" life, forbidding under the imposition of an austere management principle any discontinuity or rupture in the abstract rhythmic scheme.

Easthope's analysis of the iambic accesses the reciprocal relation between a socialized individual and symbolic feeling-forms. It realistically allows for the operation of a transformational mechanism which integrates the individual into his social group. Much like a sculptor at work in his studio, the relation Easthope has described fashions an image out of a given set of historical tools and materials. On the other hand, again like most artistry, the relation shows itself amenable to conscious direction.

Easthope's and Meeker's work provide concrete examples that a socio-aesthetic symbiosis signifies the body/mind within a specific historical milieu. This dialectical insertion of being into the life-world cannot be reduced to the linear evolution of those hypothetical chimerae: value free tools and ideal forms. The instrumental tool and the ideal form evolve in conjunction with an historically specific cognitive style and they thematize individuals within

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 72

the natural attitude of the epoch in which they arise.

To describe in functional detail the structure of this dialectical interface, requires the regeneration of language. The old linear vocabulary of formal idealism and enlightenment dissent cannot contain the structural ambivalence of the inner duality which animates all cultural signs.

Nelson Goodman suggests that cultural studies is in trouble and that the difficulty which is plaguing it can be traced to one large problem. There is a "domineering dichotomy" between the cognitive and the emotive which keeps cultural studies from seeing that "in aesthetic experience the emotions function cognitively."²⁰⁵ Valid knowledge of our culture or any other, means reducing the domineering dichotomies of expression back to the elemental structure of the sociological context which is basic to that society. Judgment which only adjudicates formal significance by imitating exemplary past achievements keeps us from seeing the dialectical nature of perception. Aesthetic cognition has much less to do with pure experience and much more to do with the tacit knowledge built into the perceptual gestalt.

²⁰⁵ Nelson Goodman, Languages of Art (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1968) pp. 247-248

There is simply, no higher language than temporal experience. We do not see how it is possible to think otherwise and remain an historian. Formal cultural patterns are selected and reinforced by a social matrix which uses them to teach its own cognitive style and service its own inference system. The Kantian-style criticism which services the bourgeois cognitive style constitutes its own object and reads its own ideological catechism instead of the historical art or social text which lies before it.

Social crisis can be indicated by the confrontation between formal representational systems. As the explanatory value of the old system declines, it encounters (and opposes) its own metamorphosis. The following is an example. In November, 1962, Nikita Khrushchev and the Soviet, avant garde sculptor, Ernst Neizvestny had a heated debate. Khrushchev encountered in Neizvestny, a new normative system and a new definition of the social content of art.

The situation is thus: an exhibition of modern art has proven to be such a sensation that the Soviet bureaucracy has closed it down. Khrushchev must decide the fate of the show. As soon as he and his entourage enter the building, Khrushchev can be heard screaming:

Dog Shit! Filth! Disgrace! Who is responsible for this? Who is the leader?

Neizvestny, uncowed, goes to meet Khrushchev and shouts back:

You may be Premier and Chairman but not here in front of my works. Here I am Premier and we shall discuss as equals.

Khrushchev's security guard seizes the enraged sculpture and a petty bureaucrat in the entourage threatens Neizvestny with exile to the uranium mines. Neizvestny ignores his captors and continues his rebuttal:

You are talking to a man who is perfectly capable of killing himself at any moment. Your threats mean nothing to me.

Khrushchev, who admires Niezvestny's spunk, indicates for him to be unhanded. However, the accusations continue. Khrushchev demands:

Where do you get your bronze?

I steal it!

One of Khrushchev's lackeys accuses Niezvestny of being mixed up in the black market and "other rackets" too. The political cunning behind Niezvestny's anger dictates a change in tactics. He replies:

Those are very grave charges made by a government head and I demand the fullest possible investigation. I do not steal in the way that has been implied. The material I use is scrap. But in order to go on working at all, I have to come by it illegally.

Khrushchev, a veteran of the world's most cut-throat bureaucracy, lets Niezvestny's answer pass and poses what, for him, is the crucial question:

What do you think of the art produced under Stalin?

I think it was rotten and the same kind of artists are still deceiving you.

The methods Stalin used were wrong, but the art itself was not.

Khrushchev's reply is an Hegelian fallacy and Neizvestny's retort is superb:

I do not know how, as Marxists, we can think like that. The methods Stalin used served the cult of personality and this became the content of the art he allowed. Therefore the art was rotten too.²⁰⁶

Neizvestny's specific allegation was not that art had become a tool of Stalinist propaganda, nor did he claim that sycophancy and nepotism had promoted mediocre artists over their betters. These would have been legitimate political complaints, and were the ones Khrushchev was probably expecting. Neizvestny ignored these secondary issues in favor of a more important point. He argued that the Stalinist intentional system had become the content of Soviet art. In Neizvestny's opinion, the "sociological paradigm,"²⁰⁷ the "vivid present"²⁰⁸ of Soviet society permeated socialist realism under Stalin. To Khrushchev's surprise, Neizvestny argued a structural relation between the political and the aesthetic modes by claiming that the aesthetic experience is an act of social cognition.

²⁰⁶ John Berger, Art and Revolution (London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1969) pp. 81-85

²⁰⁷ See below, n. 310

²⁰⁸ See above, n. 32. The phrase is Alfred Schutz', who also writes, "The basic We-relationship is already given to me by the mere fact that I am born into the world of directly experienced social reality. From this basic relationship is derived the original validity of all my direct experiences of particular fellow men..." Alfred Schutz, On Phenomenology and Social Relations (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970) p. 187

A high culture commonplace supposes that art refines the vulgar, everyday world. Neizvestny understood Soviet art structurally, so his argument ran 180 degrees contrary to knee-jerk conventional refinement. He acted as if the art of his society were part of its fundamental ideology, not through propagandistic premeditation, but affectively and structurally. Neizvestny argued that social and political history permeate symbol systems.

Khrushchev's attitude overlooked the social relativity of aesthetic experience. Khrushchev saw cultural history one-sidedly, as a table of artistic contents and a history of techniques. Having thought no deeper than this, he could imagine that a fundamental dichotomy existed between political history and the history of its corresponding culture. This tautologically packaged ontogenesis of experience permits the conventional, instrumentally idealist attitude to avoid the potentially upsetting possibility which Neizvestny forcefully proposed.

Khrushchev, redoubtable Marxist though he was, had fallen prey to a bourgeois notion. By separating aesthetic experience from social history, he had assumed that aesthetics must always criticize politics. The effect of this attitude is the opposite of its intent. The idealistic faith in aesthetics ends up making the same mistake as Khrushchev and with the same disastrous consequences. It becomes an ac-

complice of the social system it opposes.²⁰⁹ The classical attitude deploys exemplary past achievements on the false assumption that "once a solution, always a solution," never thinking that eventually its faith must be misplaced, never supposing that its exemplary cloak could eventually become a stultifying iron cage. In this way, the bourgeois individual fulfils the categorical imperatives of the old Kantian a priori system. A fragmented consciousness and ulterior ethical system can affirm their transcendental purity outside social time and space. Thus the bourgeois ego gives itself logical existence prior to any possible political debate. The strange contradiction in which it orbits saves its private face, at the expense of its collective world. Bourgeois aesthetics postulates its personal experience in permanent polarity against its own social history. The social attitude which manifests itself in countless ecological, political and psychological symptoms, remains rooted in an impregnable symbol-system that has been declared off-limits to historical analysis. Consciousness locks into the strange lonely loop that forever emulates its own lost origin.

²⁰⁹ It is not unusual to encounter intellectual radicals who are emotional reactionaries. Bourgeois Marxists, post-classical Formalists, linear structuralists, agnostic theists, "liberated" chauvinists: all of these self-contradictory characters further the fragmentation and ulteriority of the life-world against which they protest. They are "cognitively bound" in an emotional system which short-circuits their knowledge.

The classical attitude turns an historically relative aesthetic system into pure nature. In many cases, this cognitive style commemorates the new industrial "state of nature" for which Marshall Sahlins considers Marx the first shaman.²¹⁰ Frank Lentricchia calls its portentous half-truths a "forbidding nominalism."²¹¹ When the social order and the symbolic order are considered separately, not together, the hidden agenda of shared attitudes and intentions is camouflaged. Hence the conventional attitude flees its social history as rapidly as possible. "History," Levi-Strauss remarked, "may lead to anything provided you get out of it."²¹² The structure of Straussian wit should be read in earnest.

²¹⁰ See n. 123. "Marx's genealogy of conceptual thought is Malinowski's totemism."

²¹¹ Frank Lentricchia, After the New Criticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) p. 222 Lentricchia refers to the Medieval philosophy that God wound up two worlds which run in "sync" according to Divine dispensation. He calls this position the "last Romanticism" and analyzes its contradictions.

²¹² Claude Levi-Strauss, The Savage Mind (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962) p. 262 To the confusion of everyone there are two structuralisms: an historical one and an ontological one. Strauss is of the latter. His witticism is another pun on Europe's intellectual baggage (cf. n. 123). Saussure wrote, "What is said of journalism applies to diachrony: it leads everywhere if one departs from it (Cours. p. 90)." Strauss' elegance and wit win out, for most readers, over his intellectual system, but Strauss' remark is not benign. Lentricchia tags Strauss a, "synchronic Platonist (p. 128, op. cit., above)." All efforts to locate meaning outside history have to be rejected.

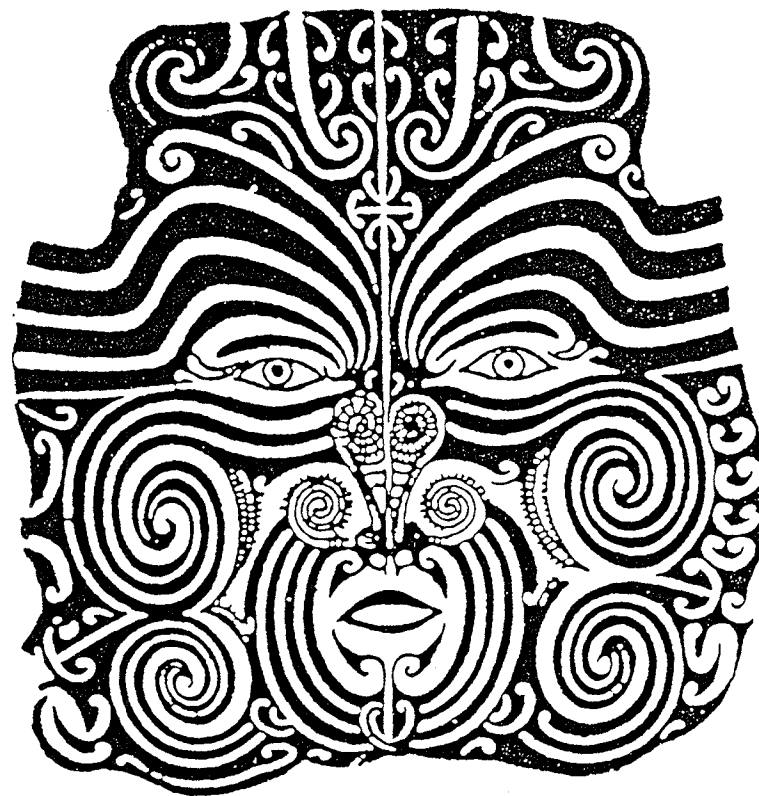


Figure 5.]
Two portraits of the Maori Chieftain, Tupa Kupa

A cross-cultural comparison illustrates the social relativity of aesthetic experience better than theory or anecdote. Compare the two portraits of the Maori chieftain, Tupa Kupa (Figure 5.1). The one on the right is a self-portrait, the left one a likeness drawn by a European. The question of artistic merit is irrelevant in comparison to the social context formally embodied by each of them.

Classical judgment would attribute the difference in formal structure between the portraits to the Maori's technical, cognitive and emotional primitiveness. Such interpretation merely self-serves a Western exemplary model. The comparative merit of each, if they can be compared at all, would attempt to decide which portrait is most faithful to the social context under which it was constructed. There is no absolute formal base for aesthetic judgments. No appropriate judgment can be made outside an understanding of the normative inference system reified in each. Impaired judgment which only reasons instrumentally, focuses on representative differences to the neglect of similar processes. In the illustration at hand, each portrait tells us more about the artist's society than about Tupa Kupa.

To the Maori, Western optical fidelity to material surfaces is cold, naturalistic, isolated, friendless and kinless. Western realism may afford the dubious utilitarian advantage of making physical recognition possible between

strangers in a crowd; but it says nothing about the "real" person, Tupa Kupa. From the Maori perspective, the Western image illustrates no social nature at all. Barren of those relationships which give human life its significance, the work based solely upon optical fidelity seems dead to a non-Westerner.

Edmund Carpenter, the source of this splendid little example, writes that he once exchanged portraits with a Papuan. Using three-dimensional perspective, he created an optical likeness of the Papuan that his fellow tribesmen could recognize. The Papuan's portrait of Carpenter was not individually identifiable. The Papuan represented Carpenter as a headless, reptile-like figure, which is the conventional Papuan motif for all ancestors. "This was the ideal symbol," Carpenter writes, "for weaving someone into the seamless web of Papuan kinship, but to incorporate someone into Western society, you need optical likeness. Then you can classify and conquer."²¹³

The Maori picture each other in Mercator flat-earth projections of the kinships and concomitant economic affiliations of their community. They find Western three-dimensional abstraction barbaric because in their society "people are important...It is people, and the experiences and meanings associated with them, that they do not want to

²¹³ Julia Blackburn, The White Men. Foreword by Edmund Carpenter (London: Orbis Publishing, 1979) p. 7

lose."²¹⁴

Compare Roy Wagner's description of the Maori quoted above, with Parson and White's synopsis of the attitude which they find reflected in Western social relations. For the latter, "instrumental individualism" is the keynote of the value system. This means first and before all "the obligation to society is left very largely within the individual's own discretion."²¹⁵ The artistic illusion of perspective is an abstract of Western individualism. Western culture--instrumental, technical and "realistic,"--focuses on the individual as the source and range of social significance. This perspective appears specious to the Melanesian because to him it implies that the individual defines his own social context. In the example in question, the visual gestalt habituated in the style of each artist is not an object for delectation. It is a living sign-system of socialization. A common task undertaken from two different cultural perspectives has created two quite different exemplary forms.

²¹⁴ Roy Wagner, The Invention of Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975) p. 26

²¹⁵ Talcott Parsons and Winston White, "The Link Between Character and Society" Cultural and Social Character. Seymour Martin Lipset and Leo Lowenthal (ed.) (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961) p. 102

Artistic gestalt may display many representational styles, but it exhibits the same phenomenological structure. Art synchronizes social memory and personal experience. "Art," Lukacs writes, "is the maximum intensification qua content of the social and historical essence of any human situation, whatever."²¹⁶ The artistic image reflects back to the individual his society's way of seeing the world. "It is impossible for me," said Breton, "to consider a picture as anything but a window in which my first interest is to know what it looks out on."²¹⁷ Interpretation which remains wilfully oblivious to this phenomenological truth is one-sided and impaired.

The forms may differ, but conventional attitudes structurally resemble each other across cultures. The unconscious similarity is interesting and sometimes, amusing. Roy Wagner discovers this similarity discussing the cargo cult phenomenon. In his opinion, the Melanesian "kago" and the Western "culture" are mirror images of each other. The Westerner tends to look at the natives' cargo, their techniques and artifacts, and call it "culture," whereas the native look at Western culture and call it cargo. The truth is often as simple as it is amusing:

²¹⁶ Berel Lang and Forrest Williams (ed.) Marxism and Art (New York: David McKay Publishers, 1965) p. 191

²¹⁷ Franklin Rosemont (ed.), Andre Breton: What is Surrealism? Selected Writings (New York: Monad Press, 1978) p. 27 [Breton's emphasis]

Cargo and culture metaphorize the same intersocietal relation... Each concept uses the extensive bias of the other as its symbol.²¹⁸

As Hegel was the first to discover,²¹⁹ idealism can only discover itself in projection. Wagner's "kago-culture" axis illustrates this well. Melanesian "culture" demonstrates to the traditional Westerner what industrial societies painfully lack: meaningful work. Western "cargo" allows the Melanesian to transcend the narrow physical limits of their inadequate system of production.

The Western concept of Melanesian "culture" insinuates a terrible loss of community and kinship. The Melanesian concept of Western "kago" insinuates authentic physical need. Each cultural perspective idealizes the other because each society suffers an absence whose fulfillment it can only recognize in the other. Each viewer ethnologically identifies his own alienated reality. Just as meaningful intersubjectivity inspires an idealistic image of "culture," so instrumental prowess inspires an idealistic image of "kago."

Melanesian "culture" is only inspiring when it is viewed from a perspective outside the experience of natural scarcity. Western "kago" is only inspiring outside the experience of instrumental dehumanization. "Kago-culture" reify an axis in speech and desire across which the essential limita-

²¹⁸ Wagner, Culture. p. 32

²¹⁹ See nn. 68-70. Hegel's concept of "negation."

tions of two societies confront each other in mute negation. Scarcity is the tacit content of the "culture" admired by Western sentimentalists. Depersonalization and bureaucracy are the tacit content of the "kago" so admired by the ingenuous Melanesian. As Barthes observed, the classic text holds its truth in a kind of eternal pregnancy, simultaneously gestated and avoided.²²⁰ Idealism encounters its own truth in unconscious projections. The adversary system of bourgeois economics becomes the perfect milieu for the great game of Hegelian negations. All its world is a stage for a drama of self-discovery which is forever prorogued. To save that world, those unconscious projections must be withdrawn from it.

Between "kago-culture" two different absences confirm the same experience of repression and loss. Structurally, the axes of "kago-culture" are indistinguishable. Each lives out the same immanent bad faith. Each structures its own most fearsome secret into a symbol of faith. Each constructs exemplary forms of negative awareness in order to flee critical analysis. The intentionality of both thought systems is the same. Their "sub-stances" are similar. Both attitudes remain unconscious of the larger historical context which orients them, and the larger social problem toward which their emotions are responding.

²²⁰ See above, n. 45

In classical systems, formal signs are regarded superstitiously. Enlightenment logic reveres the sign as if it were an eternal decoder of a timeless truth--a sort of "enigma machine" for Kantian categories. All formalists, whether Maori or North American, bow to the same superstitious structure and fall to worshipping their exemplary forms as if they had power in themselves.

Raymond Williams' work in Marxist semantics is widely known, but just as pertinent, though less appreciated, is the odyssey of his intellectual development. The significance of Williams's work has overshadowed the turnaround in his thinking between 1958 and 1977. Williams confronted his own idealist superstitions in order to develop from an activist into an analyst. Williams' journey is probably an unavoidable one which everyone has to make.

There is no dispute concerning the change in Williams' attitude. He has honestly described his intellectual pilgrimage as the journey from "radical populism" to a genuine "cultural materialism."²²¹ Williams' critical consciousness began its journey at the same point of raw sensitivity as many other critics since the advent of industrialism. He hoped to pose the affective promise of art against the spiritual brutality of industrial economics. At first, from his self-styled "populist" perspective, cultural studies seemed

²²¹ Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977) pp. 2 & 5

arduous, but simple. The political economy appeared to have colonized the timeless truth of art. To the early Williams, the ringing Victorian criticisms by Ruskin, Arnold and Carlyle all rang with one aesthetic truism: Free the truth and the truth will make you free. The promise of a society of plenty based on the common appreciation of beauty seemed so real, so logical and inescapable that many remain convinced that art can build the cathedral of tomorrow.

The pastoral lyric of the ideal form does not oppose the social trauma of industrial economics. Williams had to break through his love affair with the cult of exemplary form to see aesthetics as a systemic event within the normative paradigm of his society. The change is clearly revealed in his writings. As a radical populist he wrote:

This indeed is the tragedy of the situation: That a genuine insight, a genuine vision should be dragged down by the very situation to which it was opposed.²²²

With words like these, Williams issued a powerful re-edition of the old "colonization of culture" lament in an attempt to rehabilitate the "human end-in-itself" of Enlightenment critique.

Williams discovered that Hegelian idealism was not an adequate critical paradigm. The demonstrable ineffectiveness of high culture to change the feeling-tone of the bourgeois

²²² Raymond Williams, Culture and Society 1780-1850 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1960) p. 77

adversary system, unify its divided consciousness and purge it of its mercenary ethic, led Williams to rethink the relations between culture and society. The hallmark of this development is the shift from faith in "genuine insight" to a theory of "lived hegemony." Williams' radical and systemic vision of culture and society took culture off its Victorian pedestal and gave it a place in social history. As a fully developed "cultural materialist" he wrote:

A lived hegemony is always a process...It is a realized complex of experiences, relationships, and activities...[which] are in practice tied to the hegemonic.²²³

The illusion of transcendancy is easily tooled into an instrument of social normalization. Idealized cultural forms can become the "real process" in which social relations are both consummated and consumed. Williams' intellectual hegira led him to a broader and more inclusive concept of dominance, one which includes the traditional culture as well as the traditional relations of production. Cultural thematization can undo through the so-called "superstructure" all that populist charisma thinks that it has accomplished at the economic base.

"Lived hegemony" experiences the social order as a natural one, because a superstitiously accepted sign system naturalizes it. Williams still agrees that culture has been colonized, but his point of view now expresses agreement

²²³ Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature

with John Berger:

Art is constituted pre-consciously by its use in society before [Berger's emphasis] we turn our attention to it as a thing in itself.²²⁴

Seemingly oblivious to this relation, historians have permitted aesthetics to pose as an external god, a hidden reason of which they have but to record the conclusions.

Thomas Kuhn writes that,

Today research in parts of philosophy, psychology, linguistics, and even art history, all converge to suggest that the traditional paradigm is somehow askew.²²⁵

Only because we are so stubbornly screwed into our disciplinary specializations do we fail to grasp the anomalous conditions across large segments of the whole culture. Fragmented judgment with its mercenary motivation lacks the necessary critical paradigm with which to perceive that the Fine Arts culture has been just as willing a participant in the structure of hegemony as the cotton gin or the assembly line. Merleau-Ponty advises:

²²⁴ John Berger, Ways of Seeing (London: Penguin Books, 1972) p. 154 Like Bahktin, Williams was driven back to language in the hope that ideology can be made evident through its perturbations and distortions. Whether Williams has, unlike Bahktin, avoided the need for a "nature-based" philosophy is still not clear (See below, nn. 243-245 & n. 260).

²²⁵ Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, Vol. 11 #2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962) p. 121 Kuhn continues: "That failure to fit is also made increasingly apparent by the historical study of science to which most of our attention is necessarily directed here."

The same life, our own, is played out both within us and outside us.²²⁶

It is, Sartre writes, "this very bond which gives us access to the culture itself as totalization and temporalization."²²⁷

If cultural studies can provide structural access to the history which is both aesthetically within and economically without us, it must be discovered in the existential alienation at the heart of exemplary cultural form. For this reason, it is imperative to overcome the prudery of idealism and bring critique into the phenomenal reality of life under the industrial system of production. Such a critical incision of the life-world calls for "a political somatics," an inquest into the production of an historical body-mind.²²⁸

²²⁶ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Adventures of the Dialectic trans. Joseph Bien (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973) p. 22 Surely it goes without saying that the cotton gin and the assembly line have been part of an unprecedented escalation in the quality of human life--as has classical Western art. The point is that between its idealizers and the indifferent, the conventional aesthetic attitude is more entrenched and therefore more deleterious than any of the "organizational synthesis" whitewashes of big business. A revisionist aesthetic is not even considered a legitimate historical debate!

²²⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, Critique of Dialectical Reason trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith, Jonathan Ree (ed.) (London: NLB, 1976) p. 54

²²⁸ Terry Eagleton, Walter Benjamin (London: NLB Publishers, 1981) p. 150

The critical perspective of this discussion has, with one reservation,²²⁹ come full circle back to Marx. In social history, exemplary cultural forms may reproduce the fragmentation and domination characteristic of the industrial political economy as a whole. If perception is physiological process grafted into a culturally evolved schematic, the conclusion to be inferred from the cultural history of an industrialized political economy can hardly seem mysterious. The ideal cultural forms of industrial society may, in many cases, be teaching the ulterior ethic and divided consciousness of bourgeois society as a whole.

For cultural history, concrete, discussion and analysis begins where Marx began, with the attempt to base intersubjectivity in material existence. Call this grounding of knowledge an historical anthropology, a dialectical ethnology, a materialist phenomenology, or a Marxist aesthetic: the purpose remains the same. Critical interpretation has to see beyond the exemplary form and into the process relation which determines formal significance.

Idealizing an historically relative aesthetic form suppresses the social relation which the artwork mirrors, reproduces and then teaches. A split occurs through which the

²²⁹ See nn. 167-169. The "human end-in-itself" of classical Enlightenment critique. Thus Lacan remarks, "We can say Sade's Philosophy of the Boudoir gives its truth to the Critique of Practical Reason (pp. 765-766)." Jacques Lacan, Ecrits (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1970) Citation translated by M. Daniel Bisch.

cultural form becomes part of the social anomaly which needs to be resolved. A permanent archive of exemplary ideal forms serves as an emotional boot camp in which to regiment social consciousness. Culture, under the effects of this debilitation, simply becomes another measure of mass normalization.

"The victories of art," Marx observed, "seem bought by the loss of character."²³⁰ The instrumental relations of an idealized culture structurally embody the total life activity of its people. As the industrial political economy bogs down in anomaly, so does the culture of its early era of promise. To persist in applauding an ideal which primarily affirms the past, binds mind and emotion to an unbearable contradiction. The Victorian culture of ideal forms confirmed the Enlightenment promise of a new, more rational and dependable "state of nature," but in the twentieth century, it no longer carries "concrete puzzle-solutions"²³¹ for Western society. Its social content has been "resignified." Art work, as an ideal, becomes synonymous with "art labor," a labor compatible with the industrial political economy in every way, a labor which above all demands the definitive mass replication of the ideal form and the regimentation of feeling.

²³⁰ Mikhail Lifshitz, The Philosophy of Art of Karl Marx trans. Ralph B. Winn (New York: Pluto Press, 1973) p. 44 [Russian edition, 1933]

²³¹ See below, n. 310

Western culture risks becoming one with its economic life activity. It risks the condition in which culture cannot distinguish itself from the marketplace. Marx held the opinion that this cultural ethos was unworthy of the name, civilization:

The animal is immediately one with its life activity. It does not distinguish itself from it. It is its life activity.²³²

The industrial political economy polishes all social relations into a rational glitter in which to witness a mirror of the world of material production. Paradoxically, the more sophisticated his object, the more reified the human subject into his own materials. The aesthetics of the ideal form complete the original paradox of barbarization with which Marx began.²³³ Flourishing in the divided consciousnesses of an exchange-based culture, the cult of the ideal drives its victims deeper into loneliness and isolation. Aesthetic experience circles futilely, snared in the emotional redundancy which only a structural approach to the cultural context can unbind.

At the beginning of the century, Weber and Saussure began to criticize the fragmented and ulterior condition of the social sciences. The strategy which they applied is now called "structuralism,"²³⁴ a critical style characterized by

²³² Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977) p. 73

²³³ See above, n. 120

the profoundest concern for the cultural and emotional condition of Western society. By reconstructing the intrinsic social meaning encoded into cultural forms, critical structuralists hope to effect political change at the deepest "sub-stance" of experience. Only then, they believe, can the social justice for which Marx thundered and dreamed come to pass.

²³⁴ "Structuralism is not a new method; it is the awakened and troubled consciousness of modern thought." Michel Foucault, The Order of Things. p. 208

Chapter VI

STRUCTURALISM

Julia Kristeva describes a cultural sign as the linking term between two physical factors. The first factor is a "body proper" which receives the neurological sensation of the sign and translates it into a sensuous effect. The second factor is an "external pressure," the social, intellectual and political influences from the artist's life-world.²³⁵ The cultural sign mediates between the external pressures of a social context and the neurological context of the body-proper. Structuralism seeks to understand the process of mediation.

The delicate systemic relationship between a body and its life-world cannot be investigated exclusively from either the inner world of the "body proper" or the external world of social and material pressures. The fallacy of idealism is the pretension that the sensuality of the sign emerges from within a private self-contained world. Materialism runs toward the other extreme, over-emphasizing the "exter-

²³⁵ Julia Kristeva, Desire in Language. Leon S. Roudiez (ed.) trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980) "The triple register is made up of a pressure marking an outside, another linked to the body proper and a sign (p. 218)."

nal pressure" and thereby almost reducing art to a symptom or an act of allegory. Both the idealist and the materialist analysis fail as interpretive perspectives because they minimize the effectiveness of the symbolic link between sensuality and society. The origin of art is its dialectical compatibility between the body and a social context. No method which ignores or gives priority to one factor over the other can adequately discuss the meaning of a work of art.

Conventional aesthetics has been dominated by a method which the system theorist, Ludwig von Bertalanffy calls "linear." The linear model assumes that the behavior of a whole genre, collectivity or social unit takes the same form as the behavior of its most prominent parts.²³⁶ In a linear analysis, profits signify a healthy economy, great men determine social and political history and creative genius explains artistic creation. The linear approach cannot comprehend large systems consisting of parts in interaction.²³⁷ The ideal of the linear world-view, Bertalanffy wrote, is

²³⁶ Ludwig von Bertalanffy, General System Theory (New York: George Braziller, 1968) pp. 18-19

Bertalanffy's most concise discussion of system theory is contained in an earlier book, Robots, Men and Minds (New York: George Braziller, 1967) pp. 57-67 In Robots, he explains, "Systemic analyses are especially concerned with concepts and models arising from biological and behavioral sciences; and they are essentially interdisciplinary...." Then he strikes a keynote for cultural studies, "Phenomena different in content often show isomorphism in their formal structure (p. 63)."

²³⁷ Bertalanffy, General System. p. 19

that:

All phenomena are ultimately aggregates of fortuitous actions of elementary physical units. Theoretically, this conception did not lead to laws of the higher levels of reality, the biological, psychological and sociological. Practically, its consequences have been fatal for our civilization.²³⁸

Bertalanffy calls complex systems with many interacting components, "higher levels of reality." Multiple, low-level interactions cause effects to accumulate at "higher levels" of the system which require "systemic," as opposed to "linear" explanation. The key term in a systemic analysis is time. As Gregory Bateson writes:

Every given system embodies relations to time, that is, is characterized by time constants determined by the given whole. These constants are not determined by the equations of relationships between successive parts [i.e. a linear relation], but are emergent properties of the system. [emphasis added]²³⁹

Likewise, cultural signs are "emergent properties" of two systems in physical interaction: a body proper and a social context. Respecting this inner duality in the act of creation leads to as major a shift in aesthetics as in science. It leads, using Thomas Kuhn's definition, to a "paradigm shift" in the structure of knowledge.²⁴⁰

²³⁸ Bertalanffy, General System pp. 87-88

²³⁹ Gregory Bateson, Mind and Nature, A Necessary Unity (New York: Bantam Books, 1979) p. 119

²⁴⁰ Thomas Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions and its importance to this discussion is discussed in Chapter Seven.

A systemic theory overcomes the limitations of linear mechanics by giving the heretofore half metaphysical statement, "The whole is more than a sum of its parts," a clear operational meaning. Mechanical, domino-like relations, have given away in the twentieth century to systemic, field-like relations. Cultural studies ought to bring this change in the "sub-stance" of modern thought to bear upon the Fine Arts.

"Ultimately," Bertalanffy wrote, "the problem of human history looms as the widest possible application of the systems idea."²⁴¹ If the history of the Fine Arts is to be more than heteroclit knowledge of dates and techniques, then the system, Fine Arts, must be monitored in interaction with the social milieu from which it emerged. In this systemic relation, the question of formal essence becomes secondary to the question of formal significance. The form is "signified" in an historical field generated by the society from which it emerged.

One of the earliest and still the most successful application of a systemic theory to cultural studies occurred in Russian in the 1920s. Mikhail Bakhtin and the Russian "Formalists"²⁴² developed a methodology for reading the relation

²⁴¹ Bertalanffy, General System. p. 31

²⁴² This term stands in contrast to Anglo-American formalism where artworks are treated as historical objects in themselves and art forms (Painting, Music, Sculpture, Drama, etc.) pose questions about the development of

between literary form and social history. Drawing upon Saussure's linguistics, Bahktin proposed that conventional expressive forms, "speech-genres" as he called them, were related to the "objective conditions of social interaction" in which they arose.²⁴³ Bahktin argued that "literariness" does not rejuvenate word forms so much as it confronts the socially conventional feeling-tone associated with them. The literary use of a word, phrase or setting, if recognizable enough to be suitable for communication, must also generate a dialectical tension between the creative context as literature and the social context of utilitarian use. Tony Bennett writes that Bahktin:

Views the use of the word as part of a primarily class-based struggle for the terms in which reality is to be signified. Language, far from being a neutral horizon of fixed and given meanings, becomes an arena of class struggle as words are mobilized and fought for by different class-based philosophies.²⁴⁴

Thus, the focus of formal analysis after Bahktin includes the unconscious value system and the system of representations connected to that value system. Language art needs to be interpreted against this composite background of ideologically determined associations.

technique rather than questions about society and politics.

²⁴³ Tony Bennett, Formalism and Marxism (London: Methuen and Co., 1979) p. 80

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 80

Bakhtin and the Russian formalists had discovered a systemic relation between literary form and social history. Their knowledge of the work of Marx led them to postulate this relation, but, as we have seen, Marx was not able to develop a concept of aesthetics commensurate with his great economic critique. The methodological improvement which permitted the Formalists to proceed with the social analysis of aesthetic form came from the linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure.

Cultural studies owes a primary debt to Saussure. Tony Bennett writes that, "It would be difficult to overestimate the influence of Saussure on twentieth century thought."²⁴⁵ Saussure's linguistic theory has become one of the basic elements in structural analysis and criticism. "Nothing," Octavio Paz observes, "is more justified: language is not only a social phenomenon, but at the same time is the foundation of every society and man's most perfect social expression."²⁴⁶ Language has provided the model for the way symbol systems are elaborated and transmitted, just as language art provided the first model for a systemic approach to cultural forms.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ Bennett, Formalism. p. 69

²⁴⁶ Octavio Paz, Claude Levi-Strauss, trans. J.S. Bernstein and Maxine Bernstein (New York: Cornell University Press, 1970) p. 14

²⁴⁷ Mary Douglas, Natural Symbols, Explorations in Cosmology (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1970) "Ritual is generally highly coded. Its units are organized to standard types

The first decade of the twentieth century witnessed the birth of modern Linguistics, Physics and the Sociology of Knowledge. An improved aesthetic theory has also been part of this revolution, but it lies in fragments across the two disciplines: Linguistics and Sociology of Knowledge. The best modern interpreters of culture--Roland Barthes, John Berger, Fredric Jameson, Raymond Williams and Theodore Adorno-- make use of this rich interdisciplinary heritage. To appreciate the full quality of their work, we need to become acquainted with the complex intellectual arsenal which they creatively wield. We begin with Saussure's linguistics.

Saussure realized that social history correlates the surface of appearances, even in speech. His linguistic investigations--a triumph of good teaching over publication for its own sake--²⁴⁸ announced a revolution in the basic philosophy of, not only linguistics, but cultural analysis: a revolution in keeping with the philosophical and scientific revolt against Enlightenment mechanics also in progress at

in advance of use. Lexically, its meanings are local and particular. Syntactically, it is available to all members of the community. The syntax is rigid, it offers a small range of alternative forms. Indeed so limited does the syntactic range tend to be that many anthropologists find that a simple binary analysis is sufficient to elucidate the meanings of myth or ritual symbols. Basil Bernstein has suggested that his definitions should be applicable to other symbolic forms--he has suggested music (p. 54)."

²⁴⁸ Saussure's course in linguistics was published from students' notes by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye after Saussure's death in 1913.

the same time. The knower no longer can suppose that he is objectively detached from what can be known. The analytical tidal wave which submerged nineteenth century mechanics discovered that knower and known are dialectical accomplices in the relative reciprocity between consciousness and a specific historical context. The shock of this revolutionary insight still reverberates in Western thought.

Saussure invented a vocabulary which permitted the dialectical discussion of language forms. He realized that the social meaning of language remained obscure as long as its forms were idealized as values in themselves and held apart or aloof from social history. In working out this perception, Saussure correctly perceived that as long as language, the very hearth and home of social intercourse, remained a mystery, the social nature of the symbolic could never be successfully investigated.

The complicity between social history and the evolution of language appeared as seamless as the idealized vision of "pure" art. In response to the idealization of language forms, Saussure called for a science that studies the life of signs within society:

A science that studies the life of signs within society is conceivable [Saussure's emphasis], it would be a part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology: I shall call it Semiology (from Greek Semeion, "sign.")²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (ed.) trans. Wade

Saussure distinguished what he called "semiology" from the kinds of analysis which had preceded it:

The viewpoint which studies the sign-mechanism in the individual is the easiest method, but it does not lead beyond individual execution, and does not reach the sign, which is social.²⁵⁰

Where time is a factor, significant objects exist simultaneously in two different orders of experience. Saussure believed that all phenomena which are affected by the passage of time contain this "inner duality" of value. The adequate explanation of a symbol unifies these two orders into one systemic discourse. "Here as in political economy," Saussure wrote, "we are confronted with the notion of value; both sciences [political economy and linguistics] are concerned with a system for equating things of different orders." [Saussure's emphasis]²⁵¹ He named these two value orders the diachronic and the synchronic, concluding that:

Certainly all sciences would profit by indicating more precisely the coordinates along which their subject matter is aligned. Everywhere distinctions should be made, according to the following illustration between

1. The axis of simultaneities, (the synchronic), which stands for the relations of coexisting things and from which the intervention of time is excluded; and
2. The axis of successions (the diachronic) on which only one thing can be located at a time but upon which are located all the

Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959) p. 16

²⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 17

²⁵¹ Ibid., p. 103

things on the first axis together with their changes.²⁵²

The point of intersection between the diachronic and synchronic axes of experience defined what Saussure called the "signified" object. Without the concept of how an entity is "signified" in a synchronic field of simultaneous, existential experience, Saussure believed that "we constantly risk grasping only a part of the entity and thinking that we are embracing it in its totality."²⁵³

In themselves, diachronic [historical] events are always "accidental and particular." They "take on the appearance of absolute events only because they are realized within a system. The rigid arrangement of the system," Saussure concluded, "creates the illusion that the diachronic fact obeys the same rules as the synchronic fact."²⁵⁴ In Marcuse's more recent vocabulary, the rigid arrangement of the system reduces experience to an illusory "one-dimensionality."²⁵⁵ This illusion extends not just to politics, but to aesthetic perception as well. Structuralists call the rigid arrange-

²⁵² Ibid., pp. 79-80

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 103 Saussure is arguing for a new class of logic. "The old grammar," he said, "saw only the synchronic fact; linguistics has revealed a new class of phenomena; but that is not enough; one must sense the opposition between the two classes of facts to draw out all its consequences (p. 83)."

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 93

²⁵⁵ Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964)

ment of the diachronic event a "general grammar."²⁵⁶ Formal analysis of myth, art, law, pathology--all symbolic forms--use, to some degree, Saussure's concept of a general grammar. The synchronic system gives the diachronic event its immediate sense of significance.

Saussure's synchronic axis of simultaneity maps the deep ontological furniture of the semiotic universe. A heated debate within semiotic analysis has arisen over the origin and nature of this axis. Orthodox analysts like Chomsky, Levi-Strauss and Ernst Gombrich believe that the "ontics" or essence of being is innate, natural in the mind and prior to society. Critical structuralists like Williams, Foucault and Jameson refer back to Marx and argue that the deep synchronic structure of social symbolism derives from the exigencies of class struggle in bourgeois and pre-bourgeois society. The orthodox, bourgeois structuralist and the Marxist, critical structuralist define the semiological battlefield of contemporary formal criticism.

Following Emile Benveniste, Frank Lentricchia points out that the method and intentionality of the bourgeois formalists "have directed their inquiries into the status of discourse toward goals that seem at odds with the aims of the father of structuralism."²⁵⁷ From its inception, Saussure's

²⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 101

"To synchrony belongs everything called general grammar."

system expressed the determination that no semiological phenomenon exists apart from its manifestations as a "social fact."²⁵⁸

Critical structuralism regards linear analysis as one of the most repulsive characteristics of bourgeois society. Because critical structuralism has broken with linear positivism, part of its quarrel over the nature of the synchronic becomes an attack upon the logic and style of bourgeois explanations. A linear model gives the bourgeois structuralist faith that objectivity accumulates like silt on a river delta. He has confidence that the "holes" in his positivist universe will be filled by the progressive sedimentation of universal reason. The bourgeois structuralist affords himself this luxury because his cognitive style is appropriate for bourgeois society.

The critical structuralist, having made the political decision to reject the signifying system of bourgeois society, feels ethically compelled to include, condense and evoke the totality of which his analysis is, in part, a critique. His dialectical language, which looks into the diachronic and

²⁵⁷ Frank Lentricchia, After the New Criticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) p. 123. Our reading of Saussure agrees with Benveniste and Lentricchia. Saussure located in language, the most everyday social object in all experience, the general fact that, "Signs are a social product deposited in the brain of each individual." Saussure, Course. p. 23

²⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 77

synchronic together, makes his writing dense and sometimes even oracular. The abstract and expressionistic style of most critical structuralists like Foucault, Lacan, Eagleton, Derrida, Baudrillard, Jameson and the later Williams is difficult to understand. Since critical structuralism defines politics in the broadest and most inclusive terms, even including the act of perception, the critical structuralist acts out his determination that expression will not exclude, marginalize or procrastinate about the dialectical determination of experience.

This is the epistemology behind the difficulty of structural language, but there is another, more historical reason, as well. Saussure left his analysis without a concept of historical determination. In Saussure's opinion, the diachronic and synchronic were not co-ordered by any historical relation. Signification was left as a matter of pure chance and Saussure's famous Cours closes in historical indeterminacy.²⁵⁹

Because Saussure was unwilling or unable to address the sociology and politics of the axial relation he had defined, structural analysis was confined for a long time to linguistics and its related art form, literature. Saussure's structural language looks toward the future, but in his tolerance for possible "missignification," mistaken signification

²⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 231 "Permanence," Saussure writes, "results from sheer luck."

tion, or what, in Marxist terminology, is called "false consciousness," Saussure left his Cours an ideologically vulnerable text and his structural vocabulary limited to linguistics.

The Russian Formalists overcame this limitation by marrying Marxist philosophy to Saussure's system of analysis. Their synthesis began to explain how a "paradigm" or "a positive unconscious of knowledge,"²⁶⁰ correlates a symbol and its field of significance. The historical life of a symbol takes on its contemporary meaning (is signified) by the field of knowledge which characterizes a specific historical era. The Russian synthesis provides a model for a new system of aesthetic values, but it shared the limitations of all linear, Enlightenment systems. Its critique depended upon the existence of a "state of nature" against which to measure distortion, change and innovation. The human "need" for verbal communication gave language arts a standard that was not available in the musical and visual arts. Thus structural criticism to this day has been its own prisoner of language and a restless cellmate with the linear paradoxes of Enlightenment dissent.

Foucault demonstrates that the classical attitude assumes that the relations of signs to their content (their social significance) are guaranteed by a natural order of things in

²⁶⁰ Michel Foucault, The Order of Things (London: Tavistock, 1970) p. xi

themselves.²⁶¹ Marx's great dissent is based upon this natural guarantee. The classical attitude behaves as if its symbols are perfectly transparent to the system of significance which they represent. There is always a one to one correspondance between nature and form and the violation of that correspondance violates the natural order of things.

Critical consciousness in the twentieth century faces the social signification of natural form. The natural forms of an industrial society have been "re-signified" by a "synchronic" field of social relations generated in history, not nature. Saussure saw that the relations between symbol and significance had become crucial, but he avoided drawing his analysis into a theory of hegemony or a discussion of social signification in general. Such problems were beyond the pale of his linguistics.

Even with this cautious beginning, Saussure's work marks the breakdown of the classical system of knowledge. In the place of a mechanical one to one correlation between nature and society (an epistemological landscape in Renaissance perspective), Saussure substituted structural knowledge: knowledge of the gap between appearances (the sign) and significance (what the sign really signifies underneath appearances). Saussure's linguistic language participated in a revolutionary wavefront which extended from physics to visu-

²⁶¹ Michel Foucault, The Order of Things (London: Tavistock, 1970) pp. 66-68 & 240

al art.

Music is often used to illustrate the structural relation between a field (the synchronic) and a sign (the diachronic). Melody and harmony portray the two dialectical dimensions of the relation. The unfolding of the melody represents a diachronic event and the harmony corresponds to the "signification" of the event, that is, the way a "synchronic" field structures an event and gives it significance.²⁶²

The musical score on which all the parts are written provides a master key to the structural relation. How well one knows the score corresponds to the expanding categories of judgment discussed in Chapter One. A congenitally deaf person is incapable of judgment. A competent listener can recognize the instruments, the major themes and the major climactic episodes. The average performer enjoys effective instrumental knowledge of his part and understands how to slot his part in with the rest. When we move from instrumentally sufficient up to discriminating judgment, a larger and more inclusive understanding of the musical structure is required. Discriminating judgment sees how individual themes and harmonies are woven into larger patterns within the work. It notices harmonic transpositions, variations on themes, counterpoint, orchestration and recapitulations. Discriminating judgment appreciates the relation of similar

²⁶² Edmund Ronald Leach, Culture and Communication (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976) pp. 48-50

tonal contexts.

The analogy usually stops here, but the metaphor can be extended one step further into a third dimension which is often overlooked. Behind the simple structural analogy between melody and harmony, looms a large constant common to both structural dimensions of the score.

When one looks at a conductor's score, he discovers that many instruments play in different keys. One cannot know the score without understanding this disconcerting ambiguity within appearances. A clarinet, English Horn, French Horn and violin may be sounding notes in unison, even though they are reading different notes from their individual parts.

Centuries ago musicians discovered that it was advisable to standardize as nearly as possible the fingerings within instrument families. Since one player may have to play three different trumpets or two different kinds of clarinet in the same piece, the practical solution was to "transpose" the instrument rather than ask the player to learn different sequences of fingerings. This relation of production dictates a visual discrepancy across both the melodic and harmonic axes of representation. The notation of each instrument relates structurally to its place in the productive process, not to an abstract order dictated by the use of a conductor's score. The score embodies an historical relation of production. The discrepancies in notation derive

from a need which arises in the practical problem of performance. Performance praxis "co-orders" both the melodic and the harmonic axes of appearance. A productive relation has entered into the score and been embedded in it.

In this important classical sense, Marx "knew the score." However, his classical knowledge is insufficient because no pure form, no definitive text awaits decoding underneath the contradictory appearances of the relations of production. Beneath the discrepancies dictated by performance praxis there lies only a sign to which an appropriately acculturated "body proper" sensually responds. The senses recognize and respond to an abstract historical form that can only be considered "ideal" to the extent to which it is ideally suited for a specific historical context. The sensual linkage with the social sign eludes all classical critique, including the great Marxist dissent.

Marx could not have written, "The forming of the five senses is a labor of the entire history of the world,"²⁶³ unless he were aware of the power of the "synchronic" social field. However, Marx's anger at early capitalism led him away from the dialectical relation between history and the "body proper" into the most influential political polemic ever penned. An advanced industrial society faces a problem

²⁶³ Robert C. Tucker, (ed.) The Marx-Engels Reader "The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844" (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972) p. 75

Marx hinted at but did not confront: It faces its own positive reciprocity with the sign. Outside of extreme scarcity, society becomes its own "state of nature." This advanced challenge is, Dewey wrote, "That of recovering the continuity of aesthetic experience [meaning all emotional experience] with normal processes of living,"²⁶⁴ and it surpasses the logic of Enlightenment critique. It is phenomenon-logical: a human physical and historical in-dwelling within the power of the sign. "Phenomenon-logical" knowledge discovers "the central lack in which the subject experiences himself as desire."²⁶⁵

²⁶⁴ John Dewey, Art as Experience (New York: G. P. Putnam & Sons, 1934) p. 249

²⁶⁵ Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis. Jacques-Alain Miller (ed.) trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Penguin Books, 1973) p. 265

The body does not function normally without an intentional system. Contemporary evidence indicates that the intentional orientation of consciousness is received from a social field. Merleau-Ponty's Schneider had a sex, but no sexuality. Sneider, a shell-shock victim of World War I, had lost the capacity to remember meaning and intent. Though physically and mentally capable of every normal human function, he could not string behaviors together and hence was socially helpless. Given a list of commands which "programmed" him, for instance, to run an errand, Sneider would not recognize his own mother on the street. "The world," Merleau-Ponty wrote, "no longer has any physiognomy for Sneider (p. 132)." Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology as Perception trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962)

The historian, David E. Stannard, presented optical illusions to congenitally blind adults who had been sur-

The structural analogy with music invites a recapitulation of the classical blindspot in the Enlightenment system of knowledge. Marx, for example, "knows the score," but neither of his Hegelian absolutisms (the abstract "humanist" of 1844 or the concrete "scientist" of Capital)²⁶⁶ permit him to see the myriad ways in which a whole society dances to the same tune. Marx comprehends suppression, but not inscription; coercion, but not acculturation; pretext, but not context; bribery, but not co-optation; force but not power; stasis, but not status; hunger, but not longing; need, but never desire. Existential reality--deceptively smooth over the surface--betrays glacial fissures, chasms and crevasses which bruise, plummet and entrap those who attempt to preserve a classical attitude in a high industrial world. Clarifying the new signification structures that emotionally and pre-consciously connect symbols with their social significance has become an urgent field of knowledge since the industrial revolution.

gically given their sight. The newly sighted did not perceive the illusions. They had not learned to be fooled. Stannard also cites the work of Roy D'Andrade in Northern Nigeria. African children scored poorly on non-verbal I.Q. tests only because they had not been culturally oriented to see three-dimensional illusions in two dimensional representations upon a page. A sign only has life as the mediating term between a body proper and a social signification system. David E. Stannard, Shrinking History: On Freud and the Failure of Psychohistory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) pp. 128-131

²⁶⁶ See Chapter Three, Althusser and Anderson, n. 132; and Ollman and Gould, Chapter Three, nn. 173 & 174.

Bertalanffy observes that the paradigmatic or "epistemic relation" within eras of knowledge occasion "a parallelism of general cognitive principles."²⁶⁷ The communication paradoxes in Marx's work support Bertalanffy's observation. The word for the study of form, morphology,²⁶⁸ shows a cognitive parallel with nineteenth century science. Cognitive parallels like the independent discovery of the Calculus by Newton and Leibnitz, or the derivation of a theory of evolution by both Darwin and Wallace are famous examples. In music, the modern atonal setting of folk melodies by Ives in the United States and Bartok in Hungary and the parallel development of serial composition (12 tone row) by Josef Hauer and Arnold Schoenberg also illustrate parallel relations within historical eras.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 31

²⁶⁸ The Oxford English Dictionary calls the study of form, "morphology." The history of this word acts out an emerging systems consciousness across the nineteenth century. The serious analysis of formal structure began with early nineteenth century biology's concern with the classification of organisms. Between this preferred meaning (c. 1830) and the end of the nineteenth century, the study of form moves from a static classification system of like structures toward an evaluative system of comparative functions. This shift proves to be decisive. The emphasis upon dynamic instead of static forms heralded the twentieth century. By the 1890s the meaning of a "morphological investigation" meant "an axis, or axis of form for a system." A morphological axis expresses the concept which the Russian Formalists carried into literary analysis. Marx's work, spanning almost the same period, was part of a whole epistemological shift away from static categories toward an axis of function.

The origin of structural analysis illustrates a similar "parallelism of general cognitive principles." During the period Saussure was investigating the formal structures of language, Max Weber was motivated by a similar interest in social history. Weber did not use Saussure's vocabulary nor did Saussure use Weber's sociology of knowledge, but they each felt the need to rediscover culture on the social ground which signified it.²⁶⁹ A new world of industrial techniques and the relations arising from them had interposed itself between Western mankind and nature. Saussure and Weber responded to this new world by creating a new space for critical discourse.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ In a letter to Antoine Meillet, January 4, 1894 Saussure complained that, "The utter ineptness of current terminology, the need for reform, and to show what kind of an object language is in general-- these things over and over again spoil whatever pleasure I can take in historical studies, even though I have no greater wish than not to have to bother myself with these general linguistic considerations."

Fredric Jameson, The Prison-House of Language (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972) p. 13

²⁷⁰ Terence Hawkes' splendid study, Structuralism and Semiotics (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1977) traces the origin of structuralism back to Vico's The New Science (1725). Hawkes' enthusiasm for the chase has stopped short of a relation through Adam, but not by much. Vico's principle of verum factum: "That which man recognizes as true (verum) and that which he, himself, has made (factum) are one and the same (p. 13)," begins positivism. Foucault has located the turning point toward a structural theory of knowledge approximately 75 years later when, "One day, Cuvier toppled the glass jars of the Museum, smashed them open and dissected all the forms of animal visibility that the

We observed in Chapter Three how Marx unconsciously exploited the "inner duality of the sign" in constructing his polemical indictments of bourgeois society. Marx exhibited a pre-conscious sensitivity to this phenomenon, but he did not systematically analyze it at the macro level. Weber did. Weber's attention to politics is not as conventional as Marx's, because Weber consciously introduces epistemic relations into the study of history. For Weber, culture, not politics, becomes the primary area of social adaptation and survival. Weber proposes that culture, the mysterious social/somatic intersection, undergirds the visible ideological superstructure of any human system of material production. The regnant political system is culturally inscribed upon emotion at the same time as its buzzwords and fraternal shibboleths are etched upon language. This broader emphasis in Weber's work adds an important corollary to dialectical analysis. It breaks with Enlightenment determinism and prevents dialectical analysis from becoming another sub-system of classical mechanics.

The relation between social context and form is neither an ideal nor a material determination. The relation in question is the intersection of two historical systems. A

Classical age had preserved in them. This iconoclastic gesture, which Lamarck could never bring himself to make...is a mutation in the natural dimension of Western culture." Michel Foucault, The Order of Things (London: Tavistock, 1970) p. 137. Saussure, and to an even greater extent, Weber, extended Cuvier's iconoclastic gesture into language and culture.

diachronic event: a person, form, or institution, intersects an historical (synchronic) field which gives the event its interpersonal significance. The relation between event and field was negative for Marx. The capitalist system denies, voids and suppresses the potential for species consciousness. Weber begins the systematic²⁷¹ discussion of the dialectical reciprocity between a social field and its cultural signs.²⁷²

Weber carried cultural studies past the contradictory grammar of appearances and into the dialectical drama of the cultural context. Weber's work closes the classical gap in the "inner duality of the sign," because he extended social analysis into the whole socio-symbolic order. Culture becomes the essential link in the process of adaptation and collective survival.

Structural analysis characterizes all of Weber's work and one of the clearest examples has also been one of the most neglected. Weber's The Rational and Social Foundations of

²⁷¹ Nietzsche begins the discussion. The formidable effect of self-consciousness applied to one's own social inscription drove Nietzsche, a philologist by training, to psychotic delusions in which he believed he was being torn apart. They were only physical delusions, their truth lay in the primordial "acting out" across his body of a cultural norm which was coming apart at the seams.

²⁷² Freud's system was the last gasp of Enlightenment mechanics. His valves, sluices and "cut-offs" for libido are linear, not systemic. In 1913, Jung broke with Freud because the latter's system had no aesthetic dimension. Freud was an even bigger emotional blockhead than Marx.

Music, written in the vocabulary of an extinct Victorian musicology, argues that Western music embodies the same structural dynamic as the society in which it evolved. Weber believed that the structure of Western music is isomorphic to the structure of the Western political economy. Foundations, finished in 1911 and published in 1921, one year after Weber's death, has still not received the critical attention which it merits.

In Foundations Weber extends into music his ideal-typical categories of individualistic charisma and the collective rationalism of bureaucracy. The "charismatic principle" in music is "the irrationality of melody.... Chordal rationalization lives only in continuous tension with the melodicism which it can never completely devour."²⁷³ With this theme Weber announces the first discussion in Western intellectual history organized (tentatively, of course) around the positive reciprocity between a society and its cultural signs. In a dense discussion, often quite labored and opaque, Weber forges a thin connecting argument which opens up a new perspective on Culture. Foundations, more than any other single work, begins the formal discipline: Cultural Studies.

²⁷³ Max Weber, The Rational and Social Foundations of Music. trans. and ed. by Don Martindale, Johannes Riedel, Gertrude Neuwirth (Urbana: Southern Illinois University Press, 1958) p. 10

"Generally," Weber writes, "the fourth is the fundamental melodious while the interval of the fifth is often the basis of instrumental tuning."²⁷⁴ Melody is a vocal creation, and harmony is an instrumental one. The structural tension between these two forces had a unique outcome in the West: polyphony.²⁷⁵ Nowhere else did harmonic-polyphonic music develop to anything remotely approaching the degree of complexity and suppleness that it reached in the West. What, Weber asks, could be the reasons?²⁷⁶

The development of a systematic notation no doubt accelerated the process, but the origins of notation lie in the same fundamental process which Weber locates at the foundations of Western social history. "Note symbols were quite indispensable for instrumental accompaniment."²⁷⁷ Weber regards the evolution of instruments as the distinctive organizational principle behind the evolution of Western polyphony, but his fundamental concern runs deeper than this.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 52

²⁷⁵ Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians defines "polyphony" as "The simultaneous sounding of two or more notes of different pitch."

²⁷⁶ Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. and ed. by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1949) "In the history of music... its central problem is: why did the development of harmonic music from the universally popularly developed folk polyphony take place only in Europe and in a particular epoch, whereas everywhere else the rationalization of music took another and most often quite opposite direction (p. 30)."

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p.84

Weber regards the effect of instrumental rationalization upon the "nature" of musical perception and taste. Tonal rationalization proceeded from an instrumental base, but this rationalization also revolutionized aesthetic perception and the relations of Western musical production.

In every other world musical tradition, musical instruments are either modeled after the human voice or natural sounds and are intended to imitate vocal or animal sounds.²⁷⁸ Only the West made the opposite decision to model the voice after its instruments. This collectively unconscious decision illustrates a characteristic of the West's "inner-worldly 'asceticism.'"²⁷⁹ Only the West chose to live in emulation and self-transcendence; not only economically, but in competition with the relations of production which it, itself, had established. The goal of this attitude--this asceticism--was never balance or tranquility. It was, rather, the mastery of the external world. Western culture,

²⁷⁸ Curt Sachs, Our Musical Heritage (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1955) p.4 Sachs refers to the origins of music in word imitation [logogenic] or passion induced [pathogenic] cries. Weber proposes that the West is technogenic, or perception patterned after its tools. "In the West," Weber writes, "the purpose of giving musical form to 'passion,' lay not in the impulse to artistic expression but rather in the technical means of expression." Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences. trans. and ed. by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1949) pp. 30-31

²⁷⁹ Max Weber, The Sociology of Religion. trans. Ephraim Fischhoff, with an Introduction by Talcott Parsons (Boston: Beacon Press) p. 183

from the beginning, was in this regard, unlike any other in the world, not only in appearance, but in the social code which was structured into it. "Western culture," Sahlins observes, "evolves on an eternal and formal rationality of maximization."²⁸⁰ Weber located one of the earliest and most pervasive signs of this ascetic system in Western instrumental music.

Weber argued that the physical base of perception and production had both evolved in relation to this signifying system. The vocal capacity of singers in the Western tradition had increased in range through the human association with instrumental techniques. This happened in no other culture. Weber notes that yodeling, with its large range, probably originated under the influence of Alpine horns.²⁸¹ "The range of melody," he wrote, "is small in all genuinely primitive systems...but under the influence of instruments the ambitus of tones utilized was extended beyond the octave."²⁸² Weber reaches the conclusion that the instrumental orientation of Western culture led to a radical restructuring of aesthetic "nature." Even the intonation of singers, he observes, shows whether they were trained at the piano or the violin, for the latter have a much better feel for the

²⁸⁰ Marshall Sahlins, Culture and Practical Reason (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976) p. 19

²⁸¹ Weber, Foundations p. 58

²⁸² Ibid.

pitch center of the tone.²⁸³

Weber's structural analysis brought culture to the front and center as the most important element of socio-political adaptation. In Weber's analysis, the political dimension of social behavior expanded to include Culture. He saw that social and political adaptation include the forms of sensory adaptation which are "classical" for the individual, that is, the forms which he takes for granted as natural and corresponding to human nature.

The subliminal response to total environment has overwhelming importance. Whether the environment is a wilderness, an industrial economy, a sporting contest of a concert hall, the moment of performance demands a conditioned response. Innumerable responses must be performed with concentration, but not conscious calculation. His culture offers the most sociable of species this necessary opportunity for interpersonal classical conditioning.

Weber discovered many examples of a systemic structural relation between history, culture and personal emotion. He offered Gothic architecture as one dramatic example. "The Gothic," he wrote:

Created a technical rationalism...that made possible hitherto unsuspected artistic achievements and then dragged sculpture into a new feeling for the body, inspired by the new treatment of spaces and

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 123

surfaces in architecture."²⁸⁴

Weber's work in cultural studies, like Saussure's in linguistics, displaces the classical ideal and relocates cultural form from a pre-given in human nature to a social object for historical inquiry.

Few cultural assumptions escaped Weber's rigor. "It should be remembered," he admonished, "that the belief in the value of scientific truth is the product of certain cultures and is not a product of man's original nature."²⁸⁵ Accompanied by sufficient rigor of analysis, Weber's position did not lead to blind, anomic relativism. Carried into concrete analytical specifics, Weber began to bridge the dialogic tension between social history and the effect of the cultural sign. Cultural studies was broadened to include the relation between "nature" and the social context.

This structural perspective does not reject the economic. Quite the contrary, Weber asserts that "even the ends of religious and magical actions are predominantly economic."²⁸⁶ Weber's structural perspective asserts the epistemological interaction of the economic and cultural forms of social ad-

²⁸⁴ Weber, Method. pp. 94,80-81

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 110

²⁸⁶ Weber, Sociology. p. 1 Talcott Parsons calls Weber's The Sociology of Religion, "The most crucial contribution of our century to the comparative and evolutionary understanding of the relations between religion and society and of society and culture generally." This judgment is, in my view, correct.

aptation. Physical survival and evolution rest upon a human nature socially selected through its organization and development within both a system of material production and a corresponding system of signs. The dialectical relation within this cultural paradigm, defines the existential condition of the individual in history.

The limitations of language affected Weber also. His most articulate and widely circulated comments sound as if they exhalt asceticism. Remarks which should be read as the beginning of a systemic approach to cultural studies, have led many, including Talcott Parsons, to polarize Weber's work in methodological opposition to Marx. This reading of Weber commits the classic mistake of linear analysis by reducing Weber's methodological contribution to his personal politics. From a culturalist perspective, Weber continues the project Marx founded because he carries dialectical analysis into aesthetics and culture. Culture becomes as documentable an area of social history as economics.

A social sign system gives collective adjustment a necessary and indispensable emotional base. Thus Weber believed that the covenant concept in Judeo-Christian religion evolved as the cultural signification system which held together a basic economic rift in Hebrew society. David had established a city kingdom in the midst of the Judaic stock-breeders who provided his political power base. Weber writes:

The covenant concept was important for Israel because the ancient social structure of Israel in part rested essentially on a contractually regulated, permanent relationship of landed warrior tribes as legally protected metics....Bedouins and semi-nomads had "produced" an order whose establishment could be considered as something like the "ideological exponent" of its economic conditions. This form of historical materialistic construction is inadequate....The point is rather, that once such an order was established, the life conditions of these strata gave it by far the greater opportunity to survive in the selective struggle for existence....Once the religious fraternization had proven its efficiency as a political and economic instrument of power and was recognized as such, it contributed, of course tremendously to the diffusion of the pattern.²⁸⁷

Economic reality occasioned the covenant system, but the culture-system which was elaborated from it surpassed the original conditions upon which it had been based. The covenant culture provided the social, political and emotional basis for successfully dwelling within the economic reality which had occasioned it. The culture of the covenant was a creative adaptation to the economic reality of ancient Israel. The covenant system was an instrument of physical survival which consolidated certain survival gains and made others possible, even as it closed off certain other avenues of socio-economic evolution. In situations such as these, "Myths," Weber writes, "were of interest only when functioning as paradigms."²⁸⁸ The covenant relation provided the Hebrew paradigm for socio-economic adaptation and survival.

²⁸⁷ Max Weber, Ancient Judaism, trans. and ed. Hans Gerth and Don Martindale (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1952) p. 79

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 228-9

This relationship could only be effective if it were both an emotional and physical system of adjustment. Thus the covenant had a systemic effect upon Hebrew culture and society. The Rabbinical law was filtered through it as well as the folk mores and the high culture of Hebrew festivals and ethnic celebrations.

The formal sign carries an "inner duality." It rationalizes a situation, gives it logical contemporary relevance; but it also lives in the development of the senses. The sign has an historical life: feelings, attitudes and loyalties evolve through it. The historical life of the sign constitutes the "pre-formation system" Kant anticipated and dreaded.²⁸⁹ The continuing social life of the sign leaves an historic deposit of manners, mores and values that teach the internalization of the social code.

²⁸⁹ Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason. trans. D. M. D. Meiklejohn (London: George Bell, 1878) p. 102 Kant is the Anselm of bourgeois society. His famous critique is actually the ontological proof for the necessary and indispensable existence of the bourgeois mind. Kant wrote, "It is quite possible that someone may propose a species of preformation-system of pure reason --a middle way between the two, i.e., that the categories [of pure reason] are neither innate and first a priori principles of cognition, nor derived from experience, but are merely subjective aptitudes for thought implanted in us contemporaneously with our existence...The fact that the categories would in this case entirely lose that character of necessity which is essentially involved in the very conception of them, is a conclusive objection to it [i.e. a "pre-formation system"]. Kant was reasoning outside social history. Economic adjustment always gives a society's "principles of cognition" a "character of necessity." Marx showed this. Weber carried the "character of necessity" into culture.

The historical life of the sign leaves no phylogenetic deposit upon the collective mind of the species in so far as we can tell at this time, but its agency is so effective that its power is not directly amenable to reason or legalistic argumentation. The historical life of the sign moves into the senses on the other side of reason, without in most cases disturbing it. The historic culture composes the other half of socio-economic adaptation and the process of analytical reason finds it fascinating, but difficult to explain or even, in some cases, to take seriously. Yet this partner to reason, the historic sign system (the Culture), does half the work of socialization, shares half the load of adjustment and focuses half the significance of adaptation. It is not necessary to believe or rationally understand the civics and economics of one's life-world in order to participate successfully in the socio-economic order. The historical truth embodied in the Culture permits a kind of "pre-formed" consciousness to carry on. Physical life proceeded for millenia without any knowledge of physiology, and language developed without any knowledge of linguistics, or even academic grammar. Some of us use television sets, telephones and automobiles with hardly a clue about electronics or mechanics. It is equally possible to grow up and mature in a culture with no conscious knowledge of how it works or why Cultural forms are important.

Undoubtedly the most famous passage in all of Weber's work is also an example of the inner dualism of the cultural sign. in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber observes:

The care for external goods should only lie on the shoulders of the saint like a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment. But fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage.²⁹⁰

As in Foundations, a way of knowing not only reflects its social context, but it also executes a formal sentence upon the physical bodies that are attempting to adapt to that context. In this famous passage, the Puritan "cage" is not the weight of social responsibility. Nor is it the bureaucratic denial of immediate gratification. The "cage" is far stronger and in the long run, much worse. The cloak becomes a "cage" by force of the formal meaning the subject introduces from his social order. Weber identified the formal meaning system as a primary area of historical coherence and designated that system: Culture!²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. trans. Talcott Parsons (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1930) p. 181

Parsons translates the German, Stahlhartes Gehäuse, as "iron cage." The German phrase, more accurately translated, "casing as hard as steel" denotes the character armor taken on as a breastplate of righteousness by the Calvinist.

²⁹¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Adventures of the Dialectic. trans. Joseph Bien (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1973) p. 204

Merleau-Ponty writes, "The question is to know whether, as Sartre says, there are only men and things or whether there is also the interworld, which we call history, symbolism, truth-to-be-made. If one sticks to the

It goes without saying, that the politics and academic amenities of a society organized around linear, mechanistic reasoning work militantly against moments of dialectical synthesis. Contemporary culture has narcissistically suppressed its own origins in a normative paradigm of technique and power. Intellectuality and aesthetics now suffer the most dangerous emotional imbalance because they cannot comprehend or experience their birth under the sign of instrumental rationality and dominance.

Formal, linear idealism rests on a spurious notion of the individual who remains in, but supposedly can also somehow separate himself from, his social ground of being. By attributing to individuality an "ontic" (essential) status, a covertly idealistic notion assumes that power seizes, represses or distorts something which is subjectively already there. Foucault advises that the individual in his historical context:

Is not a pre-given entity which is seized on by the exercise of power. The individual is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies."²⁹²

[classical] dichotomy,...then we are condemned to an incredible tension (p. 200)...With the name "culture," Max Weber identified the primary coherence of all histories (p. 204)."

²⁹² Michel Foucault, Archaeology of Knowledge. trans. a. M. Sheridan-Smith (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972) p. 203

Critical structural analysis can expose the increasing number of instances in which the Culture conservatively disseminates the effects of political dominance and extend aid to other, more positive instances of life-affirmation and species adaptation.

The social reconstruction of reality cannot be accomplished by a method which begins with the assumption that power only plays the most technically advanced con-game. This assumption reduces history to the interpersonal context of a used-car lot. The social order of things is saturated with socio-political adaptation long before any naked encounter with the conventional forms of political power. A social stream of consciousness has already composed an ethnographic foundation for personal experience. The cultural insertion of a "human nature" into society creates a small scale world historical event which can only be comprehended in its dialectical moments of collision and collusion with a whole historical paradigm of knowledge.

Aesthetics casts the physical body into the field of social signification. The historical trace of the path of the senses across this field is a sign, gesture and dramatic event. Cultural experience breaks being across a signification as palpable as if the life-world were a lathe of God. The classical ego conforms the shards of its nature to the social power which historically commands and socially signifies it.

Without the phenomenology of the spirit, humanity as we know it would not be possible and no closet transcendentalism lurks beneath such an appeal. The danger to a coherent system of thought arises when the phenomenology of the cultural sign is idealized outside social history. Then culture is staged under an intentional system which no longer serves the process of social evolution and community survival which it was its purpose to promote. Under this dangerous condition, aesthetic experience achieves nothing more than the transcendent expression of a worn-out normality.

The economic take-off of the West also meant that the cultural sign's visible continuity with nature was shattered. When the meaning of the sign and its appearance were separated, this splitting meant that classical form had become its own iron cage. It became a voice which uttered that which was no longer understood in an attempt to transcend that which could no longer be expressed. The contemporary creative artist's dissatisfaction with perspectival art and triadic harmony grows out of the nature of the social relation which the classical sign can no longer comprehend.

The culture of the absolute spirit acts out the dilemma of Weber's ideally typical Puritan. Classical, bourgeois culture has become the "affirmative 'culture'"²⁹³ which

²⁹³ Herbert Marcuse, Negations, trans Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968) p. 94

transcendently confirms a normative social reality. The culture of the iron cage has forsaken the role and responsibility of an authentic cultural behavior. It no longer attunes the senses and alerts the body-mind to its own being in the world. "Iron cage" culture, the idealized culture of the absolute spirit, has been subverted into its opposite. It has become an instrument of habituation and control.

Velasquez' painting, Las Meninas, opens up the linear closure of aesthetic experience for the French philosopher and historian, Michel Foucault. In Las Meninas, Foucault writes, "We are observing ourselves being observed by the painter."²⁹⁴ In the painting, the subject's existence is only inferable, though every line of sight indicates the objective reality of the King and his consort who are sitting for the portrait. The subjects of the painting "appear" only vaguely in a small mirror image, buried surreally in the far background. The kingly essence, his presence and signifying power are literally represented by his minions--his 'subjective' presence. The king's reality is visible through the subjective reality of his world. It is just so.

In the Chapter, "Affirmative Character of Culture," Marcuse writes: "Its decisive characteristic is the assertion of a universally obligatory, eternally better and more valuable world that must be unconditionally affirmed: a world essentially different from the actual world of the daily struggle for existence, yet realizable by every individual for himself "from within," without any transformation of the state of fact."

²⁹⁴ Michel Foucault, Order of Things, p. 16

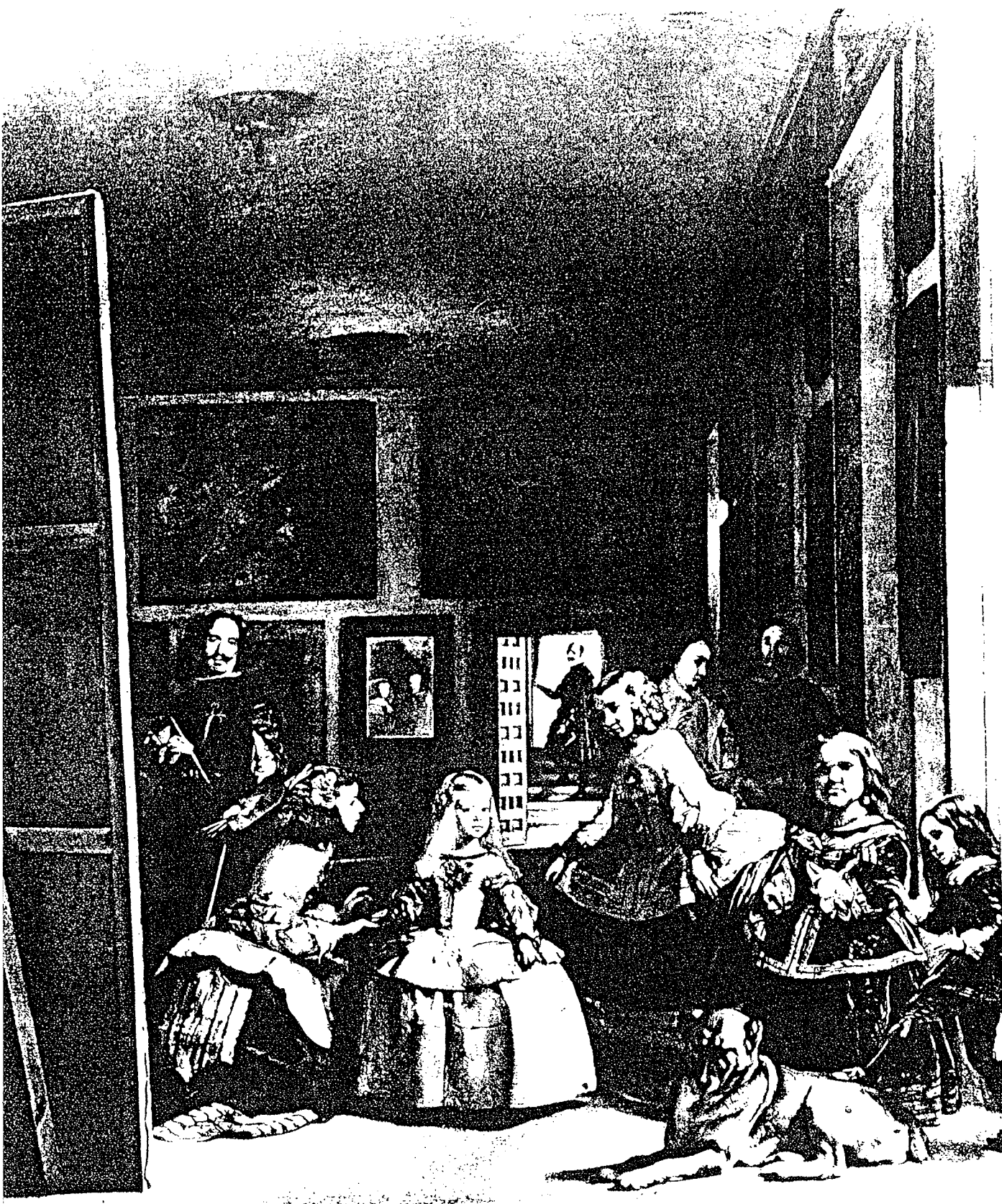


Figure 6.]

Las Meninas

The phenomenology of social experience is discovered in physical subjectivity. To understand this, we must see the King without his body. Critical structural analysis addresses this crisis of subjective hegemony within the physical world.

Kurt Wolff specifies the challenge facing cultural studies:

All men draw their being from their time...If somebody had told me this before, I should have answered, "Why, of course, obviously." But this would have been unavailing sterile knowledge, like that of the clever patient in psychoanalysis. Now like the patient who has an insight, I am committed to its truth. Before, it would have been theoretical knowledge; now it is practical knowledge.²⁹⁵

The "flesh, this interiorly worked-over mass" is enigmatic and unknown until we realize that history has constituted it "as the concrete emblem of a general manner of being."²⁹⁶ There is no ahistorical "I." Consciousness is introjected social process, internalized everyday intentionality. As Edward Hall concludes, "What has been thought of as mind is actually internalized culture."²⁹⁷

²⁹⁵ Kurt H. Wolff, Surrender and Catch (Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1976) p. 145

²⁹⁶ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Visible and Invisible. Claude Lefort (ed.) trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968) p. 145

²⁹⁷ Edward T. Hall, Beyond Culture (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1976) p. 192

Sartre's statement is as true for the cultural historian as for the physicist:

The only theory of knowledge which can be valid today is one which is founded on that truth of microphysics: the experimenter is a part of the experimental system.²⁹⁸

The social structures which in-form the classical "I" make this so. Social history reticulates the "flesh" into a life-world. A structural critique of Cultural forms attempts to penetrate the depth of that network affiliation and to widen the "inner duality of the sign" to include every area of C/cultural adaptation within its scope.

In this chapter we have looked at the birth of structural criticism in Linguistics and Sociology of Knowledge. The structural approach to culture discovered, contrary to Marx, that material necessity does not suppress the meaning of its society's ideal forms. Material necessity "signifies" cultural forms and lends them a force resembling an immutable and eternal law.

Weber and Saussure made a decisive advance over the old Enlightenment, "human end-in-itself," which had limited Marx's analysis to a denunciation of cultural negation. Even so, Weber's brilliant interdisciplinary perspective suffered from an important limitation. "Weber's doctrine of value-relevance (or knowledge-constitutive interests)," Roy

²⁹⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, Search for a Method. trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Vintage Books, 1968) p. 32

Bhaskar writes, "suffers from the defect that it leaves the source of values (or interests) unexplained."²⁹⁹ Talcott Parsons, perhaps Weber's staunchest English language supporter, admits that Weber's explanations of historical transition between forms and periods is rather "ad hoc."³⁰⁰ These limitations reveal themselves in the famous phrase from Weber's description of the Puritan iron-cage, "Fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage." The Puritan's "fate" was forged in a smithy Fredric Jameson has aptly called, "the political unconscious."³⁰¹ Weber's personal conservatism and love for classical culture made it too painful for him to dive any deeper into the problem of Western culture.³⁰² Contemporary structural criticism has had to carry Marx's sharp eye for the negation into Weberian struc-

²⁹⁹ Roy Bhaskar, The Possibility of Naturalism (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979) p.71

³⁰⁰ Talcott Parsons, The Sociology of Religion. trans. Ephraim Fischhoff, with an Introduction by Talcott Parsons (Boston: Beacon Press) p. lxxvii

³⁰¹ Fredric Jameson, The Political Unconscious (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981)

³⁰² Arthur Mitzman, The Iron Cage (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970) Weber's intellectual honesty racked his own life like an Ibsen tragedy. He suffered melancholic depressions which led to intermittent institutionalization from 1898 to 1902 (just before the publication of The Protestant Ethic), suffered bouts of impotence and struggled fitfully with his aristocratic attitude toward life. Mitzman writes, "Weber was a Calvinist who feared any lapse from steady labor bore the risk of erschlaffen (relaxation), that loathesome condition of the damned in general and his father in particular (p. 50)." Weber endured the tragedy of Western culture as a pox upon his soul. Mitzman concludes that, "The psychological underpinning of the Victorian ethic of transcendence would

tural inquiry in order to see what Weber was loathe to admit--the dialectical relations between political systems and aesthetic experience.

have to cease or all Europe would become a madhouse (p. 304)." Weber's "personality problems" were the result of intellect and courage looking itself resolutely in the eye.

Chapter VII

THE CULTURAL PARADIGM

Structuralism specified two challenges for social history. The first challenge was to broaden Weber's sociology of knowledge in order to include other aspects of social experience like aesthetics, the workplace, sexuality, the family, and recreation and leisure. In Eike Gebhardt and Andrew Arato's words, this challenge meant, "to move beyond Weber in the spirit of Marx."³⁰³ It meant adding Marx's impeccable eye for negation to Weber's structural sociology. Reich, Fromm and Perls continued the psychological dimension of structural analysis. Braverman, Noble, and Maccoby have studied the workplace. Yeo, Thompson and Ewen have done excellent work in the areas of recreation and leisure.

These outstanding examples ought to have stimulated recognition of a second problem which is equally as important to disciplinary research. This is the challenge which was inspired most directly by the work and example of Ferdinand

³⁰³ Weber's "key concepts," Andrew Arato writes, "provide the cultural and political context of the 'iron cage' that Marx largely neglected... It was to be the unsolved task of Lukacs and all of critical Marxism to use Weber against Marxist orthodoxy and yet to move beyond Weber in the spirit of Marx." Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (ed.) The Essential Frankfurt School Reader (New York Urizen Books, 1978) p. 191

de Saussure. Saussure's first love was teaching and his original contribution to research was the explanation and clarification of general methodological problems. The "cognitive parallelism" between Weber and Saussure demonstrates the inescapable tandem relation between primary research and the discussion of methodology.

Weber and Saussure did both empirical and methodological research, but Weber's forte was the production of numerous historical illustrations of structural relationships. Saussure's forte was the explanation and clarification of structural methodology. The second structural challenge passed on to us by the founders of structuralism is to broaden the methodological discussion begun by Saussure in order to include other aspects of social experience in addition to language. To amend Gebhardt and Arato's formula quoted earlier, this challenge means "to move beyond Weber in the spirit of Marx," with the clarity and plain prose precision of Saussure.

Regrettably, the methodological investigations which fulfill this second challenge have not been as widely read, appreciated or applied as the empirical research which has broadened structuralism's outreach. This situation is another profound paradox, because without a common language with which to share discoveries, debate conclusions and conversationally develop ideas, critical inquiry stagnates or degenerates into quibbles.

This chapter highlights two of the most important post-Weberian structuralists, whose contribution to methodology has made structural analysis so clear, so intrinsic to scholarship and most importantly, so conversationally accessible, that the fragmentation of consciousness characteristic of Enlightenment culture, becomes untenable. These two important twentieth century contributors to structural methodology are Thomas Kuhn and Gregory Bateson.

Kuhn's and Bateson's work has been intensely appreciated by a small coterie of scholars, has been more widely debated by an eclectic cross-section of historians and sociologists of knowledge, but has never been synthesized as part of an historical development in the history of ideas. It is to that synthesis which we now turn.

In this century, the urgency of the relation between consciousness and society has generated concrete techniques for dialectical representation and analysis. A "cognitive parallelism" of dialectical discourses has developed in symbolic logic, critical sociology, phenomenology and communication psychology. However, the textual density of these specialty areas sometimes proves taxing. The speciality discourses of critical theory have not always developed in full consciousness of the need to teach and persuade. In other instances, especially psychology, a full grasp of the critical text may require practical experiences which are

not readily available. For at least these two reasons, the paradigm model is preferable to these other, more specialized and existentially inclusive discourses, such as Sartrean phenomenology, Lacanian psychology or the Marxist sociology of Raymond Williams.

In Cultural Studies the not inconsiderable disagreement over this matter derives in large part from a misrepresentation of what is really unknowable about the aesthetic experience. Though personal taste may defy explanation, the symbolic forms of an era are historical documents which manifest a high degree of structural similarity. The American sociologist, Robert Nisbet, observes, "There are, quite evidently, 'paradigms' in Kuhn's sense, in the history of literature and all the arts."³⁰⁴

Thomas Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions outlines a basic phenomenology of the socio-somatic intersection characteristic of perceptual eras in general and aesthetic events in particular. Kuhn's concept of historical paradigms surpasses the false dualisms of classical, linear explanation.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ Robert Nisbet, Sociology as an Art Form (New York: Oxford Press, 1976) p. 31

³⁰⁵ Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, Vol. II #2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962) "Close historical investigation of a given specialty at a given time discloses a set of recurrent and quasi-standard illustrations of various theories in their conceptual, observational and instrumental applications. These are

Discussing the relation of perceptual revolution to changes of world-view, Kuhn notes the "switch in visual gestalt"³⁰⁶ which transforms the uninitiated student into the knowing scientist:

Looking at a contour map, the student sees lines on paper, the cartographer a picture of a terrain. Looking at a bubble-chamber photograph, the student sees confused and broken lines, the physicist a record of familiar subnuclear events.³⁰⁷

The scientist's vision has been accultured to a new way of seeing. Neither the nature of his environment nor the instruments of science have, by themselves, fixed this new perceptual gestalt. It "is determined jointly," Kuhn writes, "by the environment and the particular normal-scientific tradition that the student has been trained to pursue."³⁰⁸ A dialectical process between nature and technique has produced a new perceptual relation.

One of the most important applications of Kuhn's work indicates how bad problem solving habits creep into disciplinary judgment. Kuhn argues that the dialectical process of a "switch in visual gestalt" has been flattened out from historical consciousness by textbook misrepresentation. Linear historicism has dematerialized the perceptual revolu-

the community's paradigms, revealed in its textbooks, lectures, and laboratory exercises (p. 43)."

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 111

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 112

tion which lies behind scientific discovery. Linear explanation attributes a false inevitability to science, hiding the nature of its achievements under a teleological fallacy which makes invisible the revolutionary "switches" in perception that make scientific discoveries possible. This teleological fallacy makes the real revolutionary quality of science invisible, because it denies the structural reality of era-breaking, paradigmatic revolutions in the history of scientific consciousness.

Linear misrepresentation not only mystifies real processes, but it actually threatens scientific progress. "If positivistic restrictions are taken literally," Kuhn writes, "the mechanism that tells the scientific community what problems may lead to fundamental change must cease to function."³⁰⁹ The humanist heart of Kuhn's important book exposes a dangerous contradiction at the center of conventional judgment.

Kuhn has located a dialectical process which applies, not only in science, but in a number of seemingly unrelated fields. Within seven years after Scientific Revolutions, Kuhn had realized some of the other implications of his work:

In much of the book the term "paradigm" is used in two different senses. On the one hand, it stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a

³⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 101

given community. On the other, it denotes one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science.³¹⁰

The larger implication of Kuhn's historical discovery is that perception acts out a circular relation between the two kinds of paradigms he described. The general constellation of "beliefs, values, techniques, and so on," are the "sociological paradigm." The models or examples of "concrete puzzle-solutions" are the paradigm of "exemplary past achievements." The relation between the two kinds of paradigms are significant. The sociological paradigm organizes meaning and significance while the exemplary paradigm supplies the concrete object through which meaning is passed.

³¹⁰ Ibid., "Postscript to the 1970 Edition," p. 175 The word, paradigm, can generally be applied in one of three different ways:

1. The "exemplary paradigm," meaning a concrete technique or experimental model.
2. The theoretical concept, paradigm, as a "hypothetico-deductive model" which advances the comprehension of dialectical process.
3. The historical paradigm: a temporally determined era of perception.

The text uses the phrase, "concept of the paradigm" or "structure of the paradigm" when referring to the theoretical concept, paradigm, as a deductive model with which to deduce historical generalizations about the relation between perception and society. "Paradigm" or "our paradigm" refers to the historical paradigm: an era of perception ordered under a certain relation of production and perpetuated by the intentional system appropriate for those relations. The "exemplary paradigm" is also called a "concrete puzzle-solution" or an "exempla-

Kuhn shows that when the basis of judgment shifts away from a systemic evaluation of the effectiveness of the larger, "sociological paradigm" and relies only upon the model of exemplary past achievements, extremely deleterious effects may result. Such analysis constitutes a practical reversal and blockage of the method by which science makes progress. Kuhn writes:

When that occurs, the community will inevitably return to something much like its pre-paradigm state, a condition in which all members practice science but in which their gross product scarcely resembles science at all.³¹¹

Kuhn explains the larger "sociological paradigm" using as an example the difference between Einsteinian and Newtonian physics. The science done from Newton to Einstein gradually accumulated anomalies which could not be explained under the old Newtonian system. The key symptom of impaired judgment was that known anomalies in Newton's universe were not considered significant. They were dismissed as special cases. Anomaly could not be discriminated until science broke out of the mechanical general paradigm and questioned its normative idea of the nature of matter.³¹² Kuhn was concerned

ry model."

³¹¹ Ibid., p. 101 Every intellectual speciality undergoes periods of regression to its "pre-paradigmatic state," during which the problem-solving ability of the speciality is dormant and the work duplicates "exemplary past achievements." Such is unequivocally the case for classical music and probably for several other humanities disciplines like English Literature, quantitative Sociology and Intellectual History.

that contemporary judgment may be impaired in science, and we are concerned that the same may also be true in the study of culture.

In the Kuhnian model, meaning is a social and instrumental gestalt. A perceptual revolution does not emerge from only a new mathematics or a set of different laws. Simultaneously with the new language with which to describe reality Kuhn believes that, "We have had to alter the fundamental structural elements of which the universe is composed."³¹³ The history of science indicates that new paradigms rarely derive from the extrapolation of old methods. New achievements arise from an altered view of fundamental structural elements. The exemplary paradigm (concrete puzzle-solutions) is only one pole of synthesis. Following it imitatively only leads to the closure of the symbolic system. Ptolemaic epicycles and permutations illustrate the limitations of linear judgment on a cosmic scale. The symbolic system strangles itself in exceptions and special cases.

³¹² Ibid. Some scientists still attempt to classify Newton's Laws as "a special case of the laws of relativistic mechanics." The only way this logical sleight of hand works is by limiting the application of knowledge to the domain of what is already known. "A similar argument will suffice for any theory that has ever been successfully applied to any range of phenomena at all (p. 100)."

³¹³ Ibid., p. 102

Cultural studies has a similar problem with "concrete puzzle-solutions" and "exemplary past achievements." Imitation and linear historicism generate the same breakdown in coping ability. Wielding the exemplary model in isolation suppresses the perceptual dialectic which informs the creative "switch in visual gestalt." In cultural studies, as in the history of science, relying exclusively upon the exemplary paradigm impairs judgment. The evolution of the culture form and the effectiveness of its problem-solving ability are foreclosed. The exemplary past achievement becomes a kind of positivistic "totem" to critical consciousness.

The perceptual dialectic Kuhn calls the "switch in visual gestalt" is a scientific revolution when it changes the perception of nature, a formal revolution when it changes the patterns and styles of art and a political revolution when it occurs in social history. The dialectical process informing the perception of reality is similar. The process of mystification and foreclosure of consciousness can be similar, also.

The exemplary model can be used to substitute the barbarity of perfection-- Stalinism of the soul. It substitutes imitation for judgment. By representing progress thematically, it can only discover what is already there. All question of systemic relation is foreclosed. The perceptual gestalt between a body proper the social context is severed and denied.

The problem Kuhn illustrated in the history of science is shared by many other academic discourses. The linear closure of systemic relation is acted out in many different ways and at many different levels. The exemplary paradigms of performance praxis in the Fine Arts, of genre writing in the Humanities, and of style in the literary arts are invoked as if they were a transcendental basis for judgment. The exemplary model is only an old shoe, a comfort to be measured only by its suitability. In anomaly-filled situations where it is not applicable, or in historical circumstances where it no longer fits, it should be temporarily suspended or even, thrown away. Sentimentality for the form cloaks a cleverly disguised will to power. Its motto becomes Anton von Webern's, "To live is to defend a form."³¹⁴

Theodore Adorno called Webern's attitude the language of hope. In a bitter way Adorno was correct. Defending an exemplary form is indeed to hope: to hope that historical problems stay the same, to hope that affectivity, sentiment and common kindness are immanent and reflexive, to hope that old "puzzle-solutions" will always fit new challenges. Hope for the exemplary form is sometimes half-hope or less.

Piaget confirms one of Kuhn's basic tenets about paradigms. "Valid knowledge," Piaget writes, "is never in a

³¹⁴ Hans Moldenhauer and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, Anton von Webern (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979) p. 588

state and always forms a process."³¹⁵ Knowledge of the paradigm means knowledge of a process in operation, not a form in application. The difference is not hair-splitting, but a vital one to practical consciousness.

The paradigm model of dialectical adaptation and social change builds closely upon the conventional vocabulary of formal idealism and Enlightenment dissent. Because of its close relation to the traditional vocabulary, the structure of the paradigm bridges the cognitive gap between linear and dialectical reason. Through the paradigm model of structural relation and change, traditional linear language can be opened up to include a phenomenology of culture.

Thomas Kuhn was led to investigate the structure of scientific paradigms because he feared too many contradictions were accumulating in the structure and practice of scientific research. Though the history of his speciality gave Kuhn every confidence that the accumulation of contradiction would eventually raise consciousness, he hoped that a structural explanation of the phenomenology of scientific judgment would lighten the inevitable burden of accumulated error. His hope is a reasonable one.

³¹⁵ Jean Piaget, Psychology and Epistemology. trans. Arnold Rosin (New York: Penguin Books, 1971) pp. 7-8

In the dialectical model Kuhn described, the evolution of knowledge is very different from the orthodox, linear one. For Kuhn, meaning defines an existential relation. In the linear model, meaning refers to a pre-given form or a pre-given ideal which is "discovered" as if it existed all along, outside temporal relations. Kuhn's systemic model is flexible and relative, the linear one is formal and fixed. In the Kuhnian model, significance does not split into a subjective and objective polarization. The act of meaning is a creative synthesis, in which perception acts out an existential gestalt. Meaning is "performed" upon the external world. In the linear model, meaning is an epiphany, a revelation.

The central concept of the paradigm has been subjected to many interpretations. According to Margaret Masterman, Kuhn uses the word in over 20 different ways.³¹⁶ The Soviet statistician and philosopher of science, V. V. Nalimov summarizes the discussion of the paradigm by Watkins, Toulmin, Pearce Williams, Popper and P. K. Feyerabend and concludes that:

A paradigm is, in my understanding, a stabilizing selection, i.e., a protective mechanism shielding at a certain stage of its development some trend from pollution or from spreading into lateral infertile areas. At another stage, it may hamper

³¹⁶ Margaret Masterman, "The Nature of the Paradigm," Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge, Proceedings of the International Colloquium in the Philosophy of Science, I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave (ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970)

the emergence of new trends.³¹⁷

Nalimov is emphasizing Kuhn's "sociological" definition of the paradigm rather than its secondary definition as an exemplary "puzzle-solving" model. In Nalimov and Kuhn's broadest definition of the term, the paradigm provides an ultimate criterion of acceptable limits for knowledge. It is the ultimate variable which determines the range of empirical variables, the relation which defines all sub-relations, etc.

Kuhn's and Nalimov's level of logical abstraction requires a passage from the rigid Archimedean idealism of absolute objectivity to a tolerance for historical and, for that matter, perceptual, relativity. We now know that all knowledge has built into it what Nalimov calls "the notion of significance level."³¹⁸ Any "truth" tacitly contains a proviso which, if it were verbalized in the language of statistics, would read:

For the significance level we have chosen, the divergence between our model and observational results is not statistically significant.³¹⁹

The paradigm is the word for this conventional significance level, a level which in most cases, we do not chose but by which we have been unconsciously culturally inscribed.

³¹⁷ V. V. Nalimov, Faces of Science (Philadelphia: University City Science Center, 1981) p. 10

³¹⁸ Ibid., p. 7

³¹⁹ Ibid.

Nalimov believes that the "implicit but universally understood conventions forming the paradigm," means that even "the language of mathematical statistics is not context free."³²⁰ It would appear that to both Kuhn and Nalimov the paradigm opens a discussion of how a social context penetrates communication and research. The potential value of such a discussion to any number of traditional humanities disciplines would seem self-evident. "The paradigm becomes," Nalimov writes, "the foundation on which we base judgments on the nature of our knowledge."³²¹ The nature of knowledge, the question of epistemology, leads from the paradigm back to an analysis of experience. Through this concept, then, logic is permitted access to the signification system of an epoch.

Kuhn's work opened this heretofore neglected area of historiography. However, Stephen Toulmin adds an important qualification to the structural concept of paradigmatic revolution which Kuhn has developed. Toulmin points out that the term "revolution" indicates unusually "profound and precipitate" transfers of authority or conceptual change.³²² Toulmin objects that, practically speaking:

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 13

³²¹ Ibid., p. 1

³²² Stephen Toulmin, Human Understanding (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972) p. 126

At an explanatory level, the differences between normal and revolutionary change turn out to have little real theoretical significance.³²³

The historical structure of paradigmatic change incorporates within itself a hidden, but fundamental duality. When the paradigm shifts, not only does the "functional interaction" between person and world change, but the "organizational structure" of the life-world changes also.³²⁴ Regarding this crucial question of actual historical change, Toulmin reminds us that paradigm changes do not enter history in Kuhn's ideal-typical form. New perspectives are gradually shaped by the changing interaction between theory and practice. Paradigm shifts do not suddenly appear fully armed like Athena from Zeus' brain. They slowly sediment within the disciplinary competition to explain and manage the life-world.³²⁵

Paradigms compete for the right to social authority based upon their explanatory power and accuracy. Realistically, Toulmin argues, we have to recognize that this competition usually proceeds at glacial speed. Toulmin concludes that significant changes in the era of perception are not experienced as revolutions in the way the individual sees and comprehends his world. The changes within the "intellectual

³²³ Ibid., p. 118

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 269

³²⁵ Ibid., pp. 191, 300-307

ecology" between mind and method evolves so gradually that personal identity is rarely confronted by complete paradigm shifts and total changes in world-view.

Toulmin argues that Kuhn's history of paradigmatic change describes an ideal history, not a social one. The individual experience of paradigmatic change usually does not take the form of a sudden conversion or overnight intellectual revolution. Sudden dramatic and revolutionary changes are the exception, not the rule. In nearly all cases, Toulmin writes, "The rational continuity of the subject has been preserved throughout those changes."³²⁶ In practical experience, perceptual revolution progresses in such a way that, "one can no longer disentangle the dialectic."³²⁷

Toulmin's conclusions indicate that the concept of the paradigm remains merely descriptive and theoretical unless it contributes to a positive methodological change which has

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 154

³²⁷ Ibid., p. 307 See in support of Toulmin, Arthur Koestler, The Sleepwalkers, A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe. (London: Penguin Books, 1959) Copernicus added epicycles to Ptolemy's system (p. 195). "The fact that the earth moves is almost an incidental matter in the system of Copernicus...There is a well-known saying that Marx 'turned Hegel upside down.' Copernicus did the same to Ptolemy; in both cases, the reversed authority remained the bane of the disciple (p. 214-215)." Kepler, "by three incorrect steps and their even more incorrect defence, stumbled on the correct law. It is perhaps the most amazing sleepwalking performance in the history of science (p. 333)." The first modern cosmologists did not realize the significance of their achievement.

developed gradually and organically out of previous methods and earlier axioms. Cultural studies and the history of the Fine Arts would be particularly benefited by a methodology based upon the paradigmatic approach, but in order for the concept of the paradigm to be something more than ideally descriptive, the structure of paradigmatic process has to add to the methodology of historical analysis. The opportunity Kuhn presents structural analysis is to understand the paradigm in a way that disentangles the dialectic between the body proper and its social context.

We believe that disciplinary applications of formal structural analysis can benefit from re-reading Kuhn à la Toulmin in order to extract a methodological advance from Kuhn's ideal-typical description of paradigmatic revolution. Although Kuhn's description of paradigmatic change is correct, the dialectical structure of such changes can only be explained as a unified relation between consciousness and a social situation. If the concept of the paradigm is to be a unifying one for a structural approach to cultural studies, the concept must comprehend dialectical processes in their social totality and it must reveal the phenomenological relation between individual consciousness and the historical paradigm in which that consciousness has been thematized and embedded.

In the paradigmatic cycle which Kuhn documents, a phenomenological unity between individual consciousness and the historical epoch emerges at the beginning and the end of the life cycle of the paradigm. In between these two historical moments of cultural synchronization, the dialectic of perception becomes disordered. This fertile, but emotionally disruptive, interregnum takes the form of a period of both emotional and intellectual turmoil surrounding the establishment of a new normative theory.³²⁸ After the disintegration of the old perceptual gestalt which had been based upon the internalization of the old paradigm, the new normative paradigm, having been internalized to become a field of perception, reconstructs a new way of seeing which becomes the seed bed for the accumulation of anomaly that inevitably starts the cycle all over again. Thus there exists a "general grammar" in the Kuhnian model which breaks down into four practical stages:

1. The discovery of anomaly (against the agreed-upon background of the old normative paradigm)
2. Disorientation (a symptom of the breakdown of the old perceptual gestalt)

³²⁸ Kuhn, Scientific Revolutions, Under the duress of the breakdown of the Newtonian universe, Einstein wrote, "It was as if the ground had been pulled out from under one, with no firm foundation to be seen anywhere, upon which one could have built (p. 83)."

3. Argumentation over and attempted articulation of a new paradigm
4. The internalization of a new paradigm (a "switch in visual gestalt")

These four stages pair off into two categories of experience within the life cycle of a paradigm of perception. In stages one and four, perception has been ordered by an established level of signification with its corresponding perceptual gestalt. Stage one perception encounters gaps in the old perceptual gestalt and stage four perception resolves them under the aegis of a new perceptual system. In both of these cases perception occurs against the background created by the existence of a paradigm.

The gaps which stage one perception discovers appear accidentally, as serendipitous spin-off from the normative application of the old paradigm of perception. These anomalous gaps take two forms, neither of which can be distinguished at first from a perturbation in the research environment. At stage one, both exceptions to the rule and phenomena which defy classification cause the investigator to assume that he is the problem and that he must refine his research techniques. In the presence of anomaly, the researcher cannot be sure whether his task is to redefine the nature of the problem (break out of the old paradigm of perception) or refine his approach within the limits of the old

paradigm. This battle is usually fought out pre-consciously while the investigator concerns himself with techniques and methods.

In effect, the application of a method always begins with an ad hoc decision of which the investigator remains unaware. The investigator must always decide whether the direction of his work will affirm (stage four) or disaffirm (stage one) the normative paradigm under which other work in his speciality is being carried out. Since this decision is a tacit one, determined pre-consciously, or perhaps even imposed bureaucratically upon the researcher, it is usually a conservative one to affirm the old paradigm. The researcher is led to hope that the task of knowledge in his speciality remains at the stage four level, the conservative stage in the life cycle of the paradigm of perception. This built-in bias on behalf of conservation and internalization makes traditional and intergenerational communication possible within specialities, but it also (at certain strategic points) thwarts growth, development and change. This structural bias on behalf of the old paradigm can become a structural problem in the nature of knowledge. At the end of the twentieth century many Humanities disciplines face this structural problem in the organization of their research and teaching. Overcoming this problem presents a severe challenge because the inevitable anomalies encountered along the way send epistemological shudders all through the conven-

tional knowledge system. The disorientation and debate of stages two and three in the life cycle of the paradigm can be very perplexing. Their existence is proof enough for the reality of Hegel's "unhappy consciousness."³²⁹

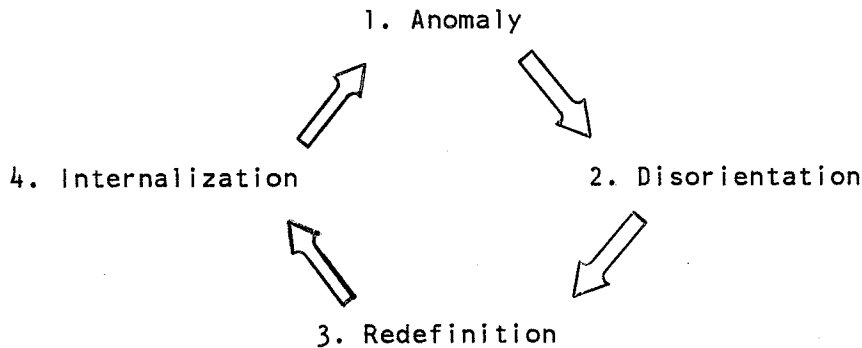
The middle, "unhappy" categories of the paradigmatic life cycle comprise the transitional phases of the paradigm and are symptomatic of the old world picture dissolving and being replaced. This phase is often a difficult emotional experience, made all the more so because the individual does not understand the revolution to which he is contributing. In this category, research and investigation describe a divergence from the premises of the old paradigm in quest of a larger and more inclusive basis for disciplinary judgment. At this point another peculiar weakness of linear language is confirmed. Although new paradigms are generated out of disorientation and debate, logical and intellectual representation of paradigmatic development usually begins at either stage one or three. In this regard, another, even more significant aspect of the life cycle of the paradigm can be illustrated.

A spatial representation markedly alters the relation of the stages in the cycle (See below, Fig. 6.1). A qualitative relation now appears between elements one and three, and elements two and four. Spatially, disorientation exists

³²⁹ See nn. 66-67

on the same plane as internalization. Stages one and three exhibit the same axial similarity.

Figure 6.1: The Life Cycle of the Paradigm of Perception



This new relation is not a trick of visual re-arrangement. Although linearly, the odd and even stages in the cycle belong to different logical moments, they are qualitatively the same class of experience. The odd numbers in the cycle are intellectual experiences and the even numbers are emotional ones. The circle illustrates a basic tension within the life-cycle of the paradigm. A qualitative discontinuity occurs between the logic of the linear order lined up in sequence and the value of each step within that sequence. This tension defines a basic structural relation which is violated again and again in conventional linear approaches to cultural studies.

A linear, descriptive narrative glosses over the dialectical relation between the two different types of experience. "Explanation" finds itself limited to either the intellectual forms or the emotional processes of the life cycle of the

paradigm without being able to adequately define an historical relation between them. A logical narrative emerges which conceals from itself its own locus of value. As Nalimov emphasizes in his discussion of the literature of the philosophy science, "It reflects only what is indubitably acknowledged by the existing paradigm."³³⁰ The innate, structural conservatism of this approach has been most severely criticized by Lacan:

It is not only the subject, but the subjects to whom we return here; in other words our ostriches, grasped in their intersubjectivity, who line up, and who, more docile than sheep, model their very being on the moment of the signifying chain which traverses them.³³¹

Unawareness, a negative moment in knowledge has a palpable, transformative action upon its world. Classical logic has no space for this action through absence. Ignorance of the paradigm permits an editing of the phenomenal world which always ends up "discovering" its own preconceptions in the linear passage of its own predetermined ideals.

Examples from industry and science are numerous. When Frank Whittle presented his design of a jet engine, he was met with a massive indifference from the industrial bureaucracy. They were interested in new problems like better pistons and variable pitch propellers. As a result, "None of

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 118

³³¹ Jacques Lacan, "Seminar on the Purloined Letter," Aesthetics Today. Morris Philipson and Paul J. Gudel (ed.) (New York: New American Library, 1980) p. 399

the five earliest turbo-jet developments of Germany, Britain, and the United States was initiated within an established aircraft firm."³³² Nalimov calls this absurdity, "prejudice armed with logic," and recalls one of the most famous examples of the power of the paradigm over perception in the history of science and technology. Almost five years passed before it was generally accepted that the Wright brothers had flown at Kitty Hawk:

After all, who were the Wright brothers to make such a claim when the most learned professors had "proved" that powered flight was impossible.³³³

The rare candor of Nobel prize winner, Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, underlines the larger point:

A discovery must be, by definition, at variance with existing knowledge. During my lifetime, I have made two. Both were rejected offhand by the popes of the field.³³⁴

The structure of knowledge systems protects itself from hare-brained crackpots, but at the same time it risks insulating itself from growth and change.³³⁵

³³² William H. Whyte, The Organization Man (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956) p. 216

³³³ Nalimov, Science p. 230

³³⁴ Edward T. Hall, Beyond Culture (New York: Anchor Press, 1976) p. 125

³³⁵ Robert E. Ornstein, The Psychology of Consciousness (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1972) "Our assumptive world is conservative....We pay the price of a certain conservatism and resistance to new input in order to gain a measure of stability in our personal consciousnesses (p. 3)."

The conservatism of the paradigm is necessary, but the qualitative relation between the two disjunct pairs within its life cycle suggests a principle by means of which to overcome this conservatism and transfer the concept of the paradigm into cultural studies. The internal pairing of qualitative moments in the life cycle of the paradigm provides an interdisciplinary point of reference through which to apply the paradigm concept to cultural studies. The disjunct pairs within the paradigm point out a way to overcome the methodological problem of extending the paradigm concept from science into the study of culture.

The procedure by means of which science demonstrates its "truths" is not available to cultural studies. In science, a researcher can "randomize" uncontrollable factors which might prejudice the outcome of his research. Through his research procedures, he can verify a perceived anomaly in his knowledge system and colleagues, informed of the system parameters of the procedure, can corroborate the same anomaly. The problem of historical anomaly is much, much more entrenched. Scientifically, the historian cannot control, randomize, or in any other way "bracket" variables as large as the social and political ones with which he works. Without raising a control group from the cradle, the nearest he can come to a scientific study of cultural variables would be to isolate a non-Western culture as a relatively controlled comparison. This approach is not scientific, but it

does as much justice to scientific procedure as can be done in the "fuzzy set" of human political, social and cultural interrelations. In order to see how the structure of the paradigm applies to cultural studies, we need to be familiar with such an example.

Gregory Bateson's Naven was written out of the need for just such a controlled comparison. Bateson, one of the twentieth century's most productive and systemically intelligent humanists, spent a year on the Sepik River in New Guinea doing a unique brand of anthropological field work among the latmul, an archaic people whose social disposition resembles the industrial West, but whose cultural system functions very differently. With Naven, Bateson began accumulating data which permits a systemic, working definition of the dialectic of cultural paradigms. Fifty years ago on the Sepik River, Gregory Bateson began to map an epistemological horizon where phenomenology and history intersect and the pedantic distinctions between anthropology, political history and symbolic logic disappear.

The political similarities between the latmul and the industrial West made them an ideal control group for a comparison of cultural paradigms. The latmul are a society of liars and murderers who live in permanent residences in large villges with elaborate ceremonial centers. They are male dominated with an extensive juridicial apparatus based

on village jurisdiction and nepotism. Their most cherished social traits are debating and fighting.

One of the most important rites of passage among the latmul males is to commit a homicide. Bateson even reported one case where a man wore this ceremonial mark of distinction for killing his own wife. Many murderous vendettas begin in the debates in which the latmul take great civic pride. An latmul male may violate any tribal taboo if he is a powerful enough debater and fighter. Faced with such a dynamic society of "go-getters," Bateson's initial concern was to discover how they kept from destroying themselves. This initial question, of course, put the Western observer immediately upon home ground.³³⁶

Bateson's logical problem was to bridge the enormous paradox between the emotional tone of latmul society and its relative demographic stability. He proceeded on the assumption that a society must be structured by a "coherent, logical scheme which may be constructed by the scientist fitting together the various premises of the culture."³³⁷

The principle cultural activity of the latmul is a civic ceremony called Naven which is performed to honor the achievements of the maturing children. Whenever a rela-

³³⁶ Gregory Bateson, Naven (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 1936) pp. 126-7 & 91

³³⁷ Ibid., pp. 109 & 25

tive's child performs a standard social act for the first time in its life, the occasion may be celebrated by the child's designated adult Naven leader. The child being celebrated and the adult celebrant are always of the same sex.

The kinship connection between the two celebrants is a distant one through the family of the wives. The elder male who leads a Naven celebration for a boy dresses up in the filthiest female garments. If the celebrating pair are female, the leader dresses in the smartest of male attire. The highly idiosyncratic ceremony features institutionalized transvestitism. The propensity to favor the idiosyncratic and individualistic, Bateson called "schismogenesis" and he used the word to describe the whole of Iatmul culture. The question which fascinated Bateson was why does a schismogenic society like the Iatmul not present a significant level of schizoid behavior?³³⁸

Bateson's study indicates that the most extreme schismogenic tendencies were countervailed against to an amazing degree by the Naven kinship ceremonies. Bateson sketches the dialectical balance of the Iatmul cultural paradigm by first noting the permeation of schismogenic attitudes into the highest levels of social intersubjectivity and then documenting point by point how the Naven cultural ceremony is an inversion of this permeation.

³³⁸ Ibid., pp. 190-192

In the male dominated society where property is passed patrilineally, congratulations are passed matrilineally, even for a homicide. Men do not compliment each other and father-son relations are quite cool. In the Naven, a significant cousin dressed as a member of the opposite sex is the designated "complimenter." Whereas in normal social relations, men dominate and women are submissive, in the Naven the social roles are reversed.³³⁹ Bateson concluded that:

It is possible that this insistence on the complementary pattern in the Naven relationship is a case of the control of a symmetrical schismogenesis by admixture of complementary patterns of behavior.³⁴⁰

Iatmul culture behavior performs the inestimably valuable function of limiting the degree of individual differentiation which is socially appropriate for the survival of the collective. Socio-economically the Iatmuls are ferocious individualists, but their radical self-differentiation is limited by a cultural context of complementarity: cultural differentiation takes the form of inverted socio-economic behavior.

Bateson's ethnological study of the Iatmul arrives at a very different qualitative relationship between culture and society than linear logic has taught us to expect. For the Iatmul, culture balances the political economy. Making pancakes, hollowing a canoe, catching a fish, murdering a

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 149

³⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 270

stranger, and so on are seized upon by the cultural network affiliation. The Naven, an indigenous "feast of fools,"³⁴¹ celebrates an absolute carnival in honor of being latmul.

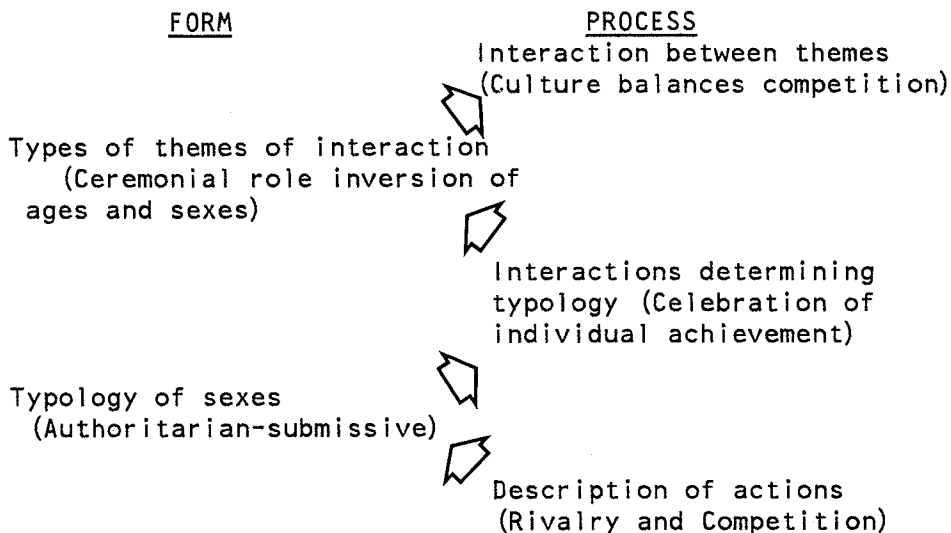
In a concrete way, the forms of latmul culture are a process of social memory raised to the paradigmatic context of specie survival. For this reason the rampant latmul individualism does not evolve absolutely, on an eternal and formal rationality of maximization. Individualism is limited by a process of parody carried out in an equally profound system of cultural relationships. The Naven ceremonies are a celebration of specie kinship where normative consciousness proudly acknowledges none. Naven summons an latmul to a relative species consciousness and for a brief time the general consciousness of rivalry and self-promotion is inverted in ceremonial awareness of communal reality. The Naven ceremonies act as culture behavior should.³⁴²

³⁴¹ Harvey Cox, The Feast of Fools (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) "During the medieval era there flourished in parts of Europe a holiday known as the Feast of Fools. On that colorful occasion, usually celebrated about January first, even ordinarily pious priests and serious townsfolk donned bawdy masks, sang outrageous ditties, and generally kept the whole world awake with revelry and satire...The Feast of Fools was never popular with the higher-ups...But despite the efforts of fidgety ecclesiastics and an outright condemnation by the Council of Basel in 1431, the Feast of Fools survived until the sixteenth century (p. 1)." I have been told that the British military preserves the custom of inverting all roles one day a year during the Christmas holiday season.

³⁴² See also, Marshall Sahlins, Stone Age Economics (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1972) Chapter Four, "The Spirit of the Gift" pp. 149-184 The Maori culture acts

The culture of the Iatmul illustrates the dialectical structure of the paradigm. Over 40 years after his original work on the Sepik River, Bateson described the paradigmatic structure of his earlier analysis:

I had proceeded, without conscious planning, up an alternating ladder from description to the vocabulary of typology. But this typing of persons led back into a study of the processes by which the persons got that way. These processes were then classified into types of process types in their turn, and were named by me. The next step was from the typing of process to study the interactions between the classified processes. This zigzag ladder between typology on one side and the study of process on the other is mapped thus: thus:³⁴³



as a check upon their political economy. A Maori who expropriates the surplus value of a field, a utensil, an animal, etc. has been taught that this act of self-aggrandizement will make him sick or even cause him to die. The quaint superstition has a profound basis in practical social truth.

³⁴³ Gregory Bateson, Mind and Nature (New York: Bantam Books, 1979) pp. 214-215

Above are the logical levels of Bateson's analysis of the latmul cultural paradigm with my parenthetical explanations of the stages added. The arrows mark the direction of Bateson's argument from simple description to the largest and most inclusive paradigm of perception. Bateson continued:

The zigzag sequence of steps from form to process and back to form provide a very powerful paradigm for the mapping of many phenomena... We encounter a zigzag ladder of dialectic between form and process. [emphasis added] I shall further suggest that the very nature of perception follows this paradigm.³⁴⁴

The "zigzag ladder of dialectic between form and process" provides a practical basis for extending the concept of a paradigm into cultural studies.

The practical operation of the life cycle of the latmul cultural paradigm worked something like this: If the highest level of legitimate totality available to cultural life remains anomaly free, then the morphology of latmul culture can follow the same age old pattern. When the "interaction between themes" which Bateson observed at the highest synthetic level of the culture ceases to balance the competitive (schismogenic) dynamic within latmul society, then the forms of latmul cultural life will change, just as the historical forms of Western culture have changed under a similar need to resolve anomaly and restore emotional balance.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 215

We propose that Kuhn's model of paradigmatic change illustrates the same structural zigzag ladder as Bateson's study of the cultural paradigm of the Iatmul. In the life cycle of Kuhn's ideal-typical paradigm we can observe the "zigzag ladder" of a similar ascending dialectical relation:

FORM

PROCESS

Internalization

Redefinition

Disorientation

Discovery of Anomaly

When emotional experiences no longer make sense within the large context of social adaptation and species survival, the whole cultural paradigm must change. The discontinuous zigzag between form and process remains, but the agenda for each typology must alter. Western Culture has passed through several such morphological revolutions.

The seemingly idealistic point which ought now to appear reasonably realistic, is that artists are a society's most stubborn practitioners of species consciousness. Artistic styles change in accord with the life cycle of the historical paradigm of perception. The logical difficulty is that artists and connoisseurs--as evidenced by their encompassing concern with materials and techniques--work as sleepwalk-

ers³⁴⁵ in the paradigm. By grasping only this technical/formal half of the signification process, historical analysis has remained mired in the Enlightenment fallacy of a "human end-in-itself" which assumes, on the basis of formal appearances, that art is self-discovery and not social discourse.

Culture, meaning Fine Arts Culture, has to be understood as a dialectical relation which can never be linear and mechanical. Cultural consciousness flows dialectically between the logically incommensurate typologies of form and process. The picturesque terms, "aesthetic" and "intellectual" refer to these generic types in the dialectic of paradigmatic process. The omission, in praxis or analysis, of one generic typology risks the subversion of the social value of the other. To understand the cultural paradigm as a dialectic in social history, one must follow its zigzags between the discrete and the continuous, the form and the process, the sign and what it signifies. In this, most inclusive concept of the paradigm, cultural forms and political processes cannot be separated from one another.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁵ see above n. 327

³⁴⁶ V. V. Nalimov observes, "I put forward the hypothesis that our intellectual activity takes place at two levels, namely, at a discrete-logical level of language, about which we know a lot, and at a continuous (extra-logical) level which we could imagine as a continuous stream of consciousness. Faces of Science, p. 182 William James' metaphor is the most famous: Consciousness, he wrote, "is nothing jointed, it flows. A 'river' or a 'stream' are the metaphors by which it is naturally de-

In linear analysis, social signs and coexistent social processes have separate essential values. Therefore, means can be separated from ends, contexts can be separated from objects, act can be separated from intent, politics can be separated from economics, personality can be separated from profession, leisure from life, art from politics--an endless fragmentation of existence. And to what end? To avoid responsibility for the life-world. To insure that individual life and its interaction with the world helplessly mirrors the fragmentation of the whole.

When artistic styles change, emotional allegiances lag behind. It is valid that they do so, for the emotional responses of his public are the artist's reality principle. However, the natural conservatism of perception can be politically exploited to freeze cultural allegiances into reactionary "puzzle-solutions" which have no validity for contemporary life. Emotional manipulation of this sort carries cultural questions directly into politics.³⁴⁷

scribed. In talking of it thereafter, let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life." Williams James, Principles of Psychology Vol. I., p. 239. Cited in Ornstein, Consciousness, p. 38. Our point is that this stream is quintessentially historical and social.

³⁴⁷ Robert E. Ornstein observes that "What we actually experience, according to Bruner and others, are the categories [Ornstein's emphasis] which are evoked by a particular stimulus, not the occurrence in the external world." Robert E. Ornstein, Consciousness p. 32 These categories are indisputably "contextual" rather than a priori.

In his last article, published in Pravda two weeks before his final illness, Lenin left us an excellent analysis of the paradigmatic relation under consideration. Because his article is a critical, negative example, it is all the more useful and instructive. Lenin declared:

The workers cannot build a new state apparatus. They have not yet developed the culture required for this; and it is culture that is required.³⁴⁸

For the old Bolsheviks, Trotsky declared, "there were no abstract truths." Lenin discussed culture because a concrete problem in the administration of the Soviet State could not be addressed any other way. The reason for his complaint was that:

Theoretical audacity in general constructions went hand in hand with amazing timidity as regards certain very minor reforms in office routine...The imagination failed when it came to working out a tenth-rate reform.³⁴⁹

Lenin's practical political experience had collided with one of the most neglected areas of critical theory and historical analysis. The cultural context can neutralize through attitudes, social habits and stereotypical emotional relations any general social or theoretical advance. The culture "re-members" the life-world. A political consciousness which has not changed its cultural attitude is caught in a self-destructive paradox which jeopardizes the effectiveness of every progressive idea. Lenin had seen the practical ef-

³⁴⁸ V. I. Lenin, Selected Works (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971) p. 701

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 708

fects of this paradox and he called the problem a cultural one.

Linear judgment separates cultural forms from their corresponding social and economic processes. This separation has mystifying consequences in our emotional and intellectual life because it leads to the assumption that aesthetic content can somehow be magically "liberated" from its social context. Where this separation is tolerated, an "iron cage" culture exercises a hegemonic power over its victims.

The social historian, Geraldine Clifford criticizes what in her view has been a determined effort on the part of American psychology, sociology and political science to be not only "a-historical i.e., ignorant of what Americans have been, but a-cultural, basically unconcerned with what a society represents in the way of a construct of social relations, preoccupations, and expectations."³⁵⁰ The linear concept of Capital C, Fine Arts Culture is a-historical, just as the linear concept of history is a-cultural. The acceptance of this antique dualism has been a critical political error in progressive politics, a serious pedagogical error in public education and an amazing methodological oversight in historiography.

³⁵⁰ Geraldine Clifford, "A Culture-Bound Concept of Creativity: A Social Historian's Critique, Centering on a Recent American Research Report," Creativity Theory and Research. Morton Bloomberg (ed.) New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1973) p. 332

The content of art is a social content. The content of any era's art is, in its classical forms, that era's social content. The sentimental allegiance to a cultural form carries with it an emotional allegiance to the paradigm of perception out of which that cultural form emerged. This paradigmatic relation is phenomenologically self-evident in the art history of changing styles and forms, but in pedagogy, scholarship and politics the relation is ignored and violated. We propose that the dialectic between consciousness and society is an evolution between form and process in Culture and the political economy. This relation is paradigmatic i.e., it is linearly discontinuous, but dialectically inseparable. We believe that this systemic theory addresses a central problem in social history, cultural studies and ethics.

In linear analysis, the forms of Cultural experience have been separated from the social processes of adaptation and survival. This schizoid approach to knowledge reproduces a self-division of body and mind which cannot be conducive either to political progress or personal tranquility. A new perspective is required in order to mend this schism. As Weber observed;

Epistemological and methodological reflections can become important only when the idea emerges that a new "viewpoint" also requires a revision of the logical forms in which the "enterprise" has heretofore operated...This situation is unambiguously

the case at present as regards history.³⁵¹

The integrity of progressive politics as well as personal behavior demands the reintegration of Capital C, Western Cultural forms with the reality of Western social process. Only then can experience be at one with its ideals.

In this chapter we have attempted to clarify and expand the early structuralist project begun by Weber and Saussure. The resulting interdisciplinary argument has led us to the conclusion that cultural forms constitute the collective memory of social adaptation. The Cultural context embodies for a group, its practical, adaptive wisdom distilled into a very precise and condensed symbolic grammar. Culture, especially the Fine Arts Culture, memorializes the continuity of historical community across generations. The concept of the paradigm permits disciplinary access to this structural historical relation. In the totality of the paradigm, the sign unveils its social nature. Cultural ciphers blossom into historical texts and the schism of Western split C C/cultural experience finds at least a measure of resolution.

³⁵¹ Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. and ed. Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1949) p 116

Chapter VIII

CONCLUSION

A major shift in emotional and cultural relations is now over a century old. The structural investigation of this change promises a new perspective on art and leisure as well as a new feeling-tone for politics and society. The outcome of this change may not be perceived as a revolution, but it will certainly result in an adaptive re-stabilization of our most basic emotional and political structures. Whether traumatic and violent or not, this transition to a new paradigm is an anxious passage.

One of the major purposes of this thesis has been to illustrate how the work of certain central figures in twentieth century cultural studies has helped to stabilize the disorientation, to soothe the debate and to facilitate internalization of a new cultural gestalt. The transition to a post-bourgeois cultural environment has been accelerated by a number of landmark thinkers whose work means that no one endures the disorientation, debate and discomfort of the contemporary paradigm change without guidance or alone. Saussure, Weber, Husserl, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Adorno, Arendt, Williams, Baudrillard, Kuhn and Bateson rank among the landmark culturologists of this century. No student of cul-

tural or intellectual history who rebels against both classical idealism and conventional Marxism need feel methodologically isolated or intellectually bankrupt in light of their contribution to the social history of culture.

In addition to these, at least three other culturologists deserve special mention. These three contemporary structural aestheticians have each treated one major aspect of the forbidding no-man's land between idealism and a materialist analysis of the Arts. Frederic Jameson, John Berger and Roland Barthes are worthy of special mention. This thesis has succeeded if its translation of the structuralist project into something approaching plain prose makes Jameson's, Berger's and Barthes' work more accessible and applicable for historians in general and intellectual history in particular.

Of these, Fredrick Jameson is perhaps the most significant. His contribution to methodology has focused the literary text like a magnifying lens upon the social structures of politics and economics. Jameson's life work has been to reveal how:

Unbeknownst to us, the objects around us lead lives of their own in our unconscious fantasies where, vibrant with mana or taboo, they stand as the words or hieroglyphs of the universal rebus of desire.³⁵²

And after this critical revelation to show that:

³⁵² Fredric Jameson, Marxism and Form (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971) p. 99

We should find ourselves in the presence of a kind of "intrinsic" Marxist criticism, a kind of Marxist philology or systematic investigation of the inner social forms of art in general.³⁵³

Jameson's studies of Balzac, Gissing, Conrad, Wyndham Lewis and Sartre are intrinsic, bed-rock illustrations of the method of twentieth century structural criticism and the explicit application of a post-bourgeois world-view. Jameson's work constructs exemplary models of a unified discourse which serve as "concrete puzzle-solving solutions" for a new era of cultural experience.

John Berger ranks close behind Jameson. His study of Picasso³⁵⁴ relinks art criticism with political biography definitively enough to practically open up a new field of scholarship. Berger's About Looking,³⁵⁵ a series of critical essays, reads the art text with a structural insight only possible after having internalized a new post-bourgeois cultural paradigm. Berger's work is our Ariadne's thread through the labyrinth of classical idealism.

Roland Barthes is worthy of particular mention in conclusion because he is the epistemologist of the post-bourgeois cultural imagination. His is the twentieth century voice (like Nietzsche's in the nineteenth) which speaks from an

³⁵³ Ibid., p. 396

³⁵⁴ John Berger, The Success and Failure of Picasso (New York: Pantheon, 1965)

³⁵⁵ John Berger, About Looking (New York: Pantheon, 1980)

epochally different aesthetic perspective. The epistemological nerve center of Barthes' reunified aesthetic is the discovery that:

The body is the site of the transgression effected by the narrative.³⁵⁶

The human senses are galvanized by their cultural inscription into an historical body politic which is also a physical political body. "It is at the level of the body," Barthes writes, "that the two inconciliabilia of the antithesis (outside and inside, cold and heat, death and life) are brought together, are made to touch, to mingle in the most amazing figures in a composite substance."³⁵⁷ Barthes sensually exploded the myth of the ideal form in a constructive act of journalistic Sadism the like of which has not been felt since Nietzsche. Barthes recycles ideal form past historical discussion, back into the visceral experience of its historical determination. Reading Barthes one bears again the burden of historical gestation and parturition.

"Myth is language-robbery,"³⁵⁸ he declared. Myth is an historical reality system transformed into a nature. In declaiming dialectics in linear prosody, Barthes' text is Braille to the eye. His language stands off the page--two-

³⁵⁶ Roland Barthes S/Z, An Essay. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974) p. 28

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Roland Barthes, Mythologies trans. Annette Lavers (St. Albans, Hertfordshire: Paladin, 1973) p. 131

dimensional to the mind and tactile to the body of the reader. His prose exerts the gestus force of a Chinese Opera, drawing observation into sensory experience--a verbal umbilication between consciousness and the body upon which consciousness depends.

It now appears probable that culture forms incarnate existential experiences. They dramatize in externalized, pre-conscious negations, the dilemmas which lie just beyond the scope of conventional problem solving techniques. For this reason, Berger, Jameson and Barthes claim that the cultural system is propulsive. When functioning as a culture system, it should lead rational discourse on, but when the relation between social process and culture is interrupted, a vital link in the human life system has been destroyed. The conceptual center, the womb from which discourse evolves, has been ripped from the earth.

Marx, Weber and Saussure originally conceived dialectical analysis within this kind of unified perspective, but they were forced to leave substantial problem areas for further research. The discussion of these substantial problem areas points toward a new paradigm of cultural reason. If we broaden our disciplinary perspectives with Berger, Jameson and Barthes in the directions which Marx, Weber and Saussure urged, we may get beyond the narrow dualisms of our positivist past and embark upon no less than the remagicization of

our world. In a reunified cultural paradigm we will perceive the artists of the world as more than mechanics in the art of gratification or mute intellectuals who must pantomime their ideals. We will appreciate artistic activity as social sleepwalking at the edge of the paradigm and begin to unravel the social meaning of its maddest visions and most enchanting dreams.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adorno, Theodore. Asthetische Theorie (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970)
- _____. "Cultural Criticism and Society," Critical Sociology. Paul Connerton (ed.), (New York: Penguin Books, 1976)
- _____. Negative Dialectics. trans. E.B. Ashton (New York: Seabury Press, 1973)
- _____. "On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening," The Essential Frankfurt School Reader Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (ed.), (New York: Urizen Books, 1978)
- Althusser, Louis. For Marx. trans. Ben Brewster (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969)
- _____. Lenin and Philosophy (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971)
- Anderson, Perry. Considerations on Western Marxism (London: NLB Publications, 1976)
- Arato, Andrew and Gebhardt, Eike. The Essential Frankfurt School Reader (New York: Urizen Books, 1978)
- Arendt, Hannah. The Life of the Mind, Vol. 2: Willing. (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovitch, 1978)
- Arnold, Matthew. Culture and Anarchy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932)
- Aron, Raymond. Introduction to the Philosophy of History. trans. George J. Irwin (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948)
- Aronowitz, Stanley. The Crisis in Historical Materialism (New York: Praeger, 1981)
- Artaud, Antonin. Selected Writings Edited, with an Introduction by Susan Sontag. trans. Helen Weaver. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976)
- Barthes, Roland S/Z, An Essay. trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill & Wang, 1974)

- _____. Mythologies. trans. Annette Lavers (St. Albans, Hertfordshire: Paladin, 1973)
- Bateson, Gregory. Mind and Nature, A Necessary Unity (New York: Bantam Books, 1979)
- _____. Naven (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936)
- _____. Steps to an Ecology of Mind. (New York: Chandler Publishing Co., 1972)
- Bateson, Gregory; Jackson, Don D.; Haley, Jay and Weakland, John. "Toward a Theory of Schizophrenia" Behavioral Sciences, Vol. 1, #4, October 1956
- Baudrillard, Jean. For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign. trans. Charles Levin (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981)
- Bauman, Zygmunt. Culture as Praxis (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973)
- Becker, Ernest. The Lost Science of Man (Toronto: Doubleday, 1971)
- _____. The Structure of Evil (New York: Free Press, 1968)
- Bennett, Tony. Formalism and Marxism (London: Methuen and Co., 1979)
- Berger, John Ways of Seeing (London: BBC and Penguin Books, 1972)
- _____. Art and Revolution (London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1969)
- _____. The Success and Failure of Picasso (New York: Pantheon, 1965)
- _____. About Looking (New York: Pantheon, 1980)
- Berger, Peter I. and Thomas Luckmann. The Social Construction of Reality (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1966)
- Bertalanffy, Ludwig von. General System Theory (New York: George Braziller, 1968)
- _____. Robots, Men and Minds (New York: George Braziller, 1967)

- Bettleheim, Bruno. The Children of the Dream (New York: Avon Books, 1969)
- Bhaskar, Roy. The Possibility of Naturalism (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979)
- Blackburn, Julia. The White Men. Foreword by Edmund Carpenter (London: Orbis Publishing, 1979)
- Bottomore, Tom (ed.). A Dictionary of Marxist Thought (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983)
- Bruch, Hilde. The Golden Cage. The Enigma of Anorexia Nervosa (New York: Random House, 1978)
- Burke, Kenneth. A Grammar of Motives. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945)
- _____. "The Nature of Art Under Capitalism," Nation. December 13, 1933, p. 677
- Clifford, Geraldine. "A Culture-Bound Concept of Creativity: A Social Historian's Critique, Centering on a Recent American Research Report," Creativity Theory and Research. Morton Bloomberg (ed.), (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1973)
- Cole, Michael; Gay, John; Glick, Joseph and Sharp, Donald. The Cultural Context of Learning and Thinking (New York: Basic Books, 1971)
- Connerton, Paul (ed.). Critical Sociology (New York: Penguin Books, 1976)
- Cox, Harvey. The Feast of Fools (New York: Harper and Row, 1969)
- Dewey, John. Art as Experience (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1934)
- _____. Experience and Nature. (New York: Dover Publications, 1958)
- Dorfman, Ariel and Mattelart, Armand. How to Read Donald Duck (New York: International General, 1975)
- Douglas, Mary. Natural Symbols, Explorations in Cosmology (Middlesex, England: Penquin, 1970)
- Eagleton, Terry. Walter Benjamin (London: NLB Publishers, 1981)
- Easthope, Anthony. Poetry as Discourse (London: Methuen, 1983)

- Eco, Umberto. A Theory of Semiotics (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1976)
- Fekete, John. The Critical Twilight (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977)
- Foucault, Michel. The Archaeology of Knowledge. trans. A. M. Sheridan-Smith (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972)
- _____. The Order of Things (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970)
- _____. Power/Knowledge Colin Gordon (ed.), trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980)
- Frank, Armin Paul. Kenneth Burke (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1969)
- Fromm, Erich. The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973)
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. Philosophical Hermeneutics. trans. and ed. by David E. Linge (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976)
- Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Culture (New York: Basic Books, 1973)
- Giddens, Anthony. A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981)
- Gombrich, E. H. Art and Illusion (London: Phaidon, 1960)
- Goodman, Nelson. Languages of Art (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1968)
- Gould, Carol C. Marx's Social Ontology (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1978)
- Gumperz, John J. Discourse Strategies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982)
- Gurwitsch, Aron. The Field of Consciousness (Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1964)
- Habermas, Jurgen. Knowledge and Human Interests. trans. Jeremy Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970)
- Hadjinicolaou, Nicos. Art History and Clas Struggle (London: Pluto Press, 1979)

- Hall, Edward T. Beyond Culture (New York: Anchor Press, 1976)
- Harris, Marvin. Cultural Materialism (New York: Random House, 1979)
- Harvie, Christopher; Martin, Graham; and Scharf, Aaron (ed.). Industrialisation and Culture 1830-1914. (London: Open University Press, 1970)
- Hawkes, Terence. Structuralism and Semiotics (Berkeley: University of California, 1977)
- Hegel, G. W. F. The Phenomenology of Mind. trans. M. B. Baillie with a Foreword by George Lichtheim (New York: Harper and Row, 1967)
- Heidegger, Martin. "The Origin of the Work of Art," Basic Writings. David Farrell Krell (ed.), (New York: Harper and Row, 1977) Heilbroner, Robert L. Marxism, For and Against (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980)
- Henry, Jules. Culture against Man (New York: Vintage Books, 1963)
- Herskovits, Melville J. Man and his Works (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948)
- Horkheimer, Max and Adorno, Theodore. Dialectic of Enlightenment. trans. John Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1972)
- Husserl, Edmund. The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology. trans. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970)
- Jacoby, Russell. Dialectic of Defeat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981)
- Jameson, Fredric. The Political Unconscious (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981)
- _____. Marxism and Form (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971)
- Kant, Immanuel. Critique of Pure Reason. trans. J. M. D. Meiklejohn (London: George Bell, 1878)
- _____. Anthropology from a Pragmatic Viewpoint. trans. Walter Cerf (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963)
- Koestler, Arthur. The Sleepwalkers, A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe. (London: Penguin Books, 1959)

- Kristeva, Julia. Desire in Language. Leon S. Roudiez (ed.) trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980)
- Kroeber, A. L. and Kluckhohn, Clyde. Culture, A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions (New York: Random House, 1952)
- Kuhn, Thomas. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, Vol. 11 #2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962)
- Lefebvre, Georges. Napoleon: From 18 Brumaire to Tilsit, 1799-1807. Vol. 1. trans. Henry F. Stockhold (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969)
- Lowe, Donald M. History of Bourgeois Perception (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982)
- Lacan, Jacques. Ecrits, A Selection. trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977)
- _____. "Kant et Sade," Ecrits (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1970)
- _____. The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis. Jacques-Alain Miller (ed.) trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Penguin Books, 1973)
- _____. "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter,'" Aesthetics Today. Morris Philipson and Paul J. Gudel (ed.) (New York: New American Library, 1980)
- Laing, R. D. and Esterson, A. Sanity, Madness and the Family (London: Tavistock Publications, 1964)
- Lang, Berel and Williams, Forrest (ed.). Marxism and Art (New York: David McKay Publishers, 1965)
- Langer, Suzanne K. Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling. Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967)
- Leach, Edmund R. Culture and Communication (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976)
- Lenin, V. I. Selected Works (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971)
- Lentricchia, Frank. After the New Criticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980)
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. The Savage Mind (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962)

- LeVine, Robert A. Culture, Behavior and Personality (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1973)
- Lifshitz, Mikhail. The Philosophy of Art of Karl Marx. trans. Ralph B. Winn (New York: Pluto Press, 1973)
- Lukacs, Georg. History and Class Consciousness. trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1971)
- Manicas, Peter T. and Secord, Paul F. "Implications for Psychology of the New Philosophy of Science," American Psychologist 38, #4 (April 1983)
- Marcuse, Herbert. The Aesthetic Dimension (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977)
- _____. One-Dimensional Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964)
- _____. Negations. trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968)
- Marx, Karl. Capital (New York: International Publishers, 1977)
- _____. Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1959)
- _____. German Ideology Robert C. Tucker (ed.) The Marx-Engels Reader (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972)
- _____. Grundrisse. trans. Martin Nicolaus (New York: Vintage Books, 1973)
- Meeker, Michael E. Literature and Violence in North Arabia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979)
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. Adventures of the Dialectic trans. Joseph Bien (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973)
- _____. Phenomenology as Perception. trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962)
- _____. Visible and Invisible. Claude Lefort (ed.) trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968)
- Meszaros, Istvan. The Work of Sartre. Vol. I: Search for Freedom (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979)
- Miller, David L. George Herbert Mead: Self, Language, and the World (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1973)

- Mitzman, Arthur. The Iron Cage (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970)
- Moldenhauer, Hans and Moldenhauer, Rosaleen. Anton von Webern (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979)
- Nalimov, V.V. Faces of Science (Philadelphia: University City Science Center, 1981)
- Nisbet, Robert. Sociology as an Art Form (New York: Oxford Press, 1976)
- Ollman, Bertell. Alienation (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971)
- Ornstein, Robert E. The Psychology of Consciousness (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1972)
- Palazzoli, Mara. Paradox and Counterparadox. trans. Elizabeth V. Burt (New York: Jason Aronson, 1978)
- Palmer, Richard E. Hermeneutics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969)
- Panofsky, Erwin. Meaning in the Visual Arts (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955)
- Parsons, Talcott and White, Winston. "The Link Between Character and Society," Cultural and Social Character. Seymour Martin Lipset and Leo Lowenthal (ed.), (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961)
- Paz, Octavio. Claude Levi-Strauss. trans. J. S. Bernstein and Maxine Bernstein (New York: Cornell University Press, 1970)
- Piaget, Jean. Psychology and Epistemology. trans. Arnold Rosin (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971)
- Polanyi, Michael and Prosch, Harry. Meaning (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975)
- Randall, John Herman. The Career of Philosophy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965)
- Read, Herbert. The Tenth Muse (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957)
- Richards, I. A. Principles of Literary Criticism (London: Kegan Paul, 1928)
- Riesman, David. The Lonely Crowd (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1950)

- Rosemont, Franklin (ed.). Andrew Breton: What is Surrealism? (New York: Monad Press, 1978)
- Rubins, Jack L. "The Relationship between the Individual, the Culture and Psychopathology," American Journal of Psychoanalysis. 35:237-249 (1975)
- Ruesch, Jurgen and Bateson, Gregory. Communication, The Social Matrix of Psychiatry (New York: W. W. Norton, 1951)
- Sachs, Curt. Our Musical Heritage (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1955)
- Sahlins, Marshall. Cultural and Practical Reason (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976)
- _____. Stone Age Economics. (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1972)
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. Being and Nothingness. trans. Hazel Barnes (London: Methuen and Co., 1957)
- _____. Critique of Dialectical Reason. trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith; Jonathan Ree (ed.), (London: NLB Publishers, 1976)
- _____. Search for a Method. trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Vintage Books, 1968)
- Saussure, Ferdinand de. Course in General Linguistics. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (ed.) trans. Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959)
- Schutz, Alfred. Phenomenology and Social Relations (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970)
- Steiner, George. In Bluebeard's Castle (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971)
- Smythe, Dallas W. Dependency Road (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Co., 1981)
- Sohn-Rethel, Alfred. Intellectual and Manual Labor, A Critique of Epistemology (London: Macmillan, 1978)
- Stannard, David E. Shrinking History: On Freud and the Failure of Psychohistory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980)
- Stoller, Robert. Perversion, The Erotic Form of Hatred (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975)

- _____. Splitting, A Case of Female Masculinity (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1973)
- Thompson, E. P. The Poverty of Theory and other Essays (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978)
- _____. William Morris, Romantic to Revolutionary (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976)
- Toulmin, Stephen. Human Understanding (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972)
- Trilling, Lionel. Matthew Arnold (New York: Meridian Books, 1955)
- Wagner, Roy. The Invention of Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975)
- Weber, Max. Ancient Judaism. trans. and ed. Hans Gerth and Don Martindale (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1952)
- _____. The Methodology of the Social Sciences. trans. and ed. Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1949)
- _____. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. trans. Talcott Parsons (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1930)
- _____. The Rational and Social Foundations of Music. trans. and ed. Don Marindale, Johannes Riedel, Gertrude Neuwirth (Urbana: Southern Illinois University Press, 1958)
- _____. The Sociology of Religion. trans. Ephraim Fischhoff with an Introduction by Talcott Parsons (Boston: Beacon Press)
- Whitmont, Charles. The Symbolic Quest (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1969)
- Whyte, William H. The Organization Man. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956)
- Williams, Raymond. Culture. (Glasgow: William Collins & Sons, 1981)
- _____. Culture and Society 1780-1850. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1960)
- _____. Marxism and Literature. (London: Oxford University Press, 1977)

Wolff, Janet. The Social Production of Art. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981)

Wolff, Kurt. Surrender and Catch. (Boston: D. Reidel, 1976)