

MAX WEBER AND THE END OF COMTEAN SOCIOLOGY

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Contents

I Perplexed and Guideless in a Disenchanted World

Science and Religion

Science and Values

Science and History

Science and Sociology

II Darkness Descends upon a Floodlighted World

Notes

Epistle Dedicatory to Tom Bottomore

Why did I see coffins where Manet saw pale figures? Your question regarding my painting *Perspective: Le Balcon de Manet* implies its own answer. The image my painting reveals where the decor of the "Balcony" is suitable for placing coffins.

The "mechanism" at work here could serve as the object of a scholarly explanation of which I am incapable. The explanation would be valuable, even irrefutable, but the mystery would remain undiminished.

Ethics, whether as prudence or as art, is nothing but the scientific application of doctrinal norms to contingent problems; right doing or making are matters not of the will, but of conscience, or awareness, a choice being only possible as between obedience or rebellion. Actions, in other words, are in order or inordinate in precisely the same way that iconography may be correct or incorrect, formal or informal. Error is failure to hit the mark, and is to be expected in all who act instinctively, to please themselves (or others)...

Where there is agreement as to the nature of man's last end, and that the Way by which the present and the paramount ends of life can be realised is that of sacrificial operation, it is evident that the form of society will be determined by the requirements of the Sacrifice; and that order (*yathā rthatā*) and impartiality (*samadr̥ṣṭi*) will mean that every man shall be enabled to become, and by no misdirection prevented from becoming, what he has in him to become.

I Perplexed and Guideless in a Disenchanted World

In a famous statement summing up his relentless analysis of the concept of society, Durkheim declares: "Between God and Society lies the choice." Immediately after this uncompromising formulation of a radical choice, Durkheim proceeds to show how, after all, there is no real choice: "..... I myself am quite indifferent to this choice, since, I see in the Divinity only society transfigured and symbolically expressed."¹)

Durkheim's indifference evokes, obliquely, an episode in Proust (1871-1922):

"Placed for the first time in her life between two duties as incompatible as getting into her carriage to go out to dinner and shewing pity for a man who was about to die, she could find nothing in the code of conventions that indicated the right line to follow, and, not knowing which to choose, felt it better to make a show of not believing that the latter alternative need be seriously considered, so as

to follow the first, which demanded of her at the moment less effort, and thought that the best way of settling the conflict would be to deny that any existed. "You're joking," she said to Swann. "It would be a joke in charming taste," replied he ironically. "I don't know why I am telling you this; I have never said a word to you before about my illness. But as you asked me, and as now I may die at any moment... But whatever I do I mustn't not make you late; you're dining out, remember," he added, because he knew that for other people their own social obligations took precedence of the death of a friend, and could put himself in her place by dint of his instinctive politeness. But that of the Duchess enabled her also to perceive in a vague way that the dinner to which she was going must count for less to Swann than his own death. And so, while continuing on her way towards the carriage, she let her shoulders droop, saying: "Don't worry about our dinner. It's not of any importance!"⁽²⁾

We have here a profoundly revealing portrait of modernity and a rare insight into the inner stance of contemporary sociology which, ironically, often claims Max Weber as its major inspiration as also one of its greatest masters. It seems to me, however, that Weber himself would have been deeply repelled by the high society ethos of post-war sociology. The spirit of Weber's later thinking moves beyond the Comtean heritage, stands firmly against the Marxian orthodoxy and is sharply distinguished from contemporary academic sociology. Weber is not so much a "bourgeois Marx" as he is an ultra-sociologist — a radical Marxist: his quest for universality (and hence his sociological system) is of a significantly different order.⁽³⁾

Though a thinker of encyclopaedic scholarship, at home in the history of most of the Western and Eastern religions and cultures through the ages, Weber's central concern is not any universal philosophy (or sociology) of history. In this he differs greatly from both Comte and Marx. Nor did Weber regard the construction of a historical sociology as his major task. As a sociologist and an institutional economist, he wanted to use his vast erudition in world-history for constructing a formal system of sociology which, by virtue of its historical range and

depth, would be of universal validity. This is one of the most important forms in which Weber's quest for universality has found positive expression.⁽⁴⁾

He has created a system of theoretical sociology by constructing comprehensive typologies of Social Action, Social Relationship, Groups, Authority, Power, Corporations, Domination, Rationality, Market, etc. He has given formal, systematic definitions of the basic concepts of economy and society; and together with the careful formal historical analysis of the fundamental typologies, this is designed as a powerful system which, with appropriate modification, would be universally valid and relevant for the analysis and understanding of any society at any time. Most of Weber's theoretical and historical thinking and researches do, in their deep structure and dialectical logic, presuppose the evolutionary perspective and the postulate of the unity of history. It is important to note this in connection with Weber's universalism because he made elaborate studies of some of the major non-Christian and non-Western religions. However, not being an avowed evolutionist, Weber does not attempt to arrange these civilisations *explicitly* in any evolutionary series; his analyses do not presuppose any Social Darwinist (or quasi-Darwinist) perspective. Weber's universalism is based on the historico-universal process of Rationalisation which is integrally paired with Charisma-Routinisation. Weber's universalism can thus avoid the absolutisation of modernity and Europeanisation of earth while yet positing a radical discontinuity between tradition and modernity.⁽⁵⁾

Like Comte, Marx and Durkheim, Max Weber also devoted a major part of his work to the analysis of modern capitalist society which, he thought, represented a form of society to which universal history had been leading; but unlike Comte, he broke with evolutionism and its optimism without wanting to give up his Enlightenment universalism. Accordingly, Weber is uncertain and in despair about the future of modern society: "In Weber, a philosophy of struggle and power of Marxist and Nietzschean inspiration is combined with a vision of universal history leading to a disenchanted world and an enslaved humanity stripped of its highest virtues."⁽⁶⁾

It is this dark picture and the consequent uncertainty, bordering on anguish and despair, that sets Weber apart from his predecessors and, curiously, from most of his successors as well.

In the life and thought of Weber, the crisis of sociology finds an expression unique in its noble profundity and tragic heroism. Indeed, Weber's intellectual biography is the drama of his encounters with the core dilemmas of modernity.

The central dilemma of which all others are but variations — is constituted by the problematics of man as an intellectual and man as an existing person. Differently formulated, it is the tension between anthropology and autology.⁽⁷⁾ This problematic originates in the displacement in our age of the idea of the intellectual as metaphysician by the notion of the intellectual as scientist. (Or, in a general way, man as a professional; however, the paramount, *par excellence* profession is that of the scientist.) In spite of some unavoidable overlap, we can, for convenience of analysis, list the following antithetical dualities which generate the constitutive dilemmas of modern civilisation: (a) Science and Religion (b) Science and Values (c) Science and History (d) Science and Sociology.

Science and Religion

Weber saw science as the paradigm of rationality, which reaches its culmination in our times as a consequence of the process of rationalisation which is characteristic of modern Western societies. Religion, according to Weber, is man's concern with the ultimate meaning of life. Max Weber made profound and extraordinarily learned studies in the sociology of world religions. However, for all the encyclopaedic range of historical studies and the conceptual sophistication of his systemic thought, Weber did not advance beyond Rationalisation and Disenchantment as the (twin) master concepts for the comparative study of World Religions and the understanding of the modern Western civilisation. His refusal (not to call it a failure) to transcend Rationalisation (and Disenchantment, which the former implies in a historicist context) meant that the dichotomy, Rationality/Irrationality would turn

antithetical and remain irreconcilable. In consequence, there occurs, ironically, an absolute relativisation of Reason: a result that compromised the logical validity and functional efficacy of the concepts of Rationalisation and Disenchantment.⁽⁸⁾

The sociologist's dilemma, then, is this: either he excludes religion altogether from his discipline, in which case he deals only with the present age and even then only partially and thus seriously compromises the generality of his discipline; or, he studies the religious traditions of the world with conceptual tools not only admittedly inadequate but demonstrably inappropriate to and destructive of traditional thinking and religious traditions (which are anachronistically/falsely called "pre-modern").

(This is not to deny that Weber did obtain some very valuable results.)

In an address given at the University of Munich two years before his death, Weber himself gives the clearest formulation of this dilemma: "The capacity for the accomplishment of religious virtuosos — the 'intellectual sacrifice' — is the decisive characteristic of the positively religious man. That this is so is shown by the fact that in spite (or rather in consequence) of theology (which unveils it) the tension between the value-spheres of 'science' and the sphere of 'the holy' is unbridgeable."⁽⁹⁾

In another address given in the same year (1918), Weber argues that "The age-old problem of theodicy consists of the very question of how it is that a power which is said to be at once omnipotent and kind could have created such an irrational world of undeserved suffering, unpunished injustice, and hopeless stupidity. Either this power is not omnipotent or not kind, or, entirely different principles of compensation and reward govern our life — principles we may interpret metaphysically, or even principles that forever escape our comprehension."⁽¹⁰⁾

Weber goes on to point out that "This problem — the experience of the irrationality of the world — has been the driving force of all religious evolution."⁽¹¹⁾ He then emphasises that "We are placed into various life-spheres, each of which is governed by different laws."⁽¹²⁾

Weber is perfectly clear that neither the natural nor the historical science can ever find a universal theoretical framework which would logically encompass these different laws.

The simple but momentous corollary that Weber suggests is that theologies (and theodicies) can be neither refuted nor debunked nor made irrelevant. No science, no sociology, no philosophy can take their place. A layman or a scientist can only make his personal or collective choice.

The act of choice, however, will remain ultimately outside sociology which thus remains essentially fragmentary, retaining, strictly speaking, only an aesthetic value.⁽³⁾

The unresolved problematics of Science and Religion appears in Weber's sociology of modern society as the dichotomy between bureaucracy (Science) and charismatic leadership (Religion), and it is well-known that Weber, who attached a central importance to bureaucracy in the on-going development of modern society, was quite pessimistic about its possible redemption by charisma.

Science and Values

Essentially the same tension, i.e. that between science and religion which, towards the end of his life, Weber came to see as unresolvable except by crucial existential decisions, appears again in his sociology of values. He devised a method for studying and comprehending values with the help of his famous distinction between value-judgement (affirming a value or choosing between alternative values) and value-reference (selection, analysis and understanding of parts of historical reality with reference to the values manifest or implicit in them). The logical adequacy of this methodology is doubtful; but here we are not examining Weber in any narrow professional context. Our concern is with Weber as an exemplar of his age. It is clearly recognised in his later work that values are an aspect of the total world-view of every age and their full meaning and force could be analysed and understood only in that particular universe. Towards the end of his life Weber became increasingly convinced that a world-view is not amenable to

complete and systematic scientific understanding; accordingly, scientists *qua* scientists cannot underwrite one world-view truly so-called. The acceptance of a world-view is a matter of ultimate choice (that is, if an ultimate choice is a choice at all). Weber tried to see the "rationality" of a world-view sociologically, in terms of its own basic postulates, but he became progressively clearer that these postulates are beyond the scope of scientific scrutiny and are neither verifiable nor falsifiable in terms of scientific methodology. They are intractable even for the cultural sciences as envisaged by Weber in the tradition of Windelband and Rickert.

One may grant that, to a certain extent, a value-system and a socio-cultural system can be comprehended by the Weberian method of ideal-typical reconstruction and analysis. Yet the crucial difficulty of comparing different world-views in terms of a common language would remain: "The fate of an epoch which has eaten of the tree of knowledge is that it must know that we cannot learn the *meaning* of the world from the results of its analysis, be it ever so perfect; it must rather be in a position to create this meaning itself."¹⁴

"The fruit of the tree of knowledge, which is distasteful to the complacent but which is, nonetheless, inescapable, consists in the insight that every single important activity and ultimately life as a whole, if it is not to be permitted to run on as an event in nature but is instead to be consciously guided, is a series of ultimate decisions through which the soul — as in Plato — chooses its own fate, i.e., the meaning of its activity and existence."¹⁵

The gap between the value-rooted nature of socio-cultural reality and the nature of social science as an aspect of rationalisation, thus remains unbridged.

Science and History

The question of value leads directly to the third dilemma: Science and History. Weber sees human history as the process of creation and maintenance of values by man: "Culture" is a finite segment of the meaningless infinity of the world process, a segment on which *human*

beings confer meaning and significance.”⁽¹⁶⁾ Weber had accepted the distinctive nature of sociology as a cultural and historical science; he did not want to construct a natural science of sociology or history; even so the very idea of a historical science is a contradiction in terms, for science aims at establishing propositions of universal validity (Weber always adhered to this minimal explication of science), while history essentially is the realm of contingency.

Weber thought that this contradiction could be overcome. For this purpose he invented his famous method of ideal-typical reconstruction and analysis of historical reality. To the same end he established the distinction between causal adequacy and meaning adequacy. However, there are three basic difficulties in transforming historical contingency into historical necessity — a transformation implied by any sociology of history.⁽¹⁷⁾ Firstly, a theory of historical causality aims at and often succeeds in isolating a set of factors given which the happenings of certain events becomes intelligible, or rationally comprehensible; however, it cannot be generalised in the form of: If ‘X’ then ‘Y’. For this reason such a theory remains quite partial and definitely falls short of the paradigm of scientific causality. Moreover, it cannot be held adequate even otherwise, for it does not say, “since X, therefore, Y,” that is, falls very much short of giving the necessary and sufficient conditions of the historical phenomena being studied. In the Weberian framework, the sociologist can only say “Since X¹, X², X’ therefore, Y is the most probable event”.

The second difficulty arises from the fact that there could be more than one ideal-typical reconstruction of the “same” phenomenon. The choice between two divergent ideal-types cannot be made on any scientific basis. The fact that Weber does not believe in the existence of a universally valid hierarchy of values, eliminates the possibility of discovering the true or fully warranted ideal-type of a historical phenomenon. Another difficulty arises from the fact that in view of the Weberian thesis of the mutual incompatibility of certain value-systems, the continuity between the ideal-types of different socio-cultural systems cannot be posited. But if this continuity is not assumed, only a

chronicle (if even that) would be possible — no “science” of history.

In the light of this analysis of Weber's response to what he considered to be his major challenge as an intellectual, it seems that ultimately there could not be any resolution of the antithesis between the natural and the social or cultural sciences: an antithesis rejected by Comte and Marx and bequeathed to Weber by Dilthey, Windelband and Rickert and the neo-Kantian tradition.

Science and Sociology

From this failure arises the fourth dilemma: Science and Sociology. Weber defined sociology as a science which attempts an “interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects. In ‘action’ is included all human behaviour when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it. Action in this sense may be either overt or purely inward or subjective; it may consist of positive intervention in a situation, or of deliberately refraining from such intervention or passively acquiescing in the situation. Action is social in so far as, by virtue of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual (or individuals), it takes account of the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course.”⁽¹⁸⁾

Now this celebrated definition of sociology which includes Weber's formal definition of “action” and “social action” gives rise to the following problem: If the aim of science is to arrive at universally valid propositions, and at the same time, the social scientific propositions and generalisations are probabilistic, how is a science of “subjective meanings” at all possible? And if one does allow the possibility of a science of human action in terms of “subjective” meanings, do the meanings remain subjective in any significant sense of the term? Alternatively, and at a more general level, the dilemma is: If human action and social action and hence society are defined in natural terms, then the value-creating role of man emphasised by Weber cannot be given any essential place in the socio-cultural system; and, if social action and society are defined as value-rooted or value-centred

phenomena, then no *sociological* theory of value is logically possible; and, if this be so, sociology is possible only as a metaphysically based hermeneutics.

Weber based his definition of sociology on the distinction between *Naturwissenschaften* (which are supposed to be nomothetic) and *Geisteswissenschaften* (which are supposed to be idiographic).⁽⁴⁹⁾ He naturally hoped that by developing a special logic for the historical "sciences" he could solve the above dilemma; it is doubtful if ultimately he had the satisfaction of having achieved the hoped-for higher unity of the sciences of the spirit. For Weber is aware that the distinction between the two sciences is not meant as an ultimate antithesis and hence a generic (minimal) meaning of science has to be common to both the 'sciences' (of nature and of spirit).

Science, for Weber is an aspect of the process of rationalisation which is characteristic of modern Western societies. In his great lecture, "Science as a Vocation", there is a masterly and forthright analysis of the nature of scientific work: "Scientific work is chained to the course of progress...."⁽²⁰⁾ "In science, each of us knows that what he has accomplished will be antiquated in ten, twenty, fifty years. That is the fate to which science is subjected; it is the very *meaning* of scientific work..."⁽²¹⁾ Weber goes on to observe: "Science today is a 'vocation' organized in special disciplines in the service of self-clarification and knowledge of interrelated facts. It is not the gift of grace of seers and prophets dispensing sacred values and revelations, nor does it partake of the contemplation of sages and philosophers about the meaning of the universe. This, to be sure, is the inescapable condition of our historical situation. We cannot evade it so long as we remain true to ourselves. And if Tolstoi's question recurs to you: as science does not, who is to answer the question: 'What shall we do, and, how shall we arrange our lives?' or, in the words used here tonight: 'Which of warring gods should we serve? Or should we serve perhaps an entirely different god, and who is he?' then one can say that only a prophet or a saviour can give the answers. If there is no such man, or if his message is no longer believed in, then you will

certainly not compel him to appear on this earth by having thousands of professors, as privileged hirelings of the state, attempt as petty prophets in their lecture-rooms to take over his role. All they will accomplish is to show that they are unaware of the decisive state of affairs: the prophet for whom so many of our younger generation yearn simply does not exist. But this knowledge in its forceful significance has never become vital for them. The inward interest of a truly religiously 'musical' man can never be served by veiling to him and to others the fundamental fact that he is destined to live in a godless and prophetic time by giving him the *ersatz* of armchair prophecy. The integrity of his religious organ, it seems to me, must rebel against this."⁽²²⁾

The deep pessimism, the near despair of the man who chooses to be a social scientist is unmistakable here. That this implies the utter futility of (modern) sociology is clear too. Reflecting on the essentially incomplete nature of all science and its infinitely self-cancelling "progressive" telos, Weber observes: "Every scientific 'fulfilment' raises new 'questions'; it *asks* to be 'surpassed' and outdated. Whoever wishes to serve science has to resign himself to this fact. Scientific works certainly can last as 'gratifications' because of their artistic quality, or they may remain important as a means of training. Yet they will be surpassed scientifically — let that be repeated — for it is our common fate and, more, our common goal. We cannot work without hoping that others will advance further than we have. In principle, this progress goes on *ad infinitum*. And with this we come to inquire into the *meaning* of science. For, after all, it is not self-evident that something subordinate to such law is sensible and meaningful in itself. Why does one engage in doing something that in reality never comes, and never can come, to an end?"⁽²³⁾

Few statements could be more powerful or more unambiguous. Here Weber rejects both the autotelic and the aesthetic concepts of science. (The aesthetic is really a form of the autotelic.) Is Sociology then a policy science? By no means. It can never be the task of an empirical science, declares Weber, "to provide binding norms and ideals from which directives for immediate practical activity can be derived."⁽²⁴⁾

Is Sociology then a "pure science" concerned only with the "truth" of a given socio-cultural reality? Perhaps; but certainly not on Weberian presuppositions. If, as Weber holds, values and meanings are human creations (and not transcendently given), if truth represents only the ultimate choice of an individual, if all comprehension is relative to a standpoint that is validated only in terms of a personal choice — then there can be no hope for sociology as a pure or formal science; in any case, not in an age of shattered and conflicting value-systems and all-enveloping anomy. (And yet sociology is the science *of* and *for* our "modern" age.)⁽²⁵⁾

It can now be seen how the antinomies of Science and History, Science and Sociology are simply major variations of Weber's Core Dilemma: the one between the Intellectual as Scientist and the Intellectual as Metaphysician; or, to formulate it at another level, between Science as Anthropology and Science as Autology.

Towards the end of his life Weber no longer believed that social science could ever resolve or transcend this dilemma, the ultimate predicament of modern man. In one of his last lectures, he was thinking not of any future advances in the social sciences or in science and technology, but of a Kierkegaardian either/or: not science but a new stoicism could be the solace, if not salvation, of the younger and coming generations.

"We live as did the ancients when their world was not yet disenchant-ed of its gods and demons, only we live in a different sense. As Hellenic man at times sacrificed to Aphrodite and at other times to Apollo, and, above all, as everybody sacrificed to the gods of his city, so do we still nowadays, only the bearing of man has been disenchant-ed and denuded of its mystical but inwardly genuine plasticity. Fate, and certainly not 'science', holds sway over these gods and their struggles. One can only understand what the godhead is for the one order or for the other, or better, what godhead is in the one or in the other order. With this understanding, however, the matter has reached its limit so far as it can be discussed in a lecture-room and by a professor. Yet the great and vital problem that is contained therein is,

of course, very far from being concluded. But forces other than university chairs have their say in this matter.

"What man will take upon himself the attempt to 'refute scientifically' the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount? For instance, the sentence, 'resist no evil,' or the image of turning the other cheek? And yet it is clear, in mundane perspective, that this is an ethic of undignified conduct; one has to choose between the religious dignity which this ethic confers and the dignity of manly conduct which preaches something quite different; 'resist evil — lest you be co-responsible for an overpowering evil.' According to our ultimate standpoint, the one is the devil and the other the God, and the individual has to decide which is God for him and which is the devil. And so it goes throughout all the orders of life.

"The grandiose rationalism of an ethical and methodical conduct of life which flows from every religious prophecy has dethroned this polytheism in favour of the 'one thing that is needful.' Faced with the realities of outer and inner life, Christianity has deemed it necessary to make those compromises and relative judgments, which we all know from its history. Today the routines of everyday life challenge religion. Many old gods ascend from their graves; they are disenchanting and hence take the form of impersonal forces. They strive to gain power over our lives and again they resume their eternal struggle with one another. What is hard for modern man, and especially for the younger generation, is to measure up to *workaday* existence. The ubiquitous chase for 'experience' stems from this weakness; for it is weakness not to be able to countenance the stern seriousness of our fateful times.

"Our civilization destines us to realize more clearly these struggles again, after our eyes have been blinded for a thousand years — blinded by the allegedly or presumably exclusive orientation towards the grandiose moral fervor of Christian ethics."⁽²⁶⁾

With this clear and powerful statement made at the end of the First World War, Comtean sociology comes to an end. Weber shows that sociology cannot replace theology, it cannot provide a secular theodicy for the (Western) industrial-technological man, it cannot underwrite any

new system of morality designed for the needs of the new society. Weber undermined the Comtean hope that sociology could eventually do for the First and last (true) universalism of the relativistic and realistic modern society what Thomism did for the Christianity besieged as it was at this time, internally, by the increasing antithesis of Reason and Revelation and, externally, by the power of Islam and other Oriental religions. His theory of science makes it very clear that any autotelic (or aesthetic) concept of social science will not be self-consistent and hence bound to break down sooner or later.⁽²⁷⁾

And yet in his personal life Weber continued to believe in the world-historical destiny of the European Man. And this implies the universalism of the industrial-technological society. Perhaps he did accept this universalism, perhaps he did not believe in it; in any case, it was with resignation and not with any reassurance and enthusiasm that he thought of the future. Indeed, it was with the deepest anguish that he saw the double face of rationalisation and he could not but see the anomic and dehumanising forces as central rather than peripheral to the modern socio-cultural system.

If the encyclopaedic scholarship of Weber thus failed to provide a scientific kerygma and a positive sociological *summa*, it does not mean a personal failure; no, not by any means. It means simply and clearly that social science henceforward could only be social criticism ("Critical Theory"), if even that; for sound social criticism assumes an accepted (or a projected unanimous) philosophy. The days of "positive philosophy" are over (that is, if it was not still-born).

More ominously, Weber's pessimism reflects the progressive weakening of the *élan* that had sustained so long the social science *Weltanschauung* against its inner contradictions and strains.

More than half-a-century separates Weber's time from our own. And these decades have been the time when sociology has steadily and rapidly grown, "matured" and, according to many of its protagonists, has, indeed, 'come of age'. Except for the last decade, any talk of a crisis in sociology (to say nothing of its end) would have sounded

eccentric, even crazy. In fact, in 1970 Gouldner talks only of the *coming* crisis of Western Sociology and he is mainly concerned about a minor system, the Parsonian.

The anguish of Weber's later thinking left no significant trace on mainstream sociology as it developed in America and England in the post-war (1918) period. Only faint echoes, if any, survive of the disenchantment and despair, of the insensitivity and excess of a sensate culture, of the schism in the soul of man. Latter-day sociologies reflect, in various direct and oblique ways, the little *personal* faiths of Weber, Sorokin and Toynbee: recovery of the greatness of Germany, of a renaissance of creative altruism, of the renewal of Christianity and a new communion of Saints — all variations of old, faded Comtean motifs.

The development of sociology between the two World Wars and particularly after World War II is a strange phenomenon. The utterly shattering experience of the War itself, of Hiroshima, of its forgetting and principial trivialisation; of Auschwitz, of the Cold War and the race for asymmetry of nuclear terror, of impending ecological disaster — nothing finds a central or structural expression in mainstream sociological thinking. There are, of course, technical discussions of nuclear *symmetry* and the balance of terror, of "post-modern" and "post-industrial society", of "post-culture", "counter-culture", of "consciousness three", of "genetic revolution", of the "passage to the solar age" — and all that. No thinking, no human concern; only a Guermentes politeness.⁽²⁸⁾

Indeed, sociology systematically underplays, regularises and domesticates the terrifying, world-destroying novelty of nuclear technology, in spite of its faith in the absolute uniqueness of modernity. Huge academic and journalistic energies are bent to assimilate the rise of cosmocidal nuclear power to previous technological revolutions: the invention of the gunpowder, the discovery of agriculture! Ecocatastrophe? But that is only a transitional (and believe it or not — a transient) problem. "I suggest that we are in the midst of a transition phase to an ecological age, characterised by an ecological world-view,

the outlines of which are being articulated in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and in philosophy and religious thought."^(28a) What more could one desire? We are in the best of hands, indeed, in omnipotent hands: so we must stop worrying and start living again.

The deliberate barbarity of wanton, indiscriminate nuclear bombing, the diabolic nonchalance of the destruction of a whole city and the maiming of untold generations of survivors: the sin of Hiroshima is forgotten rather quickly by the "victor" and the victim alike. Is there a subtle even obscene collusion between the two? Or is it that Mammon-and-Modernity must ride roughshod over our humanity?

Auschwitz and Hiroshima, it is true, cannot be brought within the realm of speech and reason. But what we experience is not beyond the reach of memory. Perhaps we do not want to remember; we like to be deaf to the dire warnings which 'would' dwell around and within us if we did not exorcise, with professionally perfected trivialising strategies, tormenting wailings rising from unremembered necropolises.

"The sin of Hiroshima": but no such phrase is permissible: the idea and the word 'sin' are under an inviolable taboo under the regime of modernity: it will have to be erased by the reader. And if the holocaust of Hiroshima cannot be named in any other way, so be it. It shall remain nameless. (And no sin, no wrath, no mercy.)⁽²⁹⁾

The end of formal and political imperialism and the emergence of America and Soviet Russia as nuclear superpowers made the success of modernisation of the under-developed "third world" the major (perhaps the only) concern of Euro-American sociology. This is no less true of the peripheral, parasitic, subordinate copybook of Non-Euro-American social sciences. They are wholly dominated by development-modernisation (or "scientific" socialist revolutionism) and show, accordingly, a vehement, overweening concern — missionary at its best, mercenary mostly — for "emancipation" from traditionalism. The importance, if any, of this vernacular social science is confined to their possible use as "ethnographical material" by the European or American social scientist.

Even Europe has to "modernise" itself; and the question whether this

means the "Americanisation of Europe" assumes great importance in the context of Weber's prognosis of our times. "Modernisation" is the mode in which modernity's imperial universalism finds its latest expression. It works as a substitute for the lost *élan* of Western man and helps him to falsify his experience of the War and blunt the tragic sense of the "progress" of modern civilisation.⁽³⁰⁾ At different levels and in various ways, sociology to-day reflects and reinforces this "new" modernising consciousness.

If our analysis of Weber's paradigmatic dilemmas is reasonably sound, it would, by no means, be far-fetched to claim that Weber had been aware of the paradox, the irony and the huge imperial-violent implications of the fact that the life-line, the sustenance-system of the theory and practice of modernity was constituted by the imperial practice and ideology of progress-modernisation. It is from this progress ideology and the global domination of the practice of modernisation that modernity gained its "moral", "intellectual" and political energy; just as it built its cybernetic immunity system against internal contradictions on the global "success" of its modernisation project. Weber was keenly sensitive to the depth of the falsification of consciousness the paradox of modernisation engendered. A calm and uncannily clear-sighted, eminently responsible thinker, a prophetic master of sociological thought, it was Weber's fate to preside over its demise. He died an unhappy man at the height of his powers.

The development of the idea and the institution of the welfare state after World War I is closely connected with the character of recent sociology, especially the directions and forms it takes after World War II. The welfare state creates for the sociologist a situation in which he has to make a radical decision: either he works for the destruction of the (liberal) industrial technological society, in which case the whole of modern sociology becomes irrelevant and has to be renounced; or he works for the strengthening of the welfare state, in which case he becomes essentially a "social engineer", or more correctly, a public relations expert for the state. Placed in this situation, we, the sociologists of the post-Weber time are like little proletarian *Oriantes*.

Aren't we?⁽³¹⁾

II Darkness Descends upon a Floodlighted World

It is time to see the truth. We, social scientists, *are* little proletarian Orianes; indeed, rather worse: unlike society ladies and aristocratic hostesses and the members of their salons whose masks are nearly transparent, ours are dense, dark, sinister.

It is not, however, a question of our littleness; the malady is far deeper: it is an aspect of what may be seen as the Second Fall: the Advent of Modernity which founds itself on the abolition of sin and, accordingly, the elimination of the very distinction between good and evil. Advent proclaims the certainty of the rising of modern man to Innocence through the self-mediated project of man achieving "scientific" omniscience.⁽³²⁾

We ignore that "Man has not been able to describe himself as a configuration in the *episteme* without thought at the same time discovering, both in itself and outside itself, at its borders yet also in its very warp and woof, an element of darkness, an apparently inert density in which it is embedded, an unthought which it contains entirely, yet in which it is also caught".⁽³³⁾

An earlier source is Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) who in his own way was drawing on traditional wisdom: "The supreme paradox of all thought is the attempt to discover something that thought cannot think. This passion is at bottom present in all thinking, even in the thinking of the individual, in so far as in thinking he participates in something transcending himself. But habit dulls our sensibilities, and prevents us from perceiving it."⁽³⁴⁾

Kierkegaard's thinking here is, of course, theo-philosophical and contra-modernity, while Foucault (1926–1984) writes as a philosophico-historical scholar and thinker. He is an archaeologist of knowledge (whatever that may mean) *critiquing* modern civilisation from within; however, by virtue of the syntax of his situation he does not escape

the metaphysical echoes of his language and style. Yet it is important that he decides to remain within the confines of modern hubristic homocentric thought. Let us then return to Kierkegaard who rightly notes the mighty indomitable force of habit; at this point, Foucault, perhaps in spite of himself, meets his predecessor with his "an apparently inert density", in which thought "is embedded".

This deadening of our sensibilities, this habitual non-perception of the other, the "unthought", this dogged, magisterial obliviousness to the darker side of man, that which remains non-manifest in all existence: this insensitivity arises from the betrayal of our gift of reflexive intelligence; a betrayal that is one of the cardinal virtues of modernity. In consequence, our age is founded on the trivialisation of the Other, a kind of systematic underground operation which is the precondition of the rise and development of the natural sciences as also of the so-called social sciences. The trivialisation of the Other (the interim form of the abolition of the Other, and the construction of a monistic universe) takes the form of demiurgic science (that is oriented to omniscience and omnipotence) and, at the level of civilisation, of social "science" and the imperial mission of modernity: Europeanisation of the Earth/globalisation of scientific socialism. (Globalisation of Euro-American modernity/"scientific" revolutionary socialism is an internal necessity, the entelechy of modern man following from the theory of "autogenesis" of (modern) man which implies the elimination of the Other. The rise of Hitlerism, the continuing trivialisation, even silence on the Holocaust and Hiroshima are some of the aspects of the wilful and proud self-alienation of man from his Source: alone and afraid in a world he never made. No, modern man will make a new world *eo ipso* free of all darkness, without an Other.)⁽³⁵⁾

The abolished Other, however, does appear in the social sciences as the twin problematic of (a) Reason/Unreason (Thought/Unthought), and (b) Rationalisation and Disenchantment. But given the abysmal conditions of its origin, it is a doomed problematic.

In Saint-Simon (1760-1825), Comte (1798-1857) and Durkheim (1858-1917), it is not centrally thematised. This is, firstly, because of their

evolutionism and, secondly, because of the pseudo-kerygamic evangelical perspective of their sociology and philosophy of history which, of course, is inconsistent with their evolutionism (unless evolutionism be a surrogate for denied Christianity). The problematic of the sentimental aspect of man (a positivisation and psychologisation of the problem of irrationality) in Saint-Simon and Comte (and the corresponding call for New Christianity and the proclamation of the Religion of Humanity) are problems and pathologies of their central problem, viz. the foundation of social solidarity. They are thus only indirectly concerned with the profounder aspect of Unreason, the problem of social solidarity itself having been reduced to the discovery or invention of a new basis of homogeneity, a new level of interdependence of the parts of a plurality. This comes out more clearly in Durkheim who sees anomie as the central malady of modernity and industrial society and proposes organic solidarity as a replacement for the lost mechanical solidarity based on likeness.

While devoting substantial attention to what he calls non-logical conduct — which he sees as of the greatest importance to sociology — Pareto (1848-1923) defines it only negatively as a residual category with logical conduct and logico-experimental theories officially in the centre. Furthermore, it is not conduct (“action” in Parsons’ terminology) itself that Pareto analyses; he studies “inductively” non-scientific and non-logico-experimental *theories* and analyses them into a constant and a variable part called Residues and Derivations. The non-scientific theory itself is called a Derivative. (One may question this formulation on the ground that there are several statements in Pareto supporting the view that sentiments or subliminal psychic states are at the root of both non-logical conduct and the various non-scientific theories supporting and justifying them: these psychic states, later given the technical name of Residues, are the constants remaining invariant as the matrix of the various forms of non-logical conduct and non-scientific theories (Derivations). The present interpretation too has, of course, ample textual support in Pareto. It is preferred here (though the occasion excludes documentation) because, as will be shown, it accords

better with his scientific credo and methodology.)

A theory of societal equilibrium (and its disturbance) is then constructed mainly in terms of the political dynamics of Residues with Force and Fraud (manipulation) in the role of mediators and an Elite class, founded on the natural inequality of man, using it in a perpetual power game, the rules of which and the conditions of victory or defeat therein Paretian sociology explored in great detail.

Pareto certainly postulated non-logical thought and conduct as central to social and historical existence and accordingly he based *his* scientific universalism (almost all post-scholastic European universalisms have been scientific-technological) on the non-logicality of human "nature"; the psychic states (which are seen by Pareto as infra-rational) determine, simultaneously and in a complex dialectic, both the variety of non-logical forms of human conduct and the different forms of non-logical thought that accompanied them pretending to be both their cause (or motivating force) and justification. These psychic states are constants that can be scientifically inventorised. The scientific gaze, Pareto clarifies, can never observe the "psychic states" themselves in any direct manner, scientifically they are primitive postulates justified by their manifestation in *both* conduct and thinking neither which, again, can be faced directly by science (logic and experiment) as they are in themselves. That is why in order to save the central distinction between science and metaphysics Pareto in his more formal exposition has to make Residues the invariant components of non-scientific theories — the unobservable psychic states have to be precluded from a causal role in order to steer clear of a metaphysical ontology. Non-logical conduct, residues and derivations can be brought within the scope of science as "residual" and only under pain of a double paradox: (a) that it is a science not of what and how things/phenomena are but of what and how they are not — an historical form of human Reason being the measure of all things: of those that are and those that are not; and (b) that to this science of the observable phenomena of non-logical action and thought the never-observable, forever incomprehensible "psychic states," arbitrarily so named, are

absolutely indispensable; it is not a question of a hypothesis that can be tested, nor can the Paretian concept of residues/psychic states be seen analogically as catalysts that can be discarded after the theory of non-logical conduct has been formed. In other words, in the name of science Pareto is founding a "counter-science", a description Foucault proposes for psycho-analysis, ethnology and structural linguistics. (It is being used here, perhaps, in an opposite sense, to refer to a Discourse that damages itself while doing violence to its objects; however, it is not impossible that Foucault uses "counter-science" with an irony raised to the second power.)

Vilfredo Pareto cultivated a scientist's (and perhaps personal as well) insensitivity to these fatal paradoxes. It seems there was an impelling, if not an imperial, need for him to be steadfast in maintaining the centrality of logico-experimental reason unperturbed even by the sacrifice of invention, innovation and a good part of technology to the domain of residues (of combination); worse even, the very *ê lan vital* of modern scientific research, viz., the quest for knowledge for its own sake (the Christian sin of idle curiosity) will have to be given over to the realm of the non-logical (again, residues of combination). His whole "scientific enterprise" culminates in the theory of societal equilibrium constructed on the basis of the theory of residues together with a few other theses: social stratification, circulation of the elite and cyclic relationship between the rise and fall of the bases (residues) of socio-political power. Not surprisingly, the theory of societal equilibrium is founded on Pareto's "demonstration" of the organic (or more accurately, the socio-logical) necessity of force and fraud in society and history. Indeed, given Pareto's cratology or the general theory of atelic (or autotelic), cyclical nature of socio-political power, given the subordination of the economic realm to the political, the realm of rational social action becomes empty. If yet the faith in the centrality of scientific Reason remains intact, it is indeed a non-logical phenomenon, for the proletarian, apolitical persona of the scientist as a supra-mundane observer is too thin, too powerless to save the situation.

Be that as it may, it is not in the inventor of a sociology, or more

accurately a "logico-experimental science" of non-logical conduct and of the role of force and fraud in society and history that one finds a responsible, professional sensitivity to the "unavoidable quality" of the zygotic pairing of Reason and Unreason. That sensitivity is to be found, perhaps for the first time in modern sociology, in Pareto's much younger contemporary, Max Weber (1864-1920) who finally comes to realise that the triumphs of Rationalisation in world history by no means succeed in marginalising "Irrationality" and he sees this truth not in spite of his undisputed scientific temper and will but because of them.

In Weber, the Reason/Unreason dichotomy, in truth, Irrationality, becomes crucial, if not central. Irrationality is still not granted a fully independent, equal and coeval status in relation to Rationality. And yet Weber is prepared to face the problem of History as if Unreason were the key to the historico-analytical understanding of the Present. One finds this in Comte, Durkheim and Marx too; a major difference, however, is that unlike Comte and Durkheim, Weber did not aspire to be the pope or the "Grand Rabbi" of the Present as the Future; and radically departing from Marx, he did not believe that he could and hence ought to break the code of the Future in a grand maieutic enterprise towards the birth of the Revolution as the demiurge: indeed, as an intellectual Weber convincingly declined both the prophetic and demiurgic vocations which define modernity and Marx. This refusal explains Weber's stoically resigned stance towards modern European civilisation and its universalism and definitively distinguishes him from Marx and his (pseudo) kerygmatic eschatology.

This flows directly from Weber's concept of Rationalisation as the basis of his analytical-interpretative history of the Present (capitalist modernity). In Weber's theory of history, of which the history of world religions is a substantial and most important part, the process and procedure of Rationalisation is at the same time a process of disenchantment of the world and the loss of freedom and meaning for the citizens. His encyclopaedic survey and penetrating analyses reveal (a) that the scope and competence of the processes and proceedings of

rationalisation are limited to external relationships, in other words, rationalisation is effective in the domain of relationships between man and nature, between man and artifacts, between things and things, and between man and man, insofar as the relationships can be completely functionalised; (b) that this leaves out the spheres of human relationship as such and also, far more importantly, man's relationship with the Divine (the Transcendent, the Absolute, the Atemporal) as a residue, with no officially recognised science equipped or designed to thematise them. Thus the spheres of meaning and value and man's affective life represent the ultimate resistance to rationalisation. It follows that the unique or specific coherence of the realm of values is outside the coherence of a scientific system, that is, outside science itself, including *Geisteswissenschaften* (for it is outside Rationality); in other words, it cannot be fully understood and explained. If, therefore the realm is "incoherent", science *qua* science cannot bring about coherence: "The elder Mill, whose philosophy I will not praise otherwise, was on this point right when he said: If one proceeds from pure experience, one arrives at polytheism. This is shallow in formulation and sounds paradoxical, and yet there is truth in it. If anything, we realize again today that something can be sacred not only in spite of its not being beautiful, but rather *because* and *in so far* as it is not beautiful. You will find this documented in the fifty-third chapter of the book of Isaiah and in the twenty-first Psalm. And, since Nietzsche, we realize that something can be beautiful, not only in spite of the aspect in which it is not good, but rather in that very aspect. You will find this expressed earlier in the *Fleurs du mal*, as Baudelaire named his volume of poems. It is commonplace to observe that something may be true although it is not beautiful and not holy and not good. Indeed it may be true in precisely those aspects. But all these are only the most elementary cases of the struggle that the gods of the various orders and values are engaged in. I do not know how one might wish to decide 'scientifically' the value of French and German culture; for here, too, different gods struggle with one other, now and for all time to come."⁽³⁶⁾

There are other sources of irrationality: Nature and, more specifically, the contingency inherent in all reality; man's affective life; and, the reality of power and the individual's relation to it (Weber sees power as the ability to impose one's will over the other/s). The most disturbing working of irrationality is certainly to be seen in the heteronomy of the realm of values, and Weber is acutely aware of it. And *no less important*, there is what Weber calls ethical irrationality which appears, firstly, in the form of antinomies arising from pursuing both justice and equality or, within the realm of justice, where commutative and distributive justice may not necessarily harmonise; and secondly, in the form of an antagonism — the possible incommensurability between an ethical intention and the ethically undesirable consequences following from the *realisation* of the intention. This, of course, is a profound dilemma not confined to any specific realm of human action, for all action initiates an infinite and irreversible chain of consequences and in a means-end model of action the (purposive) rationality of human action fails to be more than a matter of chance and pragmatic decision. Since ethical conduct is a part of the general human action, the heteronomy of values and possible irrationality of ethical action are bound up with each other: However, since human action, *qua* human, presupposes an ontology, the value-irrationality is perhaps more fundamental; in other words, what is really disturbing for Weber is ontological irrationality; that is why Weber sees man's experience of the Irrational as the driving force of all religions. Julien Freund is, therefore, certainly right when he says: "Despite the superficial progress they have brought about in all fields of human activity, rationalization and intellectualization have made no inroads on the empire of the irrational. On the contrary, as rationalization increases, the irrational grows in intensity. This is a key idea of Weber's, and, although he never stated it in so many words, it dominates his entire philosophy."³⁷

In a remarkable insight Professor Freund tells us not only about a dilemma central to Weber's thought: it is the unresolved dilemma, antinomy, (appearing under many different guises) in all modern

Western thought, especially in the social scientific disciplines. The issue is this: For the intellectual appropriation (and mastery) of the world (man, society and history), its totalisation is a *sine qua non*; or else the un-mastered will be a constant threat to the mastered segment of the world both in thought and practice. Since the world is structured in unavoidable, antithetical dualities and doubles (both in time and space), almost the only method for modern scientific intellectuality—rationality is to treat, at the level of theory the other (in this case the negative) of the pair as a residue; and at the level of praxis, to repress, oppress, eliminate it. Indeed, the method of residues is a theory (and practice) of domination—eventually of political totalitarianism. I think there are strictly logical grounds why any such theoretical and historical programme and process must fail. If the Other is a Residue what is its *raison d'être*? This question is never asked by modern science because the descriptive term "residue" is a deliberately misleading ellipsis; more plainly, a deception. A residue is (a) what has been apparently successfully, residualised, or (b) what *will be* successfully residualised (that is why Weber saw the process, especially the programme of rationalisation as essentially utopian and hence the well-known paradox of the built-in progressive obsolescence of all rationalisation and science).⁽³⁸⁾ However, if the programme of residualisation succeeds, eventually all dualities and doubles would be eliminated (whatever that may mean)—for in a scientific system a residue, when not programmatically thematised, must be eliminated: either as a residual concept or as a phenomenon. Thus the very structure of reality, the constitution of the universe would stand fundamentally altered. However, it is a strange triumph: the science and technology creating this new earth and new heaven would thereby be rendering itself irrelevant, obsolete; for the new transparent, shadowless universe may need a new science; or may not — who knows! If, as Weber insightfully notes, the triumphs of rationalisation have not and cannot necessarily diminish the scope, power and quality of the irrational; if, in other words, the domains of Reason and Unreason are related but neither dependent nor inter-dependent with reference to each other —

a Foucauldian insight anticipated but not followed by Weber — and if this is odd, distressing and problematic (not to say actionable), it is surely because of the major but not always explicit assumption of the Plenitude of Reason (and Science): the most talked about self-awareness of science of its own limits (mark, limits not limitations) is just irrelevant; for without the presumption of its Plenitude, scientific research could never have its great programme of continuous raids on the Irrational. Again, it is not only the instrumental but all Weberian rationalities that are in question here including value-rationality.

But human reason does *not* have unbounded scope; it is not a Plenitude (a clumsy expression which may be forgiven). The *angst* and awe, the alienation and remembrance arising from the awareness of this Absence have been man's perennial source of his quest for knowledge — and love; it is modern science that short-circuits and idolises this quest by displacing Plenitude in favour of omnipotence (and omniscience). Though not synonymous, Plenitude, Omniscience and Omnipotence belong to the same idea-family. They are all self-contradictory; or, in any case, unintelligible. Traditional thinking, in the last analysis, acknowledges this and accepts these ideas in their incomprehension. Using them centrally and indispensably, modern science does not officially acknowledge them thematically and hence can not confront them methodically. Modern science substitutes the idea of Plenitude by omnipotence (also by omniscience) because it is more plausible to use the omnipotence idea in an incremental cumulative sense for it can be backed up by the glamour of technological wonders and triumphs. The syntax and logic of Plenitude make it far more difficult to operationalise it in programmatic terms. (The epistemological imperative for this displacement arises from a perverse acceptance of the otherwise valid Vico Principle. This will not be discussed here.)

Between the present of the triumphal march of increasing power of technology (material and social-cultural, e.g., "computerised", "electronic", "cybernetic" society) and science (natural-mathematical and social and cultural including Foucauldian counter-sciences), and the future of

projected and incomprehensible omnipotence (and omniscience) falls the dark, menacing shadow of omnivorous, polymorphous violence. The unwarranted unreal residualisation of irrationality necessarily turns the process and plan of rationalisation into a collision of two irrationalities, the teleology of Rationalisation and Scientific Research as a programme of omnipotence and omniscience on the one hand, and Nature, human Irrationality and structural social contradictions on the other. Peace between the two is out of the question as long as we are unwilling to see the truth of Reason and Unreason: as coborn, brothers behind the scene, the double face of the Uncreate as Manifestation. Except we face this transcendent truth, we can achieve only the kind of victory modern man has won over Nature: with all its miracles and super benefits, man's conquest of Nature culminates in the deepening imminence of total cosmic destruction *via* ecological and nuclear crises.

Scholars of Weber acknowledge that Weber became increasingly convinced of the hopelessness of modern civilisation and the irrelevance of established social sciences. "... his deep belief, which he expressed more than once in his studies "The Objectivity of Knowledge" and "Politics as a Vocation," was that life and the world are fundamentally irrational."⁽³⁹⁾ Habermas is no less clear that Weber saw the master historical process of rationalisation culminating destructively: "If one represents the systematic content of the *Zwischenbetrachtung* in this way, it becomes clear that Weber's intuitions point in the direction of a selective pattern of rationalization, a jagged profile of modernization. Yet Weber speaks of paradoxes and not of the partial character of societal rationalization. In his view, the real reason for the dialectic of rationalization is not an unbalanced institutional embodiment of available cognitive potentials; he locates the seeds of destruction of the rationalization of the world in the very differentiation of independent cultural value spheres that released that potential and made that rationalization possible."⁽⁴⁰⁾

Weber's understanding (or maybe, we should say awareness) of the prevalence of Irrationality in life and the world was clear and profound: he saw it not only as historical prevalence, as a kind of quantitative

balance against Rationality, but as one of the most significant aspects of the ontology of human history (the sphere of meaning and order he saw as an island in an ocean of chaos); he was fully aware of the essential failure of the process (or plan) of rationalisation, its impact on the domain of irrationality being marginal. More radically, he saw the emergence of modern culture with a supposedly autonomous domain as a consequence of the displacement of the domains of religion by the modern project of inaugurating and consolidating the rule of science and Rationalisation and he viewed this development almost wholly negatively: "Science has created this cosmos of natural causality and has seemed unable to answer with certainty the question of its own ultimate presuppositions. Nevertheless science, in the name of 'intellectual integrity,' has come forward with the claim of representing the only possible form of a reasoned view of the world. The intellect, like all culture values, has created an aristocracy based on the possession of rational culture and independent of all personal ethical qualities of man. The aristocracy of intellect is hence an unbrotherly aristocracy. Worldly man has regarded this possession of culture as the highest good. In addition to the burden of ethical guilt, however, something has adhered to this cultural value which was bound to depreciate it with still greater finality, namely, senselessness — if this cultural value is to be judged in terms of its own standards."⁽⁴⁾

This is the end (both culmination and death) not only of Comtean-Durkheimian but of Marxian sociology as well, for the latter is sustained precisely by those combinations of positivism and eschatology, evolution and revolution, history and science, chemistry and alchemy that Weber has shown to be so unscientific, illogical and unhistorical; in any case, they are rejected in his thought. Here I do not wish to raise the question of the lessons modern man is expected to draw from the second grand disenchantment (indeed, disenchantment raised to the second power) announced (kerygmatically?) by Weber. I wish to raise a more immediate though perhaps no less important question: How is it that from his insight about the non-residual nature of irrationality Weber does not go forward to a Kierkegaardian or, at the least, to the

Foucauldian insight (quoted at the beginning of this Part)? Surely he cannot be unaware of the positive form of the truth he chose to formulate in a negative or neutral form.

One could perhaps say that the question, as far as Weber is concerned, is unimportant if not already answered. With the Whole ruptured and fragmented once for all, it is a matter of an ultimate choice; given the reign of the New Polytheism, which god one worships is entirely one's own choice: as Freund puts it, ultimately one has to choose between Prometheus and Epimetheus. But this is hardly helpful: between two absolutes or ultimates there is no real choice, indeed, the logic of choice precludes this. Weber is not unaware of this, nor is it very likely that he failed to see the schizophrenia — both logical and existential — built into his celebrated theory of value-neutrality (*wertfreiheit*); one could even go so far as to suggest that the irony of the proposal was not unintentional. The methodology and pedagogy of value/ethical-neutrality can be seen as a protective device against acute schizophrenia. Perhaps, its prophylactic efficacy will depend upon whether it makes sense to speak of personal choice of convictions which are against one's own rational/scientific views (convictions?) and whose grounds are either unstable or incommensurate with rationality. This is apart from the theorem defended in the note on Durkheim showing that the concept of choice (and choosing) does not apply to ultimate situations. In any case, the crucial practical question remains: can the method — or shall we say the ethics — of value-neutrality effectively insulate the theoretical and the practical domains from each other and thus successfully keep the man and the scientist almost wholly apart? And if it can, what could possibly be the secret of its power, the ground of the ethics of value and ethical-neutrality? Perhaps the question cannot be asked for the scientist/professor must already be "a moral person" (or, shall we say, moral entity) before he can strive for value and ethical-neutrality.

Or else scientific value-cum-ethical neutrality would only too easily serve the modern scientist — "intellectual" as an ultra-powerful ideological weapon for all manner of high and low opportunism,

enabling him at the same time to ignore truth at will — even when it is his own discovery. Again, under the disguising and “dignified” shield of pure value-neutral science, he can be an accomplice in any kind of violent and deep exploitative plans of the powerful. Now it is of central importance to see that in subtle subterranean way scientific “objectivity” and value-cum-ethical neutrality has been illicitly, indefensibly, *transformed* into a meta-value; into an Absolute (indeed, into an omnipotent, all-forgiving God).

In *Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Vol. I of his two volume work, *The Theory of Communicative Action*) Habermas concludes his erudite and full-length study of Weber’s theory of Rationalisation with what is perhaps intended as a definitive critique of Weber’s theory of modern civilisation along with that of Horkheimer and Adorno who, in an important sense, continue the Weberian tradition. Noting that Weber speaks of paradoxes of societal rationalisation rather than of partial rationalisation, Habermas observes: “This idea retains a certain plausibility only so long as Weber does not take into account, with respect to the moral-practical complex of rationality, a form of the religious ethic of brotherliness secularized at the same level as modern science and autonomous art, a communicative ethic detached from its foundation in salvation religion; that is, so long as he remains generally fixated instead on the relations of tension between religion and the world.”⁽⁴²⁾

Secondly, Habermas points out that “In Weber’s theory of rationalization the development of law occupies a place as prominent as it is ambiguous. The ambiguity consists in the fact that the rationalization of law makes possible — or seems to make possible — both the institutionalization of purposive-rational economic and administrative action and the detachment of subsystems of purposive-rational action from their moral-practical foundations”.⁽⁴³⁾ Habermas goes on to observe that while it could be argued, as Weber did, that “in consequence of the shaking of religious faith, ethical action orientations can no longer be reliably reproduced”, it would not have much force in the case of modern law which arose “from the start in secularized form”.⁽⁴⁴⁾ To

obviate this difficulty, Habermas thinks, Weber reinterprets modern law in a way that it is "detached from that evaluative sphere and can appear from the start as an institutional embodiment of cognitive-instrumental rationality".⁽⁴⁵⁾

It is not possible to go into the details of Habermas' argument designed to show why Weber's almost completely negative verdict on modern science and civilisation is not ineluctable and can be explained as the culmination of crucial misdirections in his analysis. Proceeding to Adorno who was a major — almost a father figure of critical theory — Habermas makes the following fundamental point against what can informally be called the Weber-Adorno theory: "The reception of Weber's theory of rationalization from Lukacs to Adorno makes it clear that the rationalization of society has constantly been thought of as a reification of consciousness. The paradoxes to which this leads show, however, that this theme cannot be adequately treated with the conceptual means of the philosophy of consciousness...Whereas the problematic of rationalization/reification lies along a "German" line of social-theoretical thought determined by Kant and Hegel, and leading from Marx through Weber to Lukacs and critical theory, the paradigm change that interests me was prepared by George Herbert Mead and Emile Durkheim. Mead (1863-1931) and Durkheim (1858-1917) belong, like Weber (1864-1920), to the generation of the founding fathers of modern sociology. Both developed basic concepts in which Weber's theory of rationalization can be taken up and freed from the aporias of the philosophy of consciousness: Mead with his communication-theoretic foundation of sociology, Durkheim with his theory of social solidarity that interrelates social integration and system integration."⁽⁴⁶⁾ Freeing Weber's theory of rationalisation from the aporias of the philosophy of consciousness along with restoring critical theory after its ruination by Adorno is of course the indispensable negative-historical aspect of the grand messianic task Habermas has assumed with the new Kerygma of the communicative model for the Phoenix-like resurrection of modern Western civilisation. It is a measure of Habermas' intellectual stature that he realises straightaway that

Comtean-Durkheimian sociology is *the* modern sociology, that it begins to be destroyed in Weber and that the destruction is completed by Adorno with reference to Marx and critical theory; and finally, that if modern Western civilisation along with its supporting ideology is to be saved and renewed, nothing short of a revival of Durkheimian sociology renovated with the latest language philosophy and linguistic theory will do. By the same token it is a sign of the darkness of our time and the poverty of our mainstream social-scientific tradition that those who have the greatness to see the true nature of modern civilisation and realise that its fate is sealed, do not have the magnanimity to offer something better than a long drift with stoic resignation; or anything more positive than an interim melancholy science; or more honest than an ironic archaeology and an even more ironic cratology; or more straightforward than a theory of ironic culture, second secularisation and a shipwreck sociology.

Those whose faith in the future of modern civilisation remains intact in spite of the most radical, irrefutable critiques, see salvation in a paradigm shift—basing the new paradigm on the modern epistemological dogma that truth is a function of cumulative knowledge and that the latest is the best *bet*: Indeed, it is virtually a compulsion—not to say, obsession—of our civilisation to reject and discard the canonic and to cling to the ‘contemporary’ persisting in ignoring its irredeemable rottenness, however ugly in its death. At the micro-historical level Habermas makes two closely related points against Weber: (a) Weber sees the detachment of culture from its matrix in religion and the resulting autonomy of “cultural value sphere” as completely destructive of societal rationalisation because he remains fixated on the tension between religion and the world; accordingly, (b) he fails to see the effectiveness of secular substitutes for moral-practical rationality: the most important case in point being modern systems of law.

Weber’s basic typology of rationality appears, firstly, in his fourfold typology of action and, secondly, in his distinction between formal and substantive rationality. Habermas’ elaborate and careful reconstruction of Weber’s theory and typology of rationality is largely based on the

above two classifications. The four types of action are: Rational goal-oriented (*Zweckrational*) action, rational value-oriented (*Wertrational*) action, affectual (*affektuell*) action and traditionalist (*traditional*) action. From the viewpoint of an historico-analytical survey, this is an excellent typology, virtually exhaustive. However, I do not know why it has only rarely been noticed that it is a list of types or modes/levels of human action which are all discontinuous with each other: even the first two which are both called rational by Weber are not on the same level: value-rationality is not distinguished from the goal-oriented by the end being a value; it is one to which the means-end schema does not apply: it is, in the end, oriented to the Immeasurable, the Incalculable; while the other, *Zweckrational* (purposive rationality), is oriented to the measurable, mappable, calculable, and — the conquerable, the destroyable: demiurgic violence is built into it. Hubris and fall of man is the natural, internal temptation of the *Wertrational*, but this hubris is not remorseless and presupposes forgiveness. The *Wertrational* is the only human rationality (and traditional action is its form of expression) for a being who is gifted with self-reflexive intelligence and reason but who is not present even retrospectively at his birth and is not a witness unto his death, that is, does not survive his death. Man thus exists only as a middle and always in the midst of men and things not all of them being his creation, some of the things exceeding his origin and end; this being so, you and I could not but live towards the Immeasurable which is negatively expressed every moment of our humdrum life as our impatience with time. The two rationalities are already related to another Weberian distinction viz., that between ethics of responsibility and ethics of absolute commitment; again all this may not be unconnected with the formal/substantive duality — the latter *via* its rootedness in man's central existential situation could lead towards the Formless (*via Wertrational*). Max Weber is deeply, acutely aware of all this: could a citizen of a self-made island of meaning and order in the midst of an immense vastness of an ocean of chaos ever forget the Immeasurable, literally, and in every other way, the very ground of his existence? Purposive rationality, moral-practical

rationality, cognitive-instrumental rationality and aesthetic-expressive rationality elaborated by Habermas on the basis of Weber's fourfold typology (and the distinction between formal and substantive rationality) are all pseudo-rationalities; Weber does not perhaps see affectual and traditional action-forms as rational: the traditional is the concrete historical form of the *Wertrational*, the value-oriented rationality. *Zweckrational* is the modern Western civilisation's form of rationality following the defeat and displacement of the *Wertrational*; the affectual is a permanent possibility of human action and as a surveyor of history Weber gives it a place in his exhaustive typology of *vita activa* but as a social scientist ignores the fact that it has seldom been regarded as a form of action proper to the dignity of man. In the same way, Weber includes purposive rationality alongside value-rationality because the former is the overwhelmingly dominant form of rationality for the modern civilisation: so much so that the technical logic and nature of other forms of rationality — value, moral, aesthetic — are always being reduced or sublimated ("rationalised", "modernised") to purposive or instrumental rationality. Weber's argument against culture autonomy (in fact, against the autonomy of all the subsystems: economy, politics, etc. — the new polytheism, in a word) is derived from his discovery that without an orientation to a supreme value, that is, without the backshining of Eternity, the Immeasurable, rationality and total domination would be inseparable. If this perception is sound, it follows that purposive or instrumental rationality will, while replacing it, arrogate to itself the nature of value-rationality — or else it will not survive; just as science after displacing traditional metaphysics and piety, after denying or rebelling against the Immeasurable, is impelled to move towards omniscience and omnipotence. The rationality of our times originates in and is sustained by hubris; and it is both remorseless and precarious: dependent for its huge prestige on its mask of value-rationality which, paradoxically, must function under the imperial sign of value-neutrality. Once this is seen, Weber cannot be faulted on his refusal to acknowledge law or autonomous art or humanism or secular morality as an authentic,

effective substitute for the spirit of religion and religious ethic. That is just not possible by the very nature of modern rationality.

No, Weber is not fixated upon "the relations of tension between religion and the world", between the Immeasurable and the measurable; it is his intellectual act of remembrance of the Immeasurable which, not surprisingly, appears as a fixation to those who cannot get over a necrophilic attachment to modern civilisation. In this list one may have to include Weber himself⁽⁴⁷⁾: as has already been pointed out in the first part of this paper, Weber's fundamental dilemma (which he could never resolve) was constituted by the necessity of "choosing" between the life of an intellectual as scientist which demands the exclusion of the intellectual/scientist as man; and the life of an intellectual as metaphysician which would not tolerate any separation between man and his specific spheres of thought and action: the intellectual has to be a whole man — in other words, a holy man.

At the macro-theoretical level Habermas' argument is that the repeated degeneration of rationalisation into different forms of reification of consciousness which is the despair of Weber and Adorno is by no means intrinsic to rationalisation; it is an effect of understanding its working in a philosophy of consciousness perspective. Once this paradigm is discarded and the communicative action paradigm is used, the problem of reification will be resolved. Habermas works this out in the second volume of *The Theory of Communicative Action*. An adequate review of this new paradigm and its merit is not possible here. However, a few general remarks may perhaps be useful.

Ignoring for the moment the complexities of the concept of reification, we may say that reification, essentially, is the sin against the Unthinkable, the Immeasurable. Reification (or the more familiar, "objectification") is the natural way of the working of man's cognitive faculties. Knowing or any other operation upon a phenomenon, if not constitutive of it, makes it, *ipso facto*, an "object", something "thrown-before" the cognitive faculty; that is, something that human cognition throws before itself. More specifically, the act of knowing withdraws the to-be-known phenomenon from the flux of time (and

change) and freezes it by fixing it in a pre-given framework: a framework which the to-be-known always exceeds. Again, all acts of apprehending and knowing implicitly define and distinguish the to-be-known from other phenomena related to it, thus disturbing its original embedding. In its own existence, however, the phenomenon is, of course, both distinguished from and related to others: but not necessarily in the way a given act of apprehending appropriates it. Its relational mode of existence is non-numerable at least during its ongoing existence, but in human knowledge this appears as enumerated or numerable. When Adorno sees the rational-scientific process of modern civilisation as intensifying the reification of consciousness, what is meant is that a *particular* mode of existence is *imposed* upon the to-be-known by the cognitive and other intellectual processes and acts. It is the mode of a manipulable object which does not or ought not to have any purpose, *raison d'être*, of its own. This "ought-not", this imperial proletarianisation, instrumentalisation of the Other—the to-be-known — is the secret essence — and power — of rationalisation. Adorno suggests that it is the capitalist mode of production of goods that has infiltrated into all intellectual life and once this has happened, the transition to the socialist mode of production cannot make any appreciable difference because the technology, the habit and the telos of production do not fundamentally change under socialism. Reification of consciousness deeply damages our personal and social-political life — eventually leading to our own deadening. In Weber, "reification" is seldom used; his paired concept of charisma-and-routinisation comes closest to Adorno's "reification". Charismatic thinking and acting is not reifying, routinised thought and action are.

All thinking is reifying in one manner or another; the redemption, as Kierkegaard points out, is through thought's own passion to reach — even collide with — the unthought (Foucault's word, and Kierkegaard's idea, inherited from tradition). What is crucial in this controversy — say, between Adorno and Habermas — is not whether modern thought is unduly reifying but whether it has any (internal) redeeming power. The implicit argument of Weber, which becomes thematic in Adorno,

shows that by its very nature and habit (striving towards "objectivity") as also by virtue of its telos (mastery of the Other and pleasure of the self — the one requires the other), modern "thought" has lost its redeeming potentiality. I do not know how the communication paradigm would impart to modern thought a power it is not in it to receive. This and other points made here against Habermas' superficialities and unjust charges against Weber and Adorno require an extended refutation which I cannot offer here. I do wish, however, to submit the following for the meditative fairplay of my readers.

Language ever and everywhere exceeds man. It is not man who speaks through language but language, at every level, that speaks through man (Heidegger). Language as such is not an evolute, product of a process; for man to say this is to construct an impossible (and hence false) history of language: for he is within language and always involved in every use of language. There simply can be no evolutionary theory of the origin of language for it does not originate in time. Evolutionism violates the Vico Principle even on a demiurgic reading. This is not a mystification nor a reification of language, sign systems or communicational media. It is obviously the other way round: a level of reification is inherent in language except at its two highest levels. This is clearly implied in Coomaraswamy's aphorism: the primary reference of all language is to things.

Language is essentially neither a system nor a medium for communication or for anything else. To see it *par excellence* as a medium is to see it as a manipulatory mechanism. No language is merely a system of coding and decoding not even the artificial ones. An aspect, a part, of the power of language can be coded (and then, of course, decoded). There is no residueless decoding. Man himself is a sign (Peirce).

One of the essential modes of the functioning of language through contemplating, thinking, reading, writing is repetition (remembrance and hope being aspects of backward and forward repetition). As repetition, language is always moving towards origins and the Origin. "The origin of contemplation is the contemplation of the Origin."⁽⁴⁸⁾ Language is the

backshining of the Uncreate, the Unmanifestible and the "meanest" use of language could reveal this.

The powers of language are inexhaustible in principle. Human understanding is not communicational: for language being one of the pre-eminent shadows of the Unmanifest, it speaks ambiguously, ambivalently, falsely, truly; it reveals as naturally and honestly as it conceals; it leads as easily as it misleads.

A communicational model of understanding is a joke (when not a prelude to violence). Truth is not a relation within language, between language and reality or between language, reality and society. It is the epistemic form of the manifestation of the Non-Manifestible. Man ascends to truth *via* the ascending levels of language: from *Vaikhari* to *Madhyama* to *Paśyanti* to *Para*. Our relation to knowledge and truth is that of filiation. Language itself is a coincidence of opposites: silence and speech, apophasis and kataphasis, abstraction and reification.

No model of action, no theory of language will have a saving power. Elaborate concern with the theory or philosophy of language is not an exclusively modern development; however, unlike the modern concern, traditional thinking on language is generated and governed by metaphysics. It never uses it as a surrogate for metaphysics. What we need is a return to the language of *theoria*.

The way Weber responded to his own theory of Disenchantment-Rationalisation, Charisma-Routinisation; and to his perception of the huge, overwhelming power of irrationality of the world and life should have led his thinking to the ontological-metaphysical level. Perhaps this did not happen. It is, I think, not impertinent to inquire how he stopped where he did: for he really did go quite far; which is not to say that he was a traditional thinker. As for Marx, his problematic was of a different nature. Marx started by positing a discontinuity between the contemporary capitalist-industrial and the coming socialist society. For example, irrationality appears in his system as systemic contradiction at given stages of socio-economic development and is internal to the

mode of production. Or it appears as the unmastered part of natural forces, or as the residue of organic internalisation of nature by man; or again, as the survival of capitalist institutions during the transition to socialist society even though it would be mediated by the Socialist Revolution. He recognises only structural forms of unreason: there are fairly difficult problems at this level too but, by and large, Marx responds to them in terms of the alchemical powers, of the Revolution: in him the strange alliance of positivism-materialism with an eschatological orientation finds its definitive and most destructive theoretisation.

This line of thought is not available to Weber who rejects the Marxian discontinuity between the present and the future on the basis of his analysis of the rise and development of capitalism which diverges and conflicts with that of Marx on several highly significant points.

Irrationality is a substantive issue for him, a constituent part of the world: he grew increasingly restless with seeing it as a defect, failure or residue of rationalisation. But he did not arrive at something like a Foucauldian theory, perhaps simply because he began with Reason and Rationalisation in the Enlightenment tradition.

He could have gone on in a Kierkegaardian direction, for irrationality raised for him, and quite rightly, the problem of an adequate theodicy. He nearly found one: "The third form of theodicy which we are going to discuss was peculiar to the religiosity of Indian intellectuals. It stands out by virtue of its consistency as well as by its extraordinary metaphysical achievement: It unites virtuoso-like self-redemption by man's own effort with universal accessibility of salvation, the strictest rejection of the world with organic social ethics, and contemplation as the paramount path to salvation with an inner-worldly vocational ethic."⁽⁴⁹⁾ The statement is a marvel of brevity and reveals a profound insight into an alien thought-form. However, it is not a question of going the Hindu way. What is important is to see that a radical ontology is involved here and that it follows from Weber's own analytical studies of Eastern religious traditions: it is a modal ontology,

one of antithetical wholeness in which the Dragon and the Dragon-slayer, the Good and the Evil, appear as twins behind the scene — to be transcended ultimately. To move towards this truth, Weber would have to return not to exoteric Christianity which had long exhausted its spirit,⁽⁵⁰⁾ but to mystical Christianity, say, to the tradition of Meister Eckhart. Again, it is not a question of Weber's personal religiousness, and his interest and attitude to esoteric traditions; more importantly, the question is whether we can give a socio-political form to an esoteric tradition or to "new religions". Even if Weber did not feel daunted by it, esoteric traditions are ever resistant to social acceptance and it is quite likely that Weber could see through and would not trust any such enterprise:

"The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world.' Precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life either into the transcendental realm of mystic life or into the brotherliness of direct and personal human relations. It is not accidental that our greatest art is intimate and not monumental, nor is it accidental that today only within the smallest and intimate circles, in personal human situations, in *pianissimo*, that something is pulsating that corresponds to the prophetic *pneuma*, which in former times swept through the great communities like a firebrand, welding them together. If we attempt to force and to 'invent' a monumental style in art, such miserable monstrosities are produced as the many monuments of the last twenty years. If one tries intellectually to construe new religions without a new and genuine prophecy, then, in an inner sense, something similar will result, but with still worse effects. And academic prophecy, finally, will create only fanatical sects but never a genuine community."⁽⁵¹⁾

Epilogue

The French school of sociology is very nearly right in the social explanation of religion. It only fails to explain one infinitely small thing; but this infinitely small thing is the grain of mustard seed, the buried pearl, the leaven, the salt. This infinitely small thing is God; it is infinitely more than everything.

All that is needed is to place it at the centre of life, whether of a people or of an individual soul. Everything that is not in contact with it should be, as it were, impregnated by it through the mediation of beauty. This very nearly came to pass in the Romanesque Middle Ages, that amazing epoch when men's eyes were refreshed every day by a beauty which was perfect in simplicity and purity.

The difference is infinitely small between a system of labour which leads men to discover the beauty of the world and one which hides it from them. But this infinitely small difference is real, and no effort of the imagination can bridge it.

Notes

(1) Durkheim, Emile: *Sociology and Philosophy*, tr. by D. F. Pocock, London, Cohen and West, 1953, p.52.

If Durkheim's offer of an ultimate choice between God and Society is plainly a rhetorical one — its immediate withdrawal making it plainer — what, one may ask, is the use of this stylistic device? Why does Durkheim employ the language of choice in a no-choice situation? Normally it should be to make the point all the more effectively: the point, namely, that for the modern man the die is already cast in favour of Society as the ultimate reality. In this case, however, perhaps the rhetoric of choice functions ambivalently to suggest that there is, in the last analysis, a situation of 'choosing', a kind of imperative choice; if so, the dialectic of this ambivalence suggests deeper and disturbing issues. Let me not attempt here a direct analysis of this problematic; some preliminary observations towards an appreciation of the paradigmatic significance of Durkheimian sociology may, however, be useful.

Except in the untenable case of reducing choice to caprice, whim, waywardness — in a word, to idiocy — there can be no choice between two ultimate and/or absolute "alternatives": an unmediated relation of the chooser (knower/actor) will either annul the act of choice or else compromise the absoluteness/ultimacy of the alternatives. Or, if the choice (choosing) is exercised on certain well-understood and acknowledged grounds then: (a) it establishes a superior-inferior (or at any rate, more and less preferable) relationship between the two (or more) alternatives and thereby compromises their ultimacy/absoluteness; and (b) since choice, in this context, is *ex hypothesi* a function of the ground(s) in terms of which it is exercised, the latter cannot itself be chosen: it must be a logico-epistemic given — if not an ontological one.

This argument is independent of some serious difficulties that arise immediately from the idea of two (or more) absolutes or ultimacies, for, apart from other difficulties, if the alternatives are mutually incommensurate, the question of choosing between them cannot arise for preference presupposes commensurability and continuity; if they are commensurable, they cannot both be absolute (though each may be ultimate within a specific universe).

Durkheim's reason for withdrawing his offer of an ultimate choice between God and Society deftly circumvents all the foregoing analysis and argument by declaring God and Society to be really the same (not quite; for Durkheim sees in God not society *simpliciter* but Society "transfigured and symbolically expressed". This is not a trivial but a tremendous difference but here it may be ignored; for at this point what Durkheim is suggesting is that Divinity is *nothing more* than a mystification of Society and is eliminated once the mystification is seen through and rejected.

Thus with God eliminated, no choice remains since one only candidate remains in the field.

Thus whether the alternatives are real or only apparent (as in the Durkheimian 'choice'), the present analysis shows that as between two (or more) ultimates or absolutes the question of choice (choosing) does not arise. An ultimate or absolute can only be accepted (or rejected); is this accept-or-reject situation one of ultimate choice? The answer depends on whether the rejection of an absolute by itself constitutes or creates the "other" which is thereby chosen. There is, of course, a well-known theological position which holds that man is given only one "choice" between acceptance or defiance of the Will of God; in other words, between obedience and rebellion. ("If I must choose the lesser of two evils," said Karl Kraus, "I will choose neither." Did Kraus have a choice? Was his refusal to choose an act of choice?)

The act of accepting an Absolute is one of originary participation and is inaccessible to any reviewing eye. If the rationale of all one's life's choices is grounded in and follows, in various degrees of direction and indirection, from a primordial act of acceptance-obedience/refusal/rebellion (that is, participation or, if one insists, immediate choice of an ultimate Reality, be it God or Society, Love of God or Love of self), it does not follow that the mediate, contingent series of choices constituting one's life are real choices—except in the sense that (a) the acting man by virtue of this acceptance of (participation in) the incomprehensible ultimate Reality ("God or Society") knows that *he could* always be in error, and he thus acts in fear and trembling; or (b) that there is always the possibility, which he can "choose" to actualise, of being perverse and following a wrong course of action—perhaps, in this case, without "fear and trembling".

This is the point—crucial for the founding of modern Western civilization—on which Durkheim fundamentally rejects our analysis, though understandably, he does not choose to face the problematic of ultimate choice, of choice between absolutes, in any direct manner. His attitude of indifference to choice between God and Society which he himself posits is a strategy of evasion. Even when God has been in effect eliminated as a kind of ignorantly exalted Double of Society, the nature of man's relation to Society remains to be understood and explained. It is clear that whatever may be true of pre-modern man's relation to Divinity, Durkheim would not, indeed, cannot, agree to see modern man's relation to Society as a mystic participation, for then it would be ultimately incomprehensible to both man and sociologists.

It follows that Society is a universal that must be chosen by man—even though on Durkheim's own showing it is external and greater to man (or at any rate, in relation to individuals). If the difficulties of a concept like "chosen universal" do not obviously bother Durkheim, it is because he hopes that social science would, in the

course of advancing knowledge, make it possible for man to achieve a total comprehension of Society and History and then his relation to Society, which always exceeds him, would, retrospectively, be a chosen and rational one. In this faith and its accompanying mission Durkheim is loyally carrying forward the heritage of Comte; here he has a fundamental kinship with Marx too, except that Durkheim does not see the necessity of a radical universal Revolution as the mediator between alienated man and his wholesome future. He is content to leave this to industrialisation and its ideology, viz., sociology.

It is also one of the decisive points of divergence between Durkheim (1858-1917) and Weber (1864-1920). As some of the texts quoted in the first part of this paper show, Weber remained profoundly sensitive *both* to the loss of a gifted Absolute and to the disturbing, almost self-destroying implications and consequences of modern man's ineluctable quest for a constructed and "chosen" universalism; unlike Marx he could not believe in the alchemical power of the coming scientific-socialist Revolution nor, of course, in the prophetic promise of the omniscience of man. In addition to those in the text of this paper, the following often-quoted passage from *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York, Charles Scriber's Sons, 1956, pp.180-82) would be helpful in highlighting Weber's radical departure from both Durkheim and Marx:

"One of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism, and not only of that but of all modern culture: rational conduct on the basis of the idea of the calling, was born — that is what this discussion has sought to demonstrate — from the spirit of Christian asceticism ... For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which to-day determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force. *Perhaps it will so determine them until the last ton of fossilized coal is burnt.* In Baxter's view 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.*

"Since asceticism undertook to remodel the world and to work out its ideals in the world, material goods have gained an increasing and finally an inexorable power over the lives of men as at no previous period in history. To-day the spirit of religious asceticism — whether finally, who knows? — has escaped from the cage. But victorious *capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations,* needs its support no longer...

"No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of

this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or, if neither, *mechanized petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance*. For of the last stage of this cultural development, it might well be truly said: "Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved" (Emphases added).

(2) Proust, Marcel: *Remembrance of Things Past* (translated by C.K. Scott Moncrief) Vol. I. *The Guermandes Way*, New York, Random House, 1934, pp.1139-40 (Original French edition, 1913-27).

(3) I am not sure if I know what precisely is meant by seeing Weber as "bourgeois Marx". Weber shared with Marx a radical critique of capitalist society, but that is all: his analysis of the genesis and development of capitalism is thoroughly non-Marxian even though in his own way Weber too gives sufficient weight to the economic interests of different social classes. I call him a radical Marxist because Weber does not stop at the mode of production of capitalist society. He sees the problems of capitalist society not simply as problems of the present society; he examines their roots and intrinsic nature at a deeper structural and ideological level and, hence, comes to see their unavoidable continuance in the "post-capitalist" as also in a communist and socialist society. He, unlike Marx, does not arrest his dialectic nor implicitly freeze history twice; once at the pre-revolutionary stage and again at the post-revolutionary stage. Accordingly, he is more radical than Marx: he does not believe in revolutionary change nor in the alchemical quality and potentiality of the Revolution (nor, of course, in the mysticism of violence implicit in the Marxian theory of *the* Revolution). He, in effect, wholly undermines the foundation of sociology. Hence I call him an ultra-sociologist. I avoid the term "counter-sociologist"; Weber, for good reasons, did not care to formulate any "new sociology". Nor do I find him anti-sociology or anti-social science; he does not develop any systematic and radical critique of modern social science, nor of modernity, though the fundamentals of any such critique are present in his work and they are *not* inconspicuous. Rather, he was writing an epilogue to modernity and the social sciences. In effect, if not in his design, Weber is the necrologist of modern Western civilisation.

(4) Unlike Marx and Comte, Weber, insofar as he believed in universalism, did not do so in terms of evolution-progress; nor in those of (scientific-revolutionary) alchemy. Again, though he believed in the Enlightenment, or at any rate never wholly rejected it, he did not accept any non-Christian universal soteriology — Comtean, Durkheimian or Marxian.

Indeed with Weber's radical reservations about modern science — and lament on the iron cage of consumer culture, the fruit of modern technology — one could see him as a despairing universalist. Or, is it extrapolating too much? Was he just a

“cautious” universalist — as, of course, behooved the vocation of a social scientist? Let us hear Habermas:

“Nineteenth-century research in *Geisteswissenschaften* and the cultural sciences had developed a sense for the variability of social life-forms, values and norms. Historicism had sharpened this basic experience of the relativity of traditions and modes of thought to the problem of whether even the standards of rationality presupposed in the empirical sciences were elements of a regionally and temporally limited culture, the modern European, and thus had to forfeit their naively raised claim to universal validity. But historicism had made things too easy in regard to the question of whether there resulted from the pluralism of cultures an epistemological relativism as well. Whereas in the *Geisteswissenschaften* — which were essentially occupied with the traditions of written cultures — it was easy to gain an intuitive impression of the equality in principle of different civilizations, cultural anthropology — which concerned itself with primitive societies — could not so easily overlook the developmental gradient between archaic and modern societies. Furthermore, in functionally oriented cultural anthropology there was never a danger of dismissing, together with evolutionary determinism, every form of nomological analysis aimed at discovering regularities and of drawing relativistic inferences from this ... Max Weber adopted in this controversy a cautiously universalistic position; he did not regard rationalization processes as a phenomenon peculiar to the Occident, although the rationalization demonstrable in all world religions led at first only in Europe to a form of rationalism that exhibited both particular Occidental features and general features, that is, features characteristic of modernity as such” (Habermas, Jürgen: *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Volume One, *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1984, pp.154-155).

Given his scrupulous honesty, extraordinary penetration and circumspection, how universalistic (however careful and cautious) Weber's thought would eventually remain can be gauged from the following further observations of Habermas himself: “In philosophies of history science and technology served as patterns of rationalization. There are good reasons for their paradigmatic character, which Weber did not deny. However, to serve as models for concepts of progress, science and technology have to be evaluated in the sense of enlightenment or of positivism; that is, they have to be characterized as problem-solving mechanisms with an important impact on the history of the species. The bourgeois cultural criticism of the late nineteenth century, which had its most influential representatives in Nietzsche and the contemporary *Lebensphilosophen*, was directed against this surrogate-metaphysical revaluation. Weber too shares in the pessimistic appraisal of scientific civilization. He mistrusts the rationalization processes set loose and detached from ethical value orientations, which he observes in modern societies — so much so that in his theory of rationalization,

science and technology forfeit their paradigmatic status" (*Ibid.*, p. 155).

Without wishing to minimise the Nietzschean influence on Weber's thought, one may note that in his powerful lament for the flight of the spirit of religious asceticism from the "iron cage"—a clinching, devastating metaphor—Weber takes a crucial and courageous step beyond Nietzsche in not sharing his view of the ascetic ideal: "It is absolutely impossible to disguise *what* in point of fact is made clear by every complete will that has taken its directions from the ascetic ideal; this hate of the human and even more of the animal and more still of the material, this horror of the senses, of reason itself, this fear of happiness and beauty, this desire to get right away from all illusion, therefore, growth, death wishing and even desiring—all this means—let us have the courage to grasp it—a will for Nothingness—a will opposed to life, a repudiation of the most fundamental conditions of life, but it is and remains *a will*—and to say at the end what I have said at the beginning—men wish Nothingness rather than not wish at all" (Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Genealogy of Morals* III/28).

Weber would certainly endorse the idea that "there does not exist a science without its "hypothesis", the thought of such a science is inconceivable, illogical: a philosophy, a faith must always exist first to enable science to gain thereby a direction, a meaning, a limit and a method, a right to existence" (*Ibid.*, III/24). And indeed he has most effectively used the idea that ".....in every department science needs an ideal value, a power which creates values" (*Ibid.*, III/25). Neither Nietzsche's nor Weber's relation to the ascetic ideal or to the Will to Truth which the ideal generates in Nietzsche's thinking is amenable to confident exegesis; it may yet be suggested that Weber perhaps kept a safe distance from Nietzsche's almost wholly negative view of the ascetic ideal; nor, again, would Weber see science as the expression of the ascetic ideal and the Will to Truth the ideal generates. Perhaps Weber did see the necessity of making a distinction between the self-mediated Will to total Knowledge that underlies modern science on the one hand, and the traditional religious quest for Truth which was not of this world, on the other. It is this maybe that saved the despair, the perplexities and paradoxes of Weber's intellectual life (which, alas, is to be distinguished from his political life) from taking a patently Nietzschean turn of which Marxism is one of the historical variants.

From Saint-Simon, Comte and Durkheim to Marx, from Mannheim and Parsons to Habermas, mainstream sociology has been an almost relentless effort to don the Kerygmatic and evangelical mantle of Judeo-Christian theology: it was bound to be a kind of philosophy of History of the Present alone; stupid as this may sound to some, this holds true for empirical sociology as well; which, by its very nature, remains subservient to the evangelicalism of sociological *theory*. Weber made vast contributions to sociological history but they do not culminate in systematic sociology

or philosophy of History; in other words, unlike Durkheim and Marx, one does not find in Weber any sustained effort to construct an eschatology and theodicy (or anthropodicy — to borrow a term coined by Ernest Becker). This sensitive, sophisticated reluctance tells upon his project of a formalistic-epistemic universalism (or universal sociology) in which Weber progressively lost faith. For however formalistic or structural the truths of a science may be, they must, at some level, in some mode and measure, speak to the contemporary present; for all universalism does include a given historical present though, of course, it includes, in some significant sense, all future presents too. Essentially, then, even a formal or structural science such as Weber might have had in mind (or those the contemporary structuralists have created) has to reconcile a contemporary present with its past and synthesise the two in a future; its mission, in other words, is to make past memorable and ownable, the present enjoyable or sufferable and the future expectable (in a word, to make human life loyal to its humanity). Or to use one of the contemporary idioms, even a formal system of knowledge must speak to the present so that Desire and Death can be reconciled (it may perhaps be added, it has to redeem remembrance from reification, memory from memorials). As will be abundantly clear from many oft-quoted texts (some of which will be found in the present essay as well), Weber rejected — on the ground of internal contradictions — the absolutely fundamental, constitutive presupposition, indeed, the credo of modern science, namely, that everything is knowable. ("What a curious attitude scientists have —: "We still don't know that; but it is knowable and it is only a matter of time before we get to know it!" As if that went without saying." Wittgenstein, Ludwig: *Culture and Value*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1980, p.40e.) By virtue of this credo, ideology supersedes religion in modern civilisation (see Dumont, Louis: *From Mandeville to Marx*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1977; Midway Reprint, 1983, p.22). Rejecting this postulate and credo of self-mediated (or history-mediated) all-knowability, Weber knew that no science and no ideology could replace religion and metaphysics. The credo is scientifically unintelligible, just as it is by other modes of thought; it follows that (modern) science, if not itself a master ideology, can get its life-blood only from the one or the other ruling ideology. Marx firmly believed in the idea and project of all-knowability of the universe and, accordingly, foretold a complete supersession of religion by socialist science (or a *unified* science of History and Nature). In the successor generation, Adorno follows Weber in rejecting this pseudo-dogma, but he takes the next step and has the courage to declare: "knowledge has no other light than that which shines from salvation on the world; all others exhaust themselves in *post facto* construction and remain part of technology" (Adorno, Theodor W.: *Minima Moralia*, London, 1974, p.480). Weber drew back at the end of *metanoia*. It is said he was an atheist. If he was, he must have

been of that rare kind who would understand Unamuno's: "God alone is an atheist." Weber could not forget Nietzsche's: "He who no longer finds what is great in God will find it nowhere — he must either deny it or create it." Weber certainly knew that no 'either-or' makes sense where (an) Absolute is in "question": there cannot be a "choice" in extreme or ultimate existential situations. For placed in a so-called choice-situation, a sincere person will make his decision, but he will not see it as his "choice", for he will not say he could have made another decision which is what the "chooser" must maintain. Unlike Durkheim, Nietzsche is offering not an aesthete's choice, but implication of imagining that a choice situation exists where it simply does not and could never have except as an absurdity.

Adorno is surely following a Weberian insight when he says that under the present conditions, social science must remain a "melancholy science" with no hope of leading to a "joyful wisdom". However one may well wonder if in Nietzsche himself the "joyful wisdom" was not an inexpressible lament under the guise of celebration.

(5) Cf. Habermas, Jürgen: "Among the classical figures of sociology, Max Weber is the only one who broke with both the premises of the philosophy of history and the basic assumptions of evolutionism and who nonetheless wanted to conceive of the modernization of old-European society as the result of a universal-historical process of rationalization" (*op. cit.*, p.143).

My summary remarks on Weber's attitude to evolutionism and progressivist philosophy of History would seem to be mutually inconsistent. I, however, wonder if there is a way to state the point in a wholly consistent way. It is possible perhaps to see our statement of the point as an iconic suggestion of the deep ambivalence running through most of Weber's analyses; expressing obliquely the tragic "pathos of his self-consciousness and the lonely yet undaunted rationality" (Adorno, Theodor W.: *Prisms*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, The MIT Press, 1981, p.37).

The lack of a full and coherent positive philosophy in Weber is not his personal failing; nor is such a philosophy an internal requirement of the Weberian *oeuvres*. It is modernity which desiderates and promises itself a new and rational-scientific world-view, based on a universal philosophy of History and way of life. It is an impossible necessity, a forlorn hope. It is impossible for two reasons: modernity founds itself on (a) Science-Technology and (b) Evolution-History (=philosophy of History centred in Progressivism). (In other words, for modernity all knowledge must be scientific or it is not knowledge; and all reality is historical or it is subhuman.) In Weber's idiom modernity appoints or chooses two warring Gods to preside over its destiny, each God is invincible for the other and there is *no* Supreme God.

There are compounded difficulties with both Science-Technology and Evolution-History. In the first place there is a built-in tension between both Science and Technology and Evolution-History. Science aims at a complete and certain knowledge

of universe; Technology is problem-solving, its approach being essentially piecemeal whereas science is, in principle, holistic. Science therefore has to be independent of technology. However this cannot be so so long as technology develops autonomously, that is, in obedience to the internal logic of continual advance in terms of the given one. Any number of times, pure scientific advances take place in response to technologic needs as also growing needs of men. Science does not rule and govern technology as it should.

As to Evolution-History, by commonly accepted definitions, evolution is independent of man, while history, in the modern view, is made by man: in any case, it is made up of human-social acts while evolution is seen as a series of events taking place independently of man, which have to be ordered and interpreted by scientists. Under modernity, human history therefore should be independent of man; in fact, however, *all* modern historiography is governed by an evolutionary philosophy of history (Social-Darwinism). Appearances to the contrary, this statement remains true: from Spencer, Morgan, Taylor and Toynbee to Malinowski, Lévi-Strauss to Foucault there has been no new basis for the continuity of civilisational and social history, and evolutionism, open or disguised, has provided it: the tension between immanent continuity and transcendence-centred discontinuity has been openly admitted by Toynbee in his letter to Martin Wight who had charged him with disguised evolutionism; the structuralist failure is clear from its supersession by post-structuralist movements: the most powerful philosopher of discontinuous historiography and archaeology of knowledge, Foucault, once again, refusing to embrace a transcendent metaphysical basis of history, could succeed only in dodging the problem of discontinuities in history by diverting his thought to genealogy of power-knowledge, leaving history to its own evolutionist devices. The truth has to be faced even by the modernist: immanentist axiomatics and discontinuous history do not go together.

Perhaps even more important than the problem of internal tension of Science-Technology and Evolution-History is the radical incompatibility between Science and History: stated in the briefest way, the problem is to reconcile the universality and certainty that Science seeks (nomothetics), and the particularism (idiography) and contingency that cannot be overcome by History; in other words, compatibility between History and Sciences is possible if and only if there could be a natural and/or exact science of civilisational history.

No less momentous and disastrous is the irredeemable internal aporia both in Science and History. The nature and *telos* of Science universality and certainty conflicts with its glorious methodology of endless corrigibility of all Scientific findings and theorems. History (its philosophy and methodology) is torn by the conflict between the modernity's nature as a radically unique, *virtually* a transmutational

phenomenon (that is, a civilisation and a system of knowledge radically discontinuous with all preceding civilisations and knowledges). Moreover, it is this miraculous uniqueness that has been used to support the ideology of the manifest destiny of Europe and America to conquer and rule the whole world ("Europeanisation of the Earth" — Husserl). History is, strangely, glorified as both continuous and discontinuous in the same breath: thus rendering all search for a modern philosophy or science of History a frustration, a despair. Here then, we come upon the crucial cosmocidal multi-dimensional aporia, an abysmal antinomy of modernity and its citizens. Weber is acutely aware of this misery at the centre of the grandeur of modern civilisation: indeed he is despairingly troubled by the imminent fall and fatality of modern man. And this could be why he confronts this crisis only indirectly: his devastating and irrefutable analysis of the scientific vocation (as also, in a lesser way, of politics as a vocation) constitutes, in its concentrated energy and profound impact, one of the most powerful denunciations and is virtually a total rejection of the contemporary Euro-American civilisation. Weber's response to his doomed civilisation was one of resignation — and despair: it would be difficult to imagine Weber responding at all hopefully or even expectantly to post-modernity as the Redeemer of the fallen Church Triumphant of Modernity nor even to any *avant-garde* counter-culturist proposal of a reformed Church Militant for Modernity.

It is in this context that one has to understand Weber's persistent reluctance to invent or adopt a philosophy of history based on evolutionary progressivism. Weber's problem was methodological: if he wanted to analyse and diagnose his age, the principal ideas and institutions and ideologies would have to be properly identified and understood in *their own terms*. To do so — and there is no other valid way — one would have to presuppose the founding philosophy of modernity, namely, Progress-Evolutionism; one has also to recognise the ineluctable reality of the ideology of "eternal" Euro-American global imperialism. The key-concepts in Weber's analyses of modernity are: charisma - routinisation; Rationalisation - Disenchantment; value-rationality, value-neutrality. In his penetrating analytical expositions of these and other concepts, Weber used, as a master-idea and a tool of analysis, the concept of Rationalisation; from there he proceeded to use Rationalisation as the master tool for constructing a universal history. It is difficult to say if the choice of (Rationality and) Rationalisation was the best one; — indeed, it could be a trap. It is clear, however, that Weber did not fall into it; what is more and of crucial importance is that in his universal history, Weber escaped the absurdity and the *hubris* of absolutising modernity and idolising contemporary Euro-American civilisation. Indeed, as a modern scholar and man of thought, Weber escaped the inescapable: before him such absolutisation and idolisation had been simply the given, the axiomatics of all modern historiography and philosophy of civilisation, indeed, a divine dispensation, the very

destiny of planet earth. And after Weber and Adorno, the absolutisation and idolisation remain as before, the latter reinforcing and justifying the former, however sophisticated the arguments and encyclopaedic the scholarship may be to-day. (There are exceptions like Spengler or Sorokin and they remain outside the mainstream — critical or conservative. Yes, indeed, Weber does escape the inescapable of his time. And yet, he could not escape the magical cape of Rationality–Rationalisation in the construction of his General History and the Sociologies of Knowledge and of Religion. How, with his vast profound eschatological vision of the rise and fall of modern civilisation, Weber allowed himself to fall into the trap of universalising Reason–Rationalisation remains inexplicable to me. It is a huge failure: it entails commitment to the theory of the modernisation of the past; the theory by means of which modernity falsifies all history before its own Advent, for it is perhaps the only “method” by which modern man can (mis)appropriate the historical and “pre-historical” past and justify his own time: especially in the form of the theory and practice of the development and modernisation of the non-white peoples of the world. And for this highly violent and ruthlessly imperial enterprise, a radical and self-serving falsification of the past (under the names of philosophy or “science” of History, ethnography or comparative sociology) is a *sine qua non* — as the ideological and moral basis and justification of this imperial pogrom.

(6) Aron, Raymond: *Main Currents in Sociological Thought*, Volume Two, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books Ltd., 1970, p.257.

(7) The distinction between anthropology and autology is fundamental and one that separates the “modern” from the traditional. The central question of anthropology is: What is man? that of autology, Who am I? They are two essentially different questions: the latter alone is authentic and existentially valid. This point cannot be explicated here, but we may say the following: The grammar (and syntax) of the anthropological question opens an unbridgeable gap between the epistemic and the ontic levels, presupposes man to be an object of conceptualisation and thus posits an irreconcilable subject-object duality; further it makes the obvious and internal identity of the questioner and the object of his question an extrapolation. The autological question has a reflexive syntax and presupposes the unity of the epistemic and ontic levels and precludes, by virtue of its grammar, the object character of man.

(8) The relativisation of the concepts of rationalisation and disenchantment would, in any case, be unavoidable in view of the incurable incapacity of modern thought to cope with the Other — the darker side of universal existence. This crisis of modernity and its ideologies is foreshadowed by Weber’s definitions of social action, social relationship and power in terms of the other. The Weberian definitions are based on Mead’s (1863–1931) theory of the “generalized other”. In Erving Goffman (1922–1982) this and cognate lines of thought reach their culmination with human action reduced

to performance and society to a show. (These concepts have, however, nothing in common with traditional images of the human world—except as lame perversions.)

The far-reaching implications and the hidden ironies of Goffman's work makes Parsons (1902–1979) obsolete. It does more; it shows the vast, gothic, labyrinthine edifice of Parsonian theoretisations a symptom of a tired and decayed civilisation. Goffman's own work is an epilogue to "post-modernity". No wonder there is today a tendency to neglect Goffman's work and denigrate his intellectual eminence.

(9) Gerth, H.H. and Mills, C. Wright (tr. and eds.): *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1970, p.154.

(10) *Ibid.*, p.122.

(11) *Ibid.*, p.123.

(12) *Ibid.*, p.123.

(13) 'Aesthetic' is used here in its original meaning: "We are peculiar people. I say this with reference to the fact that whereas almost all other peoples have called their theory of art or expression a "rhetoric" and have thought of art as a kind of knowledge, we have invented an "aesthetic" and think of art as a kind of feeling.

"The Greek original of the word "aesthetic" means perception by the senses, especially by feeling. Aesthetic experience is a faculty that we share with animals and vegetables, and is irrational. The "aesthetic soul" is that part of our psychic makeup that "senses" things and reacts to them: in other words, the "sentimental" part of us. To identify our approach to art with the pursuit of these reactions is not to make art "fine" but to apply it only to the life of pleasure and to disconnect it from the active and contemplative lives" (Coomaraswamy, A.K.: "A Figure of Speech or a Figure of Thought?" in *Selected Papers, Vol.I*, edited by Roger Lipsey, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977, p.13).

This is essentially the basis of Kierkegaard's illuminating distinction between the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious stages or dimensions of life. He defines the aesthetic life in terms of unreflected immediacy, pleasure for the sake of pleasure and the attitude of non-commitment: "living for the moment and for the moment's sake only". The aesthetic celebrates the fragmentary—on principle.

At its *logical* eminence, however, the aesthetic attitude is that of a totally disinterested witness, living in the moment and the moment only, not in despair which Kierkegaard says is, in general, the path of the aesthetic life, but without nostalgic memory or fervent hope. It, then, is a form of absolute transcendence and coincides with the highest level of intellectual-spiritual life. Except in such transcendent aestheticism, the aesthetic level is one of self-indulgence and entertainment and bereft of all meaning: what perpetually threatens the aesthete is boredom. When I talk of objective, value-neutral "scientific" sociology as only of aesthetic value, the point, precisely, is that such a "science" is "founded" on

meaninglessness, is sustained by imperial or parochial interests and harbours despair. Despite his rather ambivalent attitude to what he called autonomous art (the same as aesthetic "art" which is more vulgar entertainment than art), Weber did see the irredeemable loss of human dignity, the dire despair at the heart of modern Western culture and civilisation. He could never feel comfortable with living on *ersatz* to which modern life is largely reduced and to which it is enthusiastically devoted. Feeling (or taste) is the arbiter of truth and excellence in the aesthetic way of life; but however refined, it re-enters the realm of aesthetic 'judgement' only as *ersatz*. Aestheticism (as rightly defined here) and *ersatzism* are kindred. Weber is keenly aware of this: "... the tension between the value-spheres of 'science' and the sphere of 'the holy' is unbridgeable. Legitimately, only the disciple offers the 'intellectual sacrifice' to the prophet, the believer to the church. Never as yet has a new prophecy emerged (and I repeat here deliberately this image which has offended some) by way of the need of some modern intellectuals to furnish their souls with, so to speak, guaranteed genuine antiques. In doing so, they happen to remember that religion has belonged among such antiques, and of all things religion is what they do not possess. By way of substitute, however, they play at decorating a sort of domestic chapel with small sacred images from all over the world, or they produce surrogates through all sorts of psychic experiences to which they ascribe the dignity of mystic holiness, which they peddle in the book market. This is plain humbug or self-deception" ("Science as a Vocation", Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, pp.154-5). This was written in 1918 but is no less contemporary today in 1992 than it might have been in 1919-22 when it was published; it catches so precisely and insightfully the scene of *Swami-cults* (*Swamibazi* as I call it) both in the West and in India today. It is humbug; and humbug, self-deception, is the very form of aestheticism however highbrow. Indeed, it is crucially significant that Weber's critique of modernity coincides with that of Coomaraswamy on the central point, namely, that modernity is aestheticism gone mad. The central point of Weber's despairing critique of modernity is the staggering absurdity of its self-grounding in absolute neutrality of human knowledge and unconditional acceptance of passion and desire as the foundation and legitimation of *vita activa*; in other words, modernity founds science (knowledge) and action (politics) on aesthetics.

It is important to note that Weber first examines the natural sciences and then the medical sciences with reference to their almost axiomatic claim that they are wholly neutral-objective and need no presuppositions, and shows that they do make crucial presuppositions which simply cannot be proved within the natural and medical sciences. Having shown this he examines aesthetics: "Consider a discipline such as aesthetics. The fact that there are works of art is given for aesthetics. It seeks to find out under what conditions this fact exists, but it does not raise the question

whether or not the realm of art is perhaps a realm of diabolical grandeur, a realm of this world, and, therefore, in its core, hostile to God and, in its innermost and aristocratic spirit, hostile to the brotherhood of man. Hence, aesthetics does not ask whether there *should* be works of art" ("Science as a Vocation", Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, p.144).

Weber then proceeds to show the same autotelic "positivistic" anti-human, irresponsible orientation in Jurisprudence, in historical and cultural sciences, philosophy of history, philosophy of culture, in sociology, history, economics and political science. The crucial importance of Weber's concise, penetrating critique of aesthetics can be seen in more ways than one. Firstly, though generally seen as a "science" of art and beauty, aesthetics can be seen as the essence of the modern "scientific" approach to the study of any sphere of life and knowledge: the dehumanised, rarefied, value-neutral meaningless world of the legal, historical, cultural, economic, political, sociological disciplines have all as the principle and foundation the aesthetic-autotelic approach to knowledge which totalises the fragmentary. It is here that I see a rare, rather surprising but clear and essential kinship between Weber and Coomaraswamy:

"But it is not the function of a museum or of any educator to flatter and amuse the public. If the exhibition of works of art, like the reading of books, is to have a cultural value, i.e., if it is to nourish and make the best part of us grow, as plants are nourished and grow in suitable soils, it is to the understanding and not to fine feelings that an appeal must be made. In one respect the public is right; it always wants to know what a work of art is "about." "About what," as Plato asked, "does the sophist make us so eloquent?" Let us tell them what these works of art are about and not merely tell them things about these works of art. Let us tell them the painful truth, that most of these works of art are about God, whom we never mention in polite society. Let us admit that if we are to offer an education in agreement with the innermost nature and eloquence of the exhibits themselves, that this will not be an education in sensibility, but an education in philosophy, in Plato's and Aristotle's sense of the word, for whom it means ontology and theology and the map of life, and a wisdom to be applied to everyday matters. Let us recognize that nothing will have been accomplished unless men's lives are affected and their values changed by what we have to show" (Coomaraswamy, A.K.: "Why Exhibit Works of Art?" in *Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art*, New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1956, pp.20-21).

For me, therefore, the tremendous importance of Weber's critique of (modern) aesthetics (which, under the regime of modernity, replaces the rejected discipline of rhetorics) lies in its power to lead us back (or "forward") to Coomaraswamy's museum militant. It is, at the same time, a dialectical reminder of God, man and the intellectual operation in all human art — whether or not Weber "was in fact making

an enormous statement for God and humanity" (Swatos, William H. Jr., and Kivisto, Peter: "Max Weber as "Christian Sociologist"", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 1991, 30(4), p.360).

In order to gain some deeper understanding and appreciation of Weber's critique of modernity, the following extended analysis of aestheticism should be useful, especially in view of modernity's exaltation of aesthesis to the status of a foundational principle of modern civilisation.

The central dilemma, the crucial aporia of unredeemed (immanentist, referential-literalist) aestheticism arises from its internal incoherence.

Autotelic pursuit of pleasure constitutes aestheticism: "pleasure-perdition" — encapsulates the essence of the aesthetic stage of man's life, the first stage in Kierkegaard's analysis; in the hierarchically related three stages of life, the next two being the ethical and the religious. Pleasure is to be understood as any sensation, feeling-emotion, thought, activity, etc. the experience of which is sought, pursued and valued for its own sake, for the "reason" that is deliberately chosen by the *aesthete* in full individual freedom in preference to others that are seen by the aesthetic chooser as possible and choosable by him/her. It follows that any experience, thought or activity, whether painful or pleasurable, beautiful or ugly, fearful or peaceful, cruel or merciful, is, *indifferently*, a valued aesthetic experience, a joy (that is not for ever). The decisive condition is that the mode, scale and level of the experience (or pleasure), sought after, pursued and preserved and recollected should be the *aesthete's* own "free" choice, the act or fact of "choosing" conferring upon the chosen an absolute value. In other words, aestheticism is constituted by the conjunction of two internally non-cohering elements: egocentricism and autotelism. By virtue of this disjunctive conjunctin, the aesthetic-experencer or pleasure-seeker has, *in truth*, to turn himself into the witness of his own experience of enjoyment: except that the *aesthete*, no matter how sophisticated or crude, simply cannot turn him/herself into a witness without sacrificing the experience sought after; his chosen sensation, feeling, etc.; no matter how reflexive the experience of the *aesthete*, witnessing is not experiencing, observing, intuiting etc.; it is knowing which is at one with being, transcending aesthetic cognition. The *aesthete simply cannot* ever realise the truth of aestheticism because as the witness he/she should be absolutely free while the *aesthete*, by virtue of his/her egocentricity, is imprisoned in the iron cage of self-willed, eccentric choice. The principle of autotelism is thus radically contradicted by the pseudo-principle of ego-centricity (=a concentration of eccentricity). The failure to be transformed from the experencer, the enjoyer into the witness of one's own experience (and hence, ultimately of all-experience) is the failure to redeem immanentist-literalist aestheticism by transferring vertically from the animal to the

human level and from the literal to the anagogic. This redemption of the aesthetic is also the redemption of modernity; for it (modernity) is unquestionably founded on the centrality of the aesthetic (=the sensate) at both levels: the individual and the social-civilisational.

Modern thought posits man as a bundle, a congeries (not system) of his desires and needs which he himself has to satisfy, by his own (or commanded/hired) labour and work, from the pre-existing fonts of all sustenance: Nature; and the inherited human world: History. This situation of man will remain essentially the same so long as the *human* sustenance and survival systems remain as they always have been: only partially cybernated, moreover, in a highly limited way. And this seems to be a wholly fixed aspect of human constitution: the existing cybernetic system can be supplemented, assisted and enhanced; but in principle and substance, the human sustenance and survival system remains for all imaginable time virtually non-cybernated.

There is, of course, the prevailing and subliminally powerful seductive idea that advances in modern science and technology will abolish both Nature and History: Nature, by transmuting it into Industry; and History by reducing it to Technology through wholesale psychic and social engineering. One has, however, to remember that modern man's central project of complete liberation of the human species from both Nature and History involves not only the mega-magic of science-technology, but presupposes at the same time that by a species-transmutation modern man will become a completely cybernated system at all levels and modes of his existence: it is not clear if such a species-transmutation is expected to occur naturally or would have to be brought about by huge advances in bio-engineering. However, let us not digress to consider even briefly the undoubtedly important problematic of evaluating the possibility of such radical and total bio-engineering (= "scientific" alchemy), or assessing the chances of a miraculous complicity between (modern) man's fast changing desires (and ways of thought) and nature's "teleology" such that the desired transmutation of the human species will naturally occur; there is indeed a decisive objection against this, or any such, project of "scientific" alchemy. It is as follows: The implications and logico-dialectical chain-consequences of a species-(trans)mutation cannot but be no less than of cosmic dimensions; moreover, they would obviously be immense; that is, almost wholly incalculable; and, in truth, beyond our *contemporary imagination*. Now a project of which the logical implications and chain-consequences are not only beyond our reason but outstrip even our imaginative powers, is not a human project; in any case, it is literally non-sense: without reference or sense; besides, it would be wholly undesirable as a total and radical risk for humankind. As for the "hope" or "expectation" of the desired transmutation occurring naturally, that too would be precisely without any reference or sense, for in

the normal human context, one cannot "expect" or "hope" for something that one does not know and cannot meaningfully imagine. What is possible in the spiritual context is not necessarily so in the immanent human and natural contexts.

Now given that man's virtually non-cybernetic constitution stays as it has been since time immemorial (any future transmutation being unimaginable to-day); given the centrality of the aesthetic "principle" in the "self-grounding" of modernity, it follows that *only* an adversary relationship is possible between Man and Nature — a relationship of reckless exploitation: praxiologically this means that the conquering, exploiting relationship of man to nature is a logically necessary relation under the regime of modernity. Again, his relationship with History must necessarily be one of hostility: that is, one of intellectual misappropriation of the past (=modernisation of the past; in other words, the willful subjugation of all history to modernist categories of thought and action).

It should be clear now that modernity's relation to Nature and History cannot be overcome; nor even changed in any significant way except on pain of totally and radically denouncing *and* renouncing Modernity itself.

Since the aesthetic is the non-reflecting, non-rational, animal dimension and mode of human life in its wholeness, redemption of the aesthetic is the first task of man; modernity, when it does not ignore it, rejects the necessity of redeeming the aesthetic, as of course, it must, given the centrality of the aesthetic in modernity. It has to go further and elevate the aesthetic as the central governing "*principle*" of man's nature, life and destiny. This ineluctable falsification of human life cannot but lead to genocide and cosmocide. This is a stunning falsification of the reality of man's life and of the truth of his destiny. From this lie in the soul of modernity follows a chain of contradictions, falsifications and perversions: To begin with, let us consider Man's relation to Nature and to History for, as will become clear in the course of the following analysis, this relationship is original and constitutive both in Tradition and Modernity with, of course, the all-important proviso, namely, that in Tradition man is constituted by a hierarchical triadic relation: God-Man; Man-Nature (ecology, economics); and Man-Man (polis, society-history); modern man denies and rejects the first relation undermining thereby the ground of the very possibility of man and his inherited relational world of nature and history forming a coherent whole. In truth, God (the Divine, the Timeless Origin) is the sovereign who rules all other relations (man-nature and man-man), so any denial of man-Absolute relationship would involve the groundlessness of both Man-Nature and Man-Man relationship and make the very idea of a sound, just, honest or sincere relationship between man and his Other — human or non-human; for merely and wholly immanent horizontal relationship would lack the principle in terms of which the criteria of true and false relationship could be formulated, discerned and applied to specific cases. "In connection with widespread

dormancy of psychic elements, it is particularly ironical that the notion of sincerity — or rather the word, for it is scarcely more than that — should loom so large in twentieth century complacency, for sincerity, which implies an integral vigilance, is just what modern man most lacks" (Lings, Martin: *Symbol and Archetype*, Cambridge, Quinta Essentia, 1991, p.108).

Being atelic, fragmentary and atomistic-aggregational, modernity-based societies and civilisations are wholly and radically incapable of seeing Nature and History *as such*, that is, as each in its own way appears and exists in time and space: for their origin and end are beyond man's "researches" and hence outside modern scientific knowledge: each is, for man, already always there. And yet modernity posits them as coming into existence and surviving solely for serving man's needs and purposes as felt and set by man himself (man=modern man). In taking this position, modern thought obviously uses a universal suprahuman teleology which is clearly but illicitly borrowed from certain schools of Christian theology and Christology. (An explicit version of this kind of "scientific" theology can be found in the work of Father Teilhard de Chardin.) It is a contradictory position: in all modern scientific evolutionism (including Teilhard's) both Nature and natural history and "prehistory" long antedate the emergence of man. And yet their universal *telos* is determined timelessly by the late-arriving *evolute*, man, a position justified only if man were omniscient and omnipotent. (These attributes man has never possessed as yet and can never do: the concepts of omniscience and omnipotence are humanly unintelligible as will be clear from their logico-dialectical analysis.)—The contradiction lies in this: the logic of the concepts of Nature and History as they are used in modern thought makes them cosmological and man's relationship to them hierarchical. At the same time, aggregational, atelic axiomatics and empiricist-testability and value-neutral objectivist methodology rule out all cosmological and hierarchical realities and their adequate analysis and understanding. Indeed the very admission of the originlessness and endlessness of Nature and History is radically against the grain of modernity; but the admission cannot be evaded, only ignored.

It follows then that Nature and History can enter modern thought only as a supply-system and a surviving ethnographical material: each a staggering falsification of the reality — experiential and logical — of Nature and History. From this falsification follows the perverted, self-serving relation of man and nature; of actor and history sustained only by a smuggled, inadmissible teleology: an adversary relationship, one of conquest and reckless exploitation in the case of Nature and one of incomprehension and abolition through what may be called the modernisation of the past.

Now as has already been shown, man has, ineluctably, to labour and work himself for his survival (and "for the progress" of his civilisation) by extracting supplies for his needs and desires from the pre-given supply-system (=Nature in pre-modern

thought). Labouring and working for survival becomes, under modernity — and there alone — his typical, paradigmatic mode of “being”. It is, of course, clear but important to emphasise that labouring and working, in the present context, mean labouring and working *successfully*; that is, *failure* to produce (=obtaining the desired supply for man to use) cannot count as labour or work. It follows from this (principal) analysis that man is what he produces from the given supply-system (*homo laborans*); and he *is also* what he produces from a given material by remaking it according to some given design for a given purpose (*homo faber*). Used as a definition of man this already implies the converse equation: the producer is the sum of his products; the logical next step from the above premises, makes man just a producer or nothing; and the truth of producing is the end-product(s).

Now since, as we have shown, one may not succeed in producing the desired, needed product even though labouring and working for it, and since there is no way of counting failed labouring or working for anything, success (and victory) is built into all modern and Marxian anthropology and sociology (and indeed in all social science). And this must remain thus and so no matter what its nemesis may be. And indeed it *has been* terrible beyond our fears and anxieties.

Now with the crucial concept of success built into the constitutive categories of modern human life — labour and work — a number of deeply significant results follow: To begin with, labouring, working and acting, each and all of these basic concepts of the active life (*vita activa*) have to be replaced by (if not, in fact, reduced to) a single concept, viz., achieving (to achieve). Labouring, working (to work) and doing: each and all carry the built-in possibility of failure as well as that of success in obtaining the desired results; “achieving” (to achieve), on the other hand, has the idea of *successfully* labouring, working and doing built into it. The logic of this concept makes it *nonsense* to say that somebody has been “achieving” but has failed to bring about the desired results. Of course, it can be said that somebody failed to achieve what he/she wanted to. However, this would be only an inelegant way of saying: “He laboured/worked/acted/tried to achieve ‘X’ but did not succeed”: here the main verbs are: ‘to labour’, ‘to work’, ‘to act’, ‘to try’, each of which is success-neutral; so that “failing”, in effect, applies here not to “achieving” but to the above success-neutral human procedures which could as well fail as they may succeed. The same semantic difference is reflected in the grammatical fact that usage-wise one cannot say labourable/unlabourable; and though one does say workable/unworkable; doable/undoable (though the usage in the last case is rare if not impermissible), the meaning of the one is related to the strong probability of success and failure and in the other it is an axiological use if and when permissible. In the case of achieving, there is a clear distinction between the achievable and the unachievable so that *attempting* the unachievable again refers to the concepts of

"attempting", "trying" and not to that of achieving. ("Achieve: To finish, to carry out successfully; Of an end: To attain, to reach successfully." *Shorter OED*; "achieve, *v.t.* to bring to a successful issue, to end (obs.): to perform: to accomplish: to win." *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*) Modernity, "true" to its "principles", thus cannot see man's being, his specificity and nature, in terms of making or doing (for, to repeat, it cannot count failed making or acting as making or doing); it *must*, therefore, see man's being in terms of achieving, the semantic structure of the concept precluding failure; "to achieve" is to succeed. Modernity defines man as the achiever: *to be is to be an achiever*. In the very title of his classic, *The Achieving Society*, and in his key concept "n-ach." (need to achieve) McClelland has summed up the whole nature of modernity and its dire fate. It is, therefore, of the highest importance to see how the theory of man as essentially, (the) achiever; how, among so many human needs, the "n-ach." (need to achieve) is *par excellence* and preeminently the human need; let us see how the concepts "achieving" and "achiever" function in the radically new context of modernity. Firstly, in the context of tradition which, *unlike* that of modernity, is almost always dialectical, man is seen at three levels: aesthetic, active (*vita activa*) and contemplative (with the crucial caveat that the aesthetic is a subhuman level of human existence). At the level of *vita activa* man exists between ineluctable dualities which, moreover, are often antithetical. Accordingly he has to cope with rationality as well as irrationality; pleasure as well as pain — for existing at the level of relativities, man cannot eliminate once for all either reason or unreason, either pleasure or pain. In his purposive-rational life, man has to cope with and live with both victory and defeat, today the one; tomorrow, maybe, the other. This universal human condition is epitomised by Kierkegaard: at the aesthetic level, pleasure-perdition; at the active level, victory-defeat; at the religious-spiritual level, suffering: for this is the level of transcendence and dualities now yield place to the absoluteness of suffering signifying the incommensurability between man's finite, relativistic existence and the infinitude of the Transcendent, the Divine, the Absolute, the Zero (*śunya*).

In the undialectical monistic-absolutist world of modernity the relativities are banished without any act or knowledge of or belief in the Absolute or Transcendence. However, it is not easy to absolutise Reason, Happiness, Goodness, etc.; the counterparts of each: unreason, misery, evil, etc. are too powerful, too obstinate and universal to be abolished or ignored by discounting. It is success built into the concept of achieving that modernity absolutises by decreeing that the non-successful do not count: to be man = to be achiever = the successful, the victorious.

This completely unrealistic and direly undialectical position makes "success", achieving, achievement autotelic, that is, success, to be successful, is its own end. This has to be thus and so: for otherwise one either accepts the dualities, the

relativities, the contingencies of human existence as real and constitutive of human life: in short, one has to accept suffering as essential to human existence, an acceptance that itself implies the nostalgia and the striving for transcending relativity; or conversely, the absolute rejection of transcendence entails the absolutisation of the relative. There can thus be no conditionalities for modern man, the achiever nor for the achieving society of which he (the achiever) alone is a member, the others are mere proletariat, hewers of wood and drawers of water.

The absolutisation of "achieving" permits only the intransitive use of the verb "to achieve", which, though grammatically permitted, is a semantic perversity, for, as a consequence of this, it does not, indeed, cannot matter at all *what* the achiever achieves: his objective, and the object to be achieved are both insignificant so long as the "achieving" is such as can be plausibly glorified, which is really a matter of commanding advertising skills and the required financial resources. The distinction between the tremendous and the trivial is lost if one has the resources to glorify whatever one cares to achieve however trivial. The achieving society is necessarily, an advertising society, a civilisation of media and commercials; and, naturally, one of consumerists and opportunists — for the achieving society abolishes ethics, politics, economics, ecology by abolishing the very idea of intrinsic worth and the distinctions between the worthy and the unworthy.

With all this, man has to "achieve" his life — sustenance and survival from Nature however heavily mediated by advanced technology and industrialisation. The point here is that the replacement of man the producer (and the producer by his products) by man the achiever does not abolish or abrogate man the producer: it only superimposes upon him the modality, "achieving". As our foregoing analysis of the semantics and implications of the concept of "achieving" shows, the producer-achiever's relationship to nature would now necessarily be one of conquest and victory — seen in terms of greater glory of man. There would follow many ways of achieving glory in Man-Nature relationship. The one that is most important here is that of over-production and since glory is the confirmation and radiance of achievement, the autotelism of "achieving" is transferred to production: in consequence of which it is delinked from all real needs and natural desires: it has to be production for its own sake, that is, for disposal: consumers are now the counterpart of production and their needs are therefore manufactured and desires induced and managed along with producing commodities and managing their sale and distribution. The achiever as the consumer has to indulge more and more in Veblenian conspicuous consumption and ownership of goods in order to seek the glory of achieving (success).

And here we reach the ultimate contradiction of aestheticism: a double edged one; besides its intrinsic constitutive one arising from the opacity of aesthesis. As

modernity in its desperate unreason tries to turn this opacity into an autotelism, it invents aesthetics and aestheticism (and the aesthete): there thus arises the "trans"-formation of aesthesis into aestheticism as the cult of enjoying and celebrating one's own sensations, feelings, emotions, experiences; and thought and knowledge (and action) demoted to the level of aesthesis; also the momentaneous nature of all life (and things) and, indeed, of aesthesis itself, requires of the authentic aesthete that he live his life in the moment and for the moment's sake only: To be able to so live is to be transmuted into a pure witness, a saint: endlessly self-reflexive, naturally ascending to the Absolute moment. The authentic aesthete then is a son of the moment, not himself but a pure witness of all his selves. (This holds equally true of aesthetics or aestheticism in its modern technical sense, viz., perception and appreciation of beauty of the world or in art and literature, the latter mimetically representing man and his relationship to himself and his world as the enjoyer. Here the transformation of the enjoyer, the consumer, into a pure witness abrogating himself/herself by an act of transcendental contemplation is obvious. The self-destroying contradiction between enjoying and witnessing is in the very nature of autonomous-immanentist aestheticism.

Modernity denies man's *vita contemplativa* and, recognising only the aesthetic and the active life (*vita activa*) of man, founds the latter on the former. This incredible perversion leads logico-dialectically as well as socio-economically to our present predicament where a small uncreative irresponsible but dominant minority controls a production system essentially and largely de-linked from human needs, and reduces the overwhelming majority to being mere consumers for the overproducing system whose needs too are manufactured by the dominant minority along with goods that are to be disposed of one way or the other. It is NOT the private profit motive that is the real evil of the modern system of production, it is the achievement syndrome ("n-ach.!") that must culminate NOT in a society of enjoyers but one of captive, abject consumers under the illusion that it is they who choose "consumerism" and decide what they will consume, when they have, in truth, no choice whatever. The producing elite too is a victim, a captive of the conquest-glory syndrome. Indeed, McLelland calls his magic concept "n-ach." (need to achieve) a virus, and holds that only those infected with this virus (or those who have been injected with it) can be modernised (or modernise themselves).

Here then is the fate of the achieving man and his achieving society: promising himself a life of choice enjoyment, he is reduced to a helpless victim of consumerism subliminally, when not openly, by a tiny minority which is itself a victim of its own necessity of self-glorification. *Vita activa* reduced to an achieving society "rises" to be a society of victims of overproduction. With the perversion of *vita activa* by modernity, man's humanity is endangered — This is the nemesis of a civilisation

which founds itself on aestheticism.

Aestheticism — the nature, meaning and logic of which has already been briefly analysed — when exalted to the principle on which a new universal civilisation founds itself generates a dialectic which, too, culminates in the denial of man's transtemporal *telos*, thus reducing him to a cog huge socio-economic-political machine. When man, rejecting the Divine and the love and glory thereof, chooses to love himself and the glory of man; when he, accordingly, rejects the archetypal City of God and founds the City of Man on self-love and self-glorification, it becomes imperative for him as an achiever that he concretise the glory of his conquest of Nature and the possession (by incomprehension) of all preceding history. This concretisation cannot but take the form of material goods and technological wonders and monumental architecture. In order that the glory achieved by man may be confirmed and radiated, it has to be objectified in various forms, dimensions and modalities; the most popular and substantial form would be material goods: their ownership and possession and consumption and display. Material goods now constitute man's glory and his supreme Good. And man now loves to be possessed by his possessions.

The foregoing is a slightly extended commentary on Weber's penetrating and devastating critique of modernity especially as summarised in a masterly passage in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. It is already quoted in Note (1), pages 47-48. For ready reference the following passage may be requested:

"In Baxter's view 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.

"No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or, if neither, mechanized petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. For of the last stage of this cultural development, it might well be truly said: "Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved."

Weber's penetrating and remarkably prescient critique of modernity, so concisely encapsulated in what may be called the iron cage passage, has said all that needs saying to-day more than a full half-century after Weber's death. The purpose of my commentary is simply to amplify and analyse not to add to it.

Indeed, I find it rather strange that Habermas, a front rank Weber scholar, should fail to realise that Weber has already rendered obsolete his critique of instrumental rationality; this holds true of his (Habermas') proposed redemption of instrumental reason by the theory of Communicative Action based on the so-called Meadian and

Austinian paradigm-shift. Indeed, Weber's work renders nugatory the whole critical-theoretical idea of emancipatory reason (vide "Science as a Vocation" among other such sources in Weber).

Again, Habermas fully shares, *contra* Weber, the modern faith that the failings, misunderstandings, excesses and misuses of modern Reason can all be redeemed Phoenix-like by modernity itself. Obviously, Habermas cannot ever see that Modernity and Reason do not and cannot go together. Nor, apparently, does Habermas realise that his own theory of Communicative Action leads only to a Consensual theory of truth which, far from being emancipatory, instrumentalises not only Reason, but Truth itself. "Communicative Action", which Habermas *almost* equates to symbolic action, being horizontally oriented can never reach the symbolic level which is vertical to the referential level and ultimately transcends the conceptual universe. J. L. Austin, a subtle, powerful, honest thinker himself realised this and in the end gave up his key distinction between the constative and performative uses of words; and did this in the very lectures he wrote and delivered to propose and systematically develop it (*How to Do Things with Words*).

A vast, incorrigible difference in the levels of penetration, profundity and insight separates Habermas from Austin and Adorno; as indeed from any serious, sincere thinker. Thought-making, or encyclopaedic, stupendous scholarship is *not, per se*, thinking.

(14) Weber, Max: *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, tr. and eds. by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch, Glencoe, The Free Press, 1949, p.57.

(15) *Ibid.*, p.18.

(16) *Ibid.*, p.81.

(17) It may seem that Weber's approach to this problem in terms of probability is an exception. I, however, think that such an approach is rather odd, particularly in those contexts in which the concept of probability is not really meaningful — for instance, probabilities imputed to a past period. It certainly does not falsify my proposition because the notion of "highest probability" makes sense only in the context of the notion of certainty. To deny this is to abolish contingency as a logical problem and an existential mystery.

(18) Weber, Max: *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, tr. by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons; ed. by T. Parsons, New York, Oxford University Press, 1950, P.88.

(19) The celebrated distinction between nomothetic and idiographic sciences raises the question if an idiography is strictly possible at all except as a history of idiosyncracies. In any case, an idiography which is not governed by a systematic ideography — and idiography and ideography will often be divergent and work at cross purposes — can at best be "aesthetic" art (see note 13) and cut off from the active and

contemplative lives. The theory of idiographic sciences, its illustrious sponsors notwithstanding, violates the Aristotelian rule against a science of individuals. The concept of "pure description" is in any case more difficult and complex than is usually allowed. (Wittgenstein's thinking on the philosophical vocation as striving toward pure description is a case apart; and one must remember that Wittgenstein did not want to be a scientist nor was he a phenomenologist. See Wittgenstein, Ludwig; *Culture and Value*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1980, pp.5e-8e and *passim*.) Marx rejects the antithesis between the science of man and the science of nature; he has a single method, inductive and historical-dialectical, for the study of both man and nature. He rejects the view that human history and nature require two different methods of study. This would, of course, follow eventually from his belief that "Nature becomes one of the organs of his (man's) activity, one that he annexes to his own bodily organs, adding stature to himself in spite of the Bible" (Marx, Karl: *Capital; A Critique of Political Economy*, New York, Random House, 1906, p.199; parenthesis added). The social sciences of modern capitalist society do not reach the level and prestige of the natural and the tensions and methodological problems this fact generates are resolved eschatologically by the prophetic proclamation: "All history is the preparation for "man" to become the object of *sensuous* consciousness, and for the needs of "man as man" to become (natural, sensuous) needs. History itself is a *real* part of *natural history*—of nature's coming to be man. Natural science will in time subsume under itself the science of man, just as the science of man will subsume under itself natural science: There will be *one* science" (Marx, Karl: *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1959, p.103). This is, of course, only a consistent, logical development of the Comte-Durkheim project of the "Science" of man and history and is admittedly founded on a demiurgic anthropology.

Weber as a "scientist" steadfastly refused the prophetic mantle. If he was not too acutely aware of the demiurgic (omniscience and omnipotence) telos of modern man, it may be because he saw with extraordinary courage and clarity the *reductio ad absurdum* and the cosmic disaster and existential despair to which the principle of infinite corrigibility led. Again, if he did not reject idiography, it was only because he turned it into historico-analytical ideography (Ideal-types).

20 Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, p.137.

21 *Ibid.*, p.138.

22 *Ibid.*, pp.152-53 (see note 13 *supra*)

23 *Ibid.*, p.138.

24 Weber, Max: *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, p. 52.

25 One also hears nowadays of science as an aesthetic vision, or as an intellectual pursuit aiming at the achievement of a heightened consciousness. All such

conceptions are variations of the autotelic theory of science, which is founded on the aesthetic syndrome. See note 13 *supra*.

(24) Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, pp.148-49.

(25) Though more than half-a-millennium separates Thomism and Comtism (the latter culminating in Durkheim and ending in Weber) there is an important sense in which they are contemporaneous. It is right to see the origins of modernity in the Enlightenment (18th century); it will be illuminating, however, to remember that before the *philosophes* who roughly started the Enlightenment, there arose in the thirteenth century what Gilson has aptly called philosophism. It was advocated by Siger of Brabant and his circle around the last quarter of the thirteenth century. "Philosophism" means two things; "first, the thesis that philosophising is in principle independent of and separate from theology and faith. For the first time in the history of Christendom the principle of uniting *ratio and fides*, which had been established since the days of Augustine and Boethius, was formally abrogated—abrogated, moreover, by clerical teachers at the most important academy of Christendom itself. Secondly, this newly autonomous philosophy—in defiance of the definition of its name ("search for wisdom") which had been held valid since Pythagoras—was considered wisdom itself, a doctrine of salvation. "There is no state superior to the practice of philosophy"—such was one of its tenets" (Pieper, Josef: *An Introduction to St. Thomas*, London, Faber and Faber, 1963, p.127). It should not be difficult to see that the moment of the autonomy of philosophy, that is, the moment when the love of wisdom is replaced by the love of one's biohistorical selves—in other words, the displacement of *philosophia* by *necrophilia*—was the decisive moment of the deep split in the Western consciousness causing the more fundamental split between word and deed; thus making ethics out of bounds to science, social science and philosophical thoughts. Nor should it be difficult to see that this split would be repeated in the history of modernity again and again; indeed Siger of Brabant and St. Thomas Aquinas will be combined in the same figure. Comte, the positivist against the negativism of Enlightenment, the prophet of the law of three stages proclaiming the Sovereign Rule of Scientists and Industrialists, Comte is also the *soi-disant* Pope of the Religion of Humanity: Durkheim eliminates God as nothing more than society transfigured and symbolically expressed and then he does not operate with a demystified, liberal, empirical aggregational concept of society. No, he worked with a holistic, magisterial notion of society; but having junked the Holy as an exalted surrogate of the power and majesty of Society, who else but Durkheim has to bring back the Holy by remystifying and sanctifying society as Collective Representations? Indeed, without a mystical belief in society and its Representations, his theory of organic solidarity will scarcely work. Marx, the scientist of dialectical materialism, believing only in the intertwined powers of History and (Natural) Science, is also the

prophet of the alchemy of the Revolutionary fire. Weber, the ethnographer and social scientist of Rationalisation and Disenchantment is also the theorist of Charisma without which he sees no future for contemporary history.

There is one decisive difference between the 13th and the 19th-20th centuries. The universalism St. Thomas attempted to establish was a transcendental universalism, going beyond Plato and Aristotle: he did not choose between Christianity and Aristotle, but attempted to reconcile them in terms of a system not his own but of Truths revealed by God. Comte and Marx attempted to construct a universalism built in terms of Truths discovered by themselves; it was to be accepted by virtue of having been chosen. The concept of a constructed, chosen universal Reality is indeed the most novel idea — and marks our "scientific" age as unquestionably unique.

There is perhaps an inescapable nemesis of challenging the Unchallengeable, of rebelling against Oneself. "Made eternal, the transient is overtaken by a curse" (Adorno, Theodor W.: *Prisms*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, The MIT press, 1981, p.252).

See, for example, Etzioni, Amitai: *Genetic Fix: The Next Technological Revolution*, New York, Harper Colophon Books, 1975 (Macmillan edition, 1973). The surest sign of the loss of *élan vital*, of the decay of a great civilisation is the weakening of memory. It is impossible to write poetry after Auschwitz, said Adorno; but even he forgot to suggest that it is hollow to talk about Western humanity after Hiroshima: ethnocentricity is sustained on a vast selective forgetfulness. "The suspicion would then arise that our relationship with men and creation in general was like our relationship with ourselves after an operation (under chloroform) — oblivion after suffering. For cognition the gap between us and others was the same as the time between our own present and past suffering: an insurmountable barrier. But perennial domination over nature, medical and non-medical techniques, are made possible only by a process of oblivion. *The loss of memory is a transcendental condition for science. All objectification is a forgetting*" (Horkheimer, Max and Adorno, Theodor W.: *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, London, Allen Lane, 1973, p.230; emphases and parenthesis added).

And today Professor Jürgen Habermas *contra* Weber and Adorno represents a vast exercise in forgetting Auschwitz, Hiroshima and not only them.

"Memory, taken absolutely, coincides with omniscience and is not a procedure" says Coomaraswamy ("Recollection, Indian and Platonic", *Selected Papers*, Vol. II, edited by Roger Lipsey, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977, p.56).

Does this imply that in a civilisation dominated by promised and projected omniscience, memory procedurally declines?

(28a) Metzner, Ralph: "Age of Ecology" in *Resurgence*, No. 149 (1991), p.4. Metzner is the President of the Green Earth Foundation, California, U. S. A..

(I)

A recent illustration of the strategies of trivialising the tremendous constantly at work is given by the *New York Times* in an editorial (March 6, 1992) which is reproduced here in full:

"Not Funny"

"There's nothing funny about 200,000 human beings incinerated by nuclear weapons.

Ernest Hollings, usually a sensible Senator, shamed himself Monday by tastelessly quipping to South Carolina workers: "You should draw a mushroom cloud and put underneath it, 'Made in America by lazy and illiterate Americans and tested in Japan'."

Senator Hollings says he wanted to show his exasperation with comments by Japanese politicians that disparaged American work habits. Such remarks are ignorant and provocative but they concern economic competition, not wholesale death. Mr. Hollings's riposte is totally out of line.

A half-century after the events, there's still debate about the wisdom of President Truman's decision to force a speedy end to World War II by dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A parallel debate recently erupted in Japan over the morality of Tokyo's surprise attack on Pearl Harbour. Such self-examination honors both societies.

Both countries are entitled to decent respect for the innocent dead. That's what Senator Hollings has lost sight of. Unrepentant, he glories in his callous joke. In contrast to the hasty apologies from Japan that have followed every high-level insult made there, the Senator tells questioners: "I'm glad I said it." Even a belated apology would be welcome."

The editorial is very right in pointing out with admirable English understatement that the deliberate incineration of 200,000 Japanese citizens by ill-considered nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is not at all a funny matter, but something in the most ugly taste. It also argues that it is highly improper and wholly unwarranted to transfer the conflict between America and Japan from the economic to a military context, which is nowhere in the picture — at least in the near future.

The *New York Times* editorial is in the right direction and is encouraging for all saner elements. There are, however, aspects of the controversy to which the *New York Times* has paid no attention.

The editorial does remind the Senator that President Truman's wisdom in deciding to atom bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki has always been questioned: implying perhaps that it is not yet a long-settled matter in Truman's favour to allow the Senator to indulge his sick taste for wanton riposte. It does not notice that the

Senator makes public statement of a fact which, though always known or suspected, has never yet been officially admitted by the United States or any of the Allied Powers. It is the Senatorial admission that Hiroshima was chosen as the site for the first ever real live-test explosion of the newly developed theory; by lending his authority to the test theory the Senator can scarcely enhance his reputation for patriotism. Indeed if the Senator's preference for reaching for the bomb at the slightest provocation persists, he might, in his next rejoinder to some Japanese Minister, declare that the site for the holocaustic experiment was chosen on ethnic grounds—again a view long held by some experts.

By transferring the context of his rejoinder from economic rivalry to that of scientific experiment (and to military victory) the Senator powerfully illustrates the internal depths of contemporary trivialisation of the tremendous. Victory in war at any cost ("all is fair in love and war") is, in my view, an unacceptable doctrine (or slogan), testing a technological device (and perhaps, indirectly a scientific equation) at any cost however tremendous, is a different matter; it is to radically detach science from man and the world, not for the sake of truth and knowledge but in the name of universal knowability. To declare: what matters if millions of innocent people die, and generations upon generations are maimed; let unknown and unknowable consequences take their unpredictable course: "Man" must *know* whether the enormous devices of destruction forged by him are effective or not, and if so, in precisely what measure.

If it is an argument from experimental science, it is a strange one; for it violates the basic assumption of experimentalism, namely, that all experiments can be so devised as to be practically harmless; and, in any case, the possibility of irreversible damage has to be almost completely eliminated.

It is at this point that the distinction between the experimental and actual science and action, between technique and purpose, is completely erased; and the "truth" itself in terms of the mode and cost of its testing is rendered meaningless. Indeed, it is the very line between the tremendous and the trivial that is being erased. The commensurability between the measurable and the immeasurable in the official theory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, namely, that the nuclear bombing saved the estimated loss of 70,000 American lives if the war continued, reaches its absurd limit.

A further, higher order, twist in the procedures of trivialisation remains: implicit sanctification of Hiroshima for the greater glory of modern experimental science and technology. Thus trivialising the rejected idea of sanctity itself. Cf. Hannah Arendt's theory of the banality of Evil (Arendt, Hannah: *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books Ltd., 1963, revised and enlarged edition 1965, *passim*).

(II)

No less deplorable and destructive are a number of strategies which regularly operate in modern societies to socialise the sublime (trivialisation and destruction of the moral sphere). A current example is the South Korean women's demand from the Japanese Government for compensation to them for having been forced to serve as official army prostitutes to Japanese Imperial soldiers during World War II. Since these young girls, often under the most cruel and galling circumstances, were under the Army authority forcibly taken away from their families and homes and set up as prostitutes (officially called comfort women), they now demand apology and individual compensation from the present Government of Japan.

It is obvious that the eruption of the long neglected scandal of "war atrocity", has been politically timed and coincides with American hatred directed against the Japanese people. It is in the main and even essentially a political affair and is directed by both the Korean Church and certain political groups. The politicisation in the form of compensatory justice of this scandalous immoral chapter of recent Japanese history is already a decisive step in the process of obscuring the moral dimension and thus taming some of the huge issues involved.

"A group of South Korean women led by two former "comfort women" issued Monday an open statement directed at Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa calling for overall disclosure of Japan's wartime exploitation of Korean women and compensation to the former comfort women and their families.

In a five-article request attached to the statement, Korea Church Women United asked that the Japanese government reveal the "barbarous acts" taken by the defunct Japanese military against Korean women forced to provide sex to soldiers during World War II.

The statement said that looking into the comfort women issue was not just a matter of "dealing with the past," but rather critical in recovering trust between the Korean and Japanese people.

"We should end the sense of animosity now," said Young Ae Yoon, general secretary of the group at a goodwill exchange gathering held at the Upper House building in Tokyo the same day. Her remark referred to the mistrust and hatred among Korean people toward Japan that are being passed down by former comfort women to their children.

Prior to Yoon's speech, two former comfort women, Chim Mi Ja and Hwang Kum Ju, both 69, gave emotional, and at times graphical, descriptions of their gruesome experience.

"Why should Korean women serve as public toilets for Japanese soldiers?" Chim said with a voice close to a choke, recalling how she felt when she had to have sex with more than 20 soldiers a day. Chim said she was forced to provide sex for six years in Fukuoka on the southernmost main island of Kyushu.

Hwang claimed that she had been fooled into sex slavery when she applied for a factory worker's job. She said She was taken to Sakhalin and China.

Yasuko Takemura, an Upper House member of the Social Democratic Party of Japan, said in a closing statement that efforts are being made to pass a law to press the Japanese government for compensation to former comfort women." (From *Asahi Evening News*, March 3, 1992)

Before I analyse this case as a paradigm of the general trivialisation of the sublime, let me point out that while in this case the South Korean "comfort women" are addressing a former imperial power, the colonial context of the demand does not seem to be essential to the principles involved here. The moral situation would be the same if these women were Japanese, though, of course, there are important political legal differences between the two situations. This particular aspect of the episode therefore does not figure in the analysis that follows; I do so because my purpose here is to see how the *victims* are colluding with the aggressors by trivialising the atrocities perpetrated against them.

Three demands have been made: (a) a full official (but truthful) account of the whole "comfort women" operation; (b) an apology to the people of South Korea, especially to the "comfort women", surviving and dead; and (c) proper monetary compensation to the surviving comfort women and to the families of those who are no more. The first is an eminently proper demand profoundly in consonance with the utter gravity of the offence against the dignity of womanhood; ultimately, it is a demand for a public moment of truth which the Government of Japan owes both to the people of South Korea and to its own. Its truthful and authoritative fulfilment carries within it great redemptive power; its local importance lies in the fact that the Japanese Government's immediate response to the opening of the shameful (or should one say, shameless) affair was to flatly deny the whole thing thus shamelessly using a well-worn political strategy designed to marginalise the moral dimension of the episode: if the denial works, that is the end of the matter; if it does not, the Government will be given credit for the belated and ineluctable admission of its crime, rather than facing a fresh and irrefutable charge of telling a lie to the people; (b) the second demand too is most appropriate for sincere apologies alone are what can be offered now when the deed has been done — for what is done is done, no power on earth or heaven can undo it except God for whom

nothing is impossible: an authentic apology has to be an act of repentance which draws its energy from its reality as a prayer to God for the return of the *status quo* before the wrong doing. Though here the demand for apology from the Emperor or the Government (or both) is mainly in a secular-political context, it is clear that the full meaning of asking for apology and its acceptance (or non-acceptance) cannot be accessible to us without prayer for forgiveness. (Hannah Arendt, it seems to me, does disagree with it against, I think, her own analysis of *vita activa*, but that is another story.) And yet it may not be forgotten that some of the worst aporias in modern thought and many tormenting tensions and ironies of modern practice arise from the fact that the concept of sin has been almost universally discarded by our age, often with vehement contempt. This is strikingly illustrated in the third and the most important demand: (c) that the Government of Japan should award suitable compensation (for the atrociously forced prostitution of Korean girls by the soldiers of the Imperial Army of Japan) to the survivors and to the families of all those who are no longer living.

This is clearly the central and most prominently pressed demand. It is, of course, an established and perhaps unquestioned move in all such belated awareness of the wrong done to the afflicted party. In this case, the movement led by several church and political groups is likely to seek retrospective justice from law by filing a case at an appropriate court of law, in addition to appealing to the United Nations. At home too, leaders are pressuring the Diet to accept the compensation demand of the "comfort women".

"It is my duty to testify publicly about the issue of comfort women," Yoshida (78, a wartime official in charge of forced labourers from Korea) said, comparing the army's violation of international law to the Nazi massacre of European Jews.

"Yoshida insisted that some way must be found to compensate the victims.

"After the war, Germany paid ¥ 8 trillion to individuals in compensation, so Japan should at least pay ¥ 1 trillion to a welfare foundation for North and South Korean victims", he said." (*Asahi Evening News*, February 25, 1992, p.4; parenthesis added).

It should be reasonably clear now that while the first and second demands are eminently appropriate and related to crucial norms of democratic polity, it is the third that is being seen as the central; and is being pursued accordingly at different levels. This would not be the serious matter that it indeed is, if this demand did not at the same time serve to obscure the meaning and profound importance of the first two demands.

In order to see how this has come about, let us note that the demand for compensation often, and especially in the present case where the Government through the Imperial Army acts as the pimp or procurer for the soldiers, is possible

only if the state can appropriate the moral sphere to its own authority and thereby obscure, if not obliterate, the line between the moral and the political. This is, of course, a well-known and a much vaunted achievement of modernity. The consequences of this virtually total assimilation of the moral into the political sphere are huge indeed: it begins with the separation of the church and the state which then leads necessarily and rather automatically to the complete appropriation of morality by politics: the autonomy (secularisation) of politics is the utter profanation of morality (and ethics); for autonomous morality makes no sense, but with the abolition of theology and the elimination of metaphysics if morality is to make sense at all, it can do so only as the handmaiden of the political system; that is, not only public morality and ethics (ordered expression of the ethos of a people and a time), private morality too is necessarily so determined. (This is not to say that I myself believe in the ultimate validity of such a distinction.) The modernist emancipation of morality from religion, theology and metaphysics did not and could not make it autonomous (whatever it may mean — if anything at all), nor scientific or rational: morality (ethics), by virtue of its emancipation from all direction from Above, falls a willing, often enthusiastic, collaborator of the ruling power and the dominant groups. The *vita activa* is guided and governed by *bios theoretikos*. The realm of politics and the realm of morality coincide by each being the realm of human action; there is no important modal difference between the two because the political domain must necessarily be moral, for if political action is non-moral, then there is no way for any human action to be imperatively, axiologically, moral. And this explains why an "emancipated" morality is *eo ipso* a morality in the service of the dominant power-holding class or group.

What is the nature of loss or damage (or both) for which the "comfort women" demand compensation? Since this compensation is in terms of a sum of money to be paid to each survivor or the present families of the victims, the next question is how do these payments today — fifty years after the barbarities — help the victims specifically in the way of recompensing the loss or damage suffered decades ago. (It may be remarked here that whatever may be the general theory of compensation, in the present case the relation of a monetary payment to the guilt of the payer (the Government of Japan) and to the loss and sense of grievance of the victim must be clear; or else the demand (for monetary compensation) will become quite unrelated to the loss of the victims and the guilt of the aggressor.)

The loss is the loss of chastity, of the honour of womanhood, of the honour of the family of man. It is compounded by the fact that this loss has been forced upon the victims and their family by the Government of Japan through the Imperial Army. It is assumed that the victims who had been forced to sell their honour had no way out for most of the victims could not get out of this shameful no exit situation;

perhaps even if some of them stubbornly refused to sell their favours, they might not have been shot to death but subjected to modern methods of breaking down a person.

Now what could compensate decades later — or even at that very time — this loss of womanly honour, this sin, this crime against humanity? Nothing, as far as I think, except prayer and penance. But in modern thought there is no place for the family of concepts of sin, expiation, prayer, forgiveness, redemption. The situation in our time is thus a curious one: while the concept of irreversible loss of honour, loss of or damage to intrinsic dignity survives, — if only in a limited manner — into the present day, the way to redemption does not.

Compensation is a civil law concept, even if compensation or damages may be awarded in certain types of criminal cases too. In this context there is a closely related concept of reparation which too falls within the twilight zone between the criminal and the civil law. It is most often used in the context of war treaties where usually compensation in monetary terms for losses and damages caused by the war to the victor is to be paid by the vanquished to the victor. This could just be a euphemism for penalty imposed by the victor on the vanquished in addition, of course, to the damage already caused to the defeated; however, this does not mean that the money received as the reparation amount is not a major (or minor) contribution to the cost of repairing the damage caused, and indeed it may actually be so used.

The demand for monetary compensation made by and in behalf of the "comfort women" belongs to a different category and it is important to be clear about it. The loss and damage done to the "comfort women" has two aspects: (a) it belongs to the moral; (b) it belongs to the modern political or civil sphere, which is seen as morally, axiologically and metaphysically neutral; it is the sphere of "pure power" — whatever that may mean; it is even utility-neutral.

Let me consider the second context first. Since it is a war-related matter it is easy to see it as a kind of demand for reparation. But it cannot be so assimilated. In its specific technical use it differs importantly from that concept because it is a demand on the Government (in this case, a foreign government) by civilian victims of war; it is not a point of negotiation between two warring nations; also reparations are not only demanded but imposed on the vanquished by the victors to which they have to agree as defeated people. In the case of the demand by the comfort women, though war victims, their demand has no power or authority to be effective except through a court of law, which is not the case for a victor army.

Reparation is a penalty; compensation, in principle, is a kind of weak *quid pro quo*, not a penalty. In fact, so far, this precisely has been the stand of the Japanese Government: all matters arising from the War have been settled by a treaty with

the South Korean Government which categorically agreed to a clause stipulating that no further claims of any kind will ever be made hereinafter by either side. It should thus be clear that as a purely political or legal demand, it does not bear any close scrutiny. It cannot be seen as any better than a demand that has powerful sentimental appeal and mobilising potential derived largely from its moral basis which is being sought to be capitalised for purely political purposes whatever they may be. This can be easily seen at the non-technical level: the compensation money can scarcely be used for repairing any damage arising out of the forced prostitution. Its only justification could be: one can always use some additional money.

It may be argued that the demand for compensation in addition to those for full information and apology from the Emperor or the Japanese Government is a token or symbolic one. The question now is what does "compensation" betoken, what principle or reality does it symbolise?

This brings us to the morality of this ugly episode which *alone* can reasonably be the basis *not for monetary compensation* but for opening the issue even if belatedly. The case then would be that forced Governmental dishonour of woman's very womanhood is the highest and the cruelest atrocity perpetrated by a nation on wholly innocent citizens, an wholly wanton, dire punishment visited, with great violence, upon simple innocent women.

At this stage a crucially important but highly inconvenient point: what is the essence of or the principle involved in the complaint and the demands (information, apology and compensation)? Is it simply the humiliation, the indignity of being forced to do what one may or may not want or agree to do *freely*; or is the essential thing the basic dishonour of prostitutional sex which is here terribly enhanced and compounded by the official sanction and its totally violent implementation? Now it may seem that it is not absolutely necessary to take a stand on the morality of prostitutional sex to see the justification for protest against state organisation of prostitution by wholesale force. But it is. If we delete the question of the morality of voluntary prostitution, this whole ugly episode becomes a *very different* matter, namely, a form of conscription. Conscription is not an uncontroversial nor a simple issue: it became so consequential during the American Vietnam War; it is clear, however, that the issue in its present form cannot be raised as one of conscription; moreover, in fact, it is not being raised as a retrospective protest against an illegal (or legal) conscription.

It follows that monetary compensation must be seen as a fake demand even on a purely politico-legal level: not on the ground that all claims whatsoever are barred by the provisions of the treaty concluding the war, but more importantly on the substantive ground that there is no material damage involved to correspond to the compensation claim in terms of *quid pro quo*. In view of these considerations, the

theory of compensation as a symbolic demand also fails; for, as our analysis shows, if the general problem of the morality of prostitution is kept out or held in abeyance, the episode becomes one of conscription in which the demand is referential, not symbolic. (And even if it is successfully shown that there had been tacit and illegal conscription, the demand for individual monetary compensation will have no validity as such except in terms of the award given by the authority that decides this matter.)

The most important thing, however, is that the very concept (and strategy) of compensation (which is almost always demanded and paid (when conceded) in money) is one that retrospectively legitimises the wrong done. At the political level, therefore, the demand for compensation is an expression of the will to be reconciled with wrongdoing. This may not always be sound politics even from the perspective of naked power-seeking; in the present case, the demand for monetary compensation made by and in behalf of "comfort women" ill-serves their interests and compromises their obligations: for by getting reconciled to the war crimes, by closing, with monetary compensation, this profoundly ugly and politically wanton and irresponsible chapter, they reinforce the generality of corrupt and utterly insensitive political systems; indeed it is nothing short of the victims' retrospective collaboration with their oppressors and tormentors; it is moreover a betrayal by the survivors of those who had strongly resisted such atrocious exploitation. To demand a price for the violence done to them, to their honour, is in truth tantamount to voluntary sale of their honour — and that too retrospectively.

We should now consider the purely moral aspect of this episode; in other words, we want to see how the rejected idea of honour is yet selected to appeal to the people for accepting unacceptable processes and situations. From the moral point of view, prostitution, especially voluntary prostitution, is the deepest dishonour, the most violent indignity and humiliation of the very womanhood of woman. This loss of honour is irredeemable; it is beyond any compensation however high: only prayer can bring divine forgiveness. Forced prostitution is not the worst, for the force is an extenuating circumstance, though the sin is not completely erased nor the sinner exonerated or indulged. Precisely for this reason, the sin of those who force one to prostitute oneself is huge and humanly unforgivable. The demand of the victims for compensation is, at the level of morality, deeply immoral, it compounds the original sinful state of the victim: voluntary prostitution is a sin because the sacred, the divine in woman is made a commodity to be sold for a price high or low determined by the seller or by market forces: those forced to sell themselves against their complete disinclination, doubly compound the sin: they demand a price for having suffered force: thus prostituting suffering. Worse, they free the hellish sinners (Government) of its sin of forcing people to sin and thus causing them irreparable

damage. The involuntary sinner by virtue of the demand for compensation thus now becomes doubly a sinner and voluntarily: by demanding a price (a) for suffering force; and (b) for offering to clear the conscience of the oppression by charging a price to become reconciled to their profoundest indignity, to the total irredeemable damage to their womanhood and thus dishonouring their honour a second time, now willingly and enthusiastically. In this way, the victims, collaborate with their own exploiters.

If the moral order is to have an independent authority and its own worth, it has to be metaphysically grounded: the ideas of good and evil, of ought and ought-not, have to be understood in terms of conformity to and discordance with or transgression, ultimately, of the cosmic order. Modernity rejects all this as pre-modern trash; it founds itself on man-made statute law based rather tortuously upon the idea of human autonomy. The concept of crime which replaces that of evil and sin cannot then be other than political, governed always by politics of power and class interests. It follows then that within this system there is no space for any protest against anything that may look like an abuse of power, however serious it may be. This is why the compensation demand is always a legitimization of the ruling power structure and converts victims into collaborators with the state; this becomes a deeply damaging paradox in cases where the wrong done is undeniably of a nature that can in no way be recompensed: compensation when given not only legitimises the state's wrongdoing, it makes the victims compound their victimisation and raise the involuntary "sin" or "immorality" to the second power, making it retrospectively voluntary. One of the reasons for such strange, unintended and opposite consequences is that the rejected concepts whose foundations have been systematically eroded remain residually and subliminally alive and when allowed to surface implicitly or explicitly, prove devastating. Today, the victims' tacit collaboration with the victorious master is one of the strange powers behind the violent throne. Could one overemphasise the urgency of seeing the dialectics of our predicament today?

Weber's time is not Kafka's time. In one of his last lectures, "Politics as a Vocation", he is, however, presciently aware of the dire consequences of an autonomous politics alienated from ethics and morality. There is a clear awareness in him of modernity as Kafka's penal colony. Separated by two decades from World War II, he did have a prevision of its unprecedented horrors and the consequent systematic banalisation of evil in the post-war world. The iron cage, the long polar night are truly prophetic metaphors. Had he not broken down and died a lonely man, Weber would certainly have asked: And in such dark times, why be a social scientist at all?

③ A post-war development marking the decline of the West is the rise of an antagonistic dual leadership of the world. Before World War II, Europe was the leader of the world. In the post-war world, the centre of world-power, of 'cultural' influence, and other modes of domination moves to America and Soviet Russia: England, Europe and the rest of the world experience the impact (influence, power, domination) of both America and Russia at many different levels — some vastly different from each other — in different modes and measures. This is what I mean by dual world-leadership. The duality has a twin basis: politico-military power and the pull and influence and power of conflicting ideologies roughly called Liberal-democratic and Marxian, or capitalist and communist: America representing the liberal-democratic, anti-communist and Soviet Russia representing the communist societies/nation states in Europe and other parts of the world. The nature of the leadership and hegemonic position and power of America and Soviet Russia have been arguably but not unquestionably different. The supposedly radically opposed ideologies of the two universalisms are Europeanisation of the Earth or in current jargon modernisation of the underdeveloped peoples (Europe and America), and establishment of scientific socialism throughout the world through Socialist Revolution (Soviet Russia). Much of the "intellectual" and "moral" appeal and political energy of each super-power was derived from the postulate of radical choice between modernisation and Scientific-Socialist Revolution. For Europe and America the success of socialist revolutionary mission would mean global enslavement; likewise for Soviet Russia the success of the Kerygmatic mission of modernisation under American-European leadership would spell the setting back of the clock of humanity's progress.

Russian hegemonic power certainly got a huge setback with what may be called the unilateral declaration of independence by China; since then, there seems to have been a continuing weakening of Russia's hegemonic power over the Communist world — or so it seems retrospectively — until last year (1991) it collapsed. It would be plausible to argue that with the Soviet Union taking this plunge almost into dependency, America's leadership and hegemonic power becomes undivided and unchallenged. Again it may seem that what seemed to indicate a decline of the power and prestige of post-war world leadership by virtue of its bifurcation, has proved, again retrospectively, only a prelude to the recovery of unified leadership and unchallenged hegemonic power — after a long prelude of close to half-a-century.

This prelude — if one chooses to see it as such — has also been a long interregnum of "cold war" between the two hegemonic powers, though, of course, this limits its amorphous scope. There is, however, a far more consequential "interregnum", the overwhelming and sovereign rule of the theory and *practice* of

Deterrence under whose pacifist, benevolent sign the two superpowers ran the nuclear race and prepared for "star wars": "The deterrence-idea brought the nuclear age into being, and came to maturity with it as a programme for "massive retaliation" in the event of an enemy attack" (O'Donovan, Oliver: *Peace and Certainty: A Theological Essay on Deterrence*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989, p.55). No less fateful than the bringing about of the "nuclear arms race", is the fact that the deterrence idea has been so far organised:

(1) In order to establish without another war (which may or may not be decisive) the dual, antagonistic hegemonic leadership, American and Russian, over the globe, it would be necessary to freeze the *status quo* as it emerged in the post-war world: that is, the spheres of influence and hegemonic power of each of the two super-powers must clearly be recognised and accepted by both of them; accordingly, a dual world-system must each be totalitarian. This, however, is a simplification: for the self-description of the two worlds is the reverse of each other: from the Russian point of view, the Soviet-Communist world-system is the only possible free, democratic and non-exploitative system, the Euro-American being the unfree, pseudo-democratic and deeply exploitative. This makes the European imperial mandate (received from History) divided and apparently antithetical into (a) Europeanisation (modernisation) of the Earth (= Euro-American reading of the destiny of the Earth); and (b) producing a new man and a new post-prehistory time through the scientific-socialist-alchemical revolution (= Marxian reading of the destiny of world-history entrusted to Marx and transmitted to his self-proclaimed successors, again, by History).

(2) The hegemonic power and ideological power of each (America and Soviet Russia) is founded on and sustained by (a) the promise to save the American way of life and the freedom of the rest of the "free" world and the humanity of man from being over-powered by Russia; and (b) the promise to save the socialist way of life and the advanced, progressive socialist people and the colonial non-European countries from being over-powered and enslaved by the capitalist decadent undemocratic bourgeois way of life.

(3) Another proviso to the precondition of this dual antagonistic leadership is the following: that the boundaries of the spheres of the two worlds are determined and mutually acknowledged as the *status quo post-bellum*; their inviolability refers to use of war as a means of expanding one or the other sphere of influence. Efforts towards extension by peaceful means are permitted.

(3.1) This is the opening for destabilisation and war; but this opening is unavoidable; without it the ideological basis of either leadership will be lost.

(4) A fundamental, key presupposition of this *post-bellum* ("new") world-system and international order is that the two "ideological" worlds are to co-exist

perpetually, except in case of failure to prevent nuclear war which alone can end this coexistence and perhaps all existence.

(4.1) This implies another presupposition that conquest by war can and will establish an ideological system and subsequent defence capability can and will sustain it.

(5) These presuppositions, though inescapable, are not acknowledged on either side; they are not consistent with the idea that peaceful operations in favour of expanding the spheres of the two opposed ideologies are necessary. Yet it is not possible to omit any of the postulates or implications of the post-war international order.

Thus logically (and in an important sense, politically as well) the most compelling argument for deterrence emerging from this analysis is that since there is no way of reconciling the radically opposed ideologies and ways of life (as seen by the leaders of each), since there is no cure of the other's disease, each must concentrate on preventing the other from imposing by war an alien ideology and eliminating once for all the rival ideology. That the "prevention" refers more importantly and most urgently to the prevention of near-total destruction of man and the earth is untenable both logically and historically. Logically: if one did not proceed on the maxim "better dead than red" and believed, instead, in the inherent power of one's belief, nuclear defence or attack need not be necessary; and if one unconditionally ruled out total destruction, the probability of nuclear war, on the given assumptions of deterrence theory would be extremely low, if not altogether eliminated (for some buttons could be pressed inadvertently). In other words — and this is the crucial paradox — the "rationality" of the deterrence "theory" arises from the readiness — albeit in extreme circumstances — to tolerate the imminence of total nuclear destruction of the world.

This is the structure of the context of one of the strangest developments in the contemporary world, namely, the establishment of the "theory" and practice of deterrence as the grand, central organising and sustaining "principle" of the super-powers' global rule.

The aura of necessity, "the only alternative" and a kind of opaque plausibility surrounding the concept and theory of Deterrence make analysis difficult. Let me, however, begin with the beginning: the relation between nuclearism and deterrence. I have already stated that deterrence promotes nuclearism: the atomic bomb was speedily developed to beat Nazism and win the War for the Allied Forces. However, the relationship of nuclearism and deterrence is far more complicated for the kind of analysis and argument often used; that is to say, if nuclear warheads are developed in response to the needs of the theory and practice of deterrence, it could also be argued with equal plausibility that given the nature, declared purpose and logical structure of the theory of deterrence, it could not be formulated except in the context of an increasing threat of a nuclear holocaust and a general climate of

nuclearism. In other words, rather than use a causal or means-ends perspective on the relationship between nuclearism and deterrence, it would be better to see this relation in dialectical terms: that is, the two (nuclearism and deterrence) call for each other and readily respond one to the other.

Deterrence is a strange idea: its "logical" structure is riddled with dire paradoxes — or with plain and huge inconsistencies. And yet its plausibility remains unaffected. That is, to me, the whole thing is just bewildering. But let me now return to the "idea" and strategy of deterrence more directly. Simply put: the deterrence strategy for global peace-keeping by preventing war between the two super-powers is to continuously maintain the threat of total annihilation of the aggressor super-power on the twin assumptions that the mere threat would be such a huge deterrent to the other party, and that it will never actually launch a nuclear or conventional attack against the party, and hence neither super-power will ever have actually to carry out the threat. It is, of course, of the essence of this strategy that the threat should at all-times be actually backed by the stock-piling of the latest nuclear warheads duly tested; and that each super-power should know this about the other even though the preparatory operations of each are to be kept top-secret. The strategy fails (a) if the threat has to be carried out either to preempt what is seen as an imminent attack in unbelievable disregard of the threat; or, (b) in the case of defensive counter-attack in response to an actual attack by the other super-power.

There are four ideas here: (a) the threat must be actual (backed by physical stockpiling adequate to the desired nuclear strike capability) but it must never be actualised for therein lies its success as a deterrent; (b) the actuality of the threat is to be kept top-secret but should be known to the rival super-power; (c) the potential of the nuclear strike threat should be near total destruction; and (d) since the rival super-powers will be competing in the stock-piling of nuclear warheads for mutual deterrence, there automatically develop internal built-in accelerators of the stock-piling. The whole deterrence operation is, by its logic (illogic?) and design, unending and infinite.

A central and critical contradiction in the theory and practice of deterrence, of far-reaching significance, has already been pointed out, namely, the twin presuppositions: on the one hand, the ideological and political conflict between Russia (Communism) and Europe and America (Liberal-Democratic) cannot be settled except through war; on the other hand, war, because it would be all-destroying, must be prevented at all costs.

There are other no less far-reaching presuppositions and implications of this "idea" of deterrence, an idea that has solidly and sovereignly dominated the post-war international world-order, rationalising and legitimating the most weird, abysmal

developments.

"Deterrence is about how the behaviour of nations can be subjected to management, by taking the infinite into our threats and by deploying the calculated prospect of human action and reaction as an instrument to ensure predictability... The idea of deterrence was in our minds before it gave rise to nuclear weapons; it could continue to be there when nuclear weapons have been rendered obsolete by the advent of some more economical deterrent" (O'Donovan, *op. cit.*, p.21).

"If we take ultimate disproportion into the category of eligible means, we can do so only at the cost of revising our conceptions of the eligible end. The justification of nuclear war creates its own scale of values. It regards the destruction of Western civilisation, with its unforeseeable attendant suffering possibly lasting for centuries, as preferable to the subjection of Western civilisation to alien political conditions. Whatever may be said in favour of such a judgment, it can claim no continuity with the liberal tradition of thought. It has invested a political order with sanctions appropriate to an ultimate value; and "liberalism", if it meant anything, meant a political vision which treated all political orders as *relative values*" (O'Donovan, *op. cit.*, p.94).

"Mankind now thinks himself in a position to promise, on the basis of an absolute disproportion of force to the political good, the abolition of war" (O'Donovan, *op. cit.*, p.51).

It is clear then that deterrence, the exemplary strategy in place of political action, undertakes the Husserlian infinite task of European humanity and ends up with the enterprise of using, in a central way, the irrational, the crazy, as the foundation *and* the means of bringing order into the anarchic international order of our times. Its deeper meaning lies not in its deterrence function but in the power of its insanity to make millions of people believe in America as the super leader and the foremost champion of the freedom and dignity of man.

With the collapse of Soviet Russia, the hegemonic leadership of the world has come to be endangered, both in theory and practice.

Soviet Russia and the United States of America were to each other not only the mortal political enemy; at the same time, and much more importantly, each to the other represented the darker side of modernity and a drag on, a huge impediment to, the true progress of mankind. Each for the other was the villain, a satanic giant which had to be killed; and each super-power cast itself in the role of the giant killer, the other being cast in the "image" and role of the giant. The Cold War, though fully political, has been, *at the same time*, no less completely an ideological war, each adversary claiming to be on the side of truth, righteousness, justice and peace. Indeed, according to the self-advertisement of each Hero, politicisation was

simply a necessary instrumental aspect of what was really a wholly moral war. Each was fighting for its own people (the Euro-American, and the Russian and the Marxist); however, no less important and even "more" imperatively required was the saving of the Asians, Africans, and South Americans.

It seems to me that the unavoidable, even if perverse, echoes of a perennial mythical and folktale motif in this contemporary story of the imperialism of modernity do, subliminally, provide it a secret source of power and appeal and enable it to ride roughshod over its huge untenable presuppositions and glaring contradictions and paradoxes.

The collapse of Soviet Russia and the eclipse of the Communist ideology are too sudden and recent and too complex phenomena to admit of any instant understanding. It is possible however to make some preliminary observations: It is a definitive failure of apparently the Marxist version of modern economy (and economics), but essentially it is a sign of the failure of the entire modern economic system and economic theory, both of which are based on the magical powers of modern technology and the unacknowledged but clear assumptions of infinity and atemporality. It is the working out of an internal contradiction between the economy of production for plenty and more plenty; and the liberty – equality – fraternity revolutionary democratic system. Modern economy and economic theory, capitalist and communist alike, are poverty-neutral; the latter is a political concept for the modern economist, even though he may be working professionally for poverty-elimination projects of the State. The nature of modern economics has its impact on the contradiction between democratic ideology (in its liberal and Marxian versions) and the overwhelming reality of hegemonic power structure: firstly, internationally in the very concept of two global super-powers (and also "the big five", or big "four" or big "three"); and secondly, in the internal power-structures of many Asian and African democracies; and, lastly, the existence of patently anti-democratic regimes in different parts of the world: in relation to these the two super-powers have always failed to follow a uniform policy consistent with their declared principles. The break-up of the internal Soviet empire may thus be a highly important cause of the fall of Communist power. The Soviet collapse goes to prove the long-held view of scholars about the wholly artificial and political differences between the liberal-market and the socialist controlled economics; both being high technology based economies, no important differences can be sustained. It seems to me as if the masters of the Soviet economy believed that the ideological super-structure of socialism will transform the essential properties of technological infra-structure.

The main point that the above brief observations are intended to make is that fundamental contradictions inherent in the theory and practice of modern civilisation are now, one may say, maturing and the recent turn in the Soviet is only the

beginning. The economic costs of the long cold war between the two super-powers were from the start unsustainable; it was, in its own terms, a huge programme of the production of the most costly waste at the expense of civil economy. This has been masked in various ways and means, some easy to locate, others rather opaque. The current economic situation of the United States may perhaps *not* be simply the usual cyclic phenomenon.

Does the present situation leave the United States as a united — at least, single, unchallenged — global leader? Our concern here is different: assuming that the U.S.A. is likely now to emerge as an unchallenged world hegemonic leader, can she carry this huge burden? It is not a question about the leader's competence and capability or majesty and power; it is one about the structure of the contemporary global leadership *and* the sign under which it proclaims and sustains itself as the number one leader of the globe entrusted with the burden of Europeanisation of the Earth (=modernisation) so that the destiny of the Earth is fulfilled (Husserl, Edmund: *The Vienna Lecture*, 1935). Does the structure and the specific, even unique, modality survive the loss of the Cold War, the fall of the arch-enemy (whether to be fought against or pacified in the name of autonomy and nationalism) of (modern) man and the cracking up of "internal" or European and American "domestic" imperialism?

It is most unlikely that it would come out of such massive change without almost total damage: to emerge as the one world leader, unchallenged and without a comparable rival is not an enviable position, for challengibility and an actual challenger have been, and, I think, would continue to remain the staple sustenance, the *raison d'être*, the unquestionable legitimation of world leadership in the contemporary situation. Deterrence bases itself upon a curious situation: it is emphatically advertised as predicated upon urgent, terrible realities, which, however, are overlaid with playacting (a threat that must not or will never have to be carried out by virtue of its very enormity), but the playacting will be seen as real by the other hero of the deterrence drama, never mind if he knows the script by heart for it is his script too.

The structure, being that of a new modern genre of the dramatic art, cannot survive after all its possibilities have been exhausted.

A new genre of the drama and a new villain are wanted — that is, if we continue the old, failed deterrence thought — which would be a pity. It seems to me not very helpful to consider Japan eventually being cast into the role of the Soviet: for the Soviet was at once a nuclear power, a political reality *and* a bearer, a living embodiment of a rival ideology: Japan is a power, though a non-nuclear one, an international reality, but bearer of no rival ideology; worse, in terms of an important distinction, a distinction valued by Europeans, Japan is not an originally

modern nation (or people); they are derivative-imitative, though no longer transitional like many other Asian people.

To repeat, it is too early — at least for one who is not at all knowledgeable in international affairs — to take in the post-cold war situation in all its complexity and far-reaching implications. With reference to what is said here about Japan's ineligibility to play the role of the villain-hero, it may be added that the newspapers are providing us everyday with clear evidence for the fact that currently Americans are frantically in search of a surrogate for the fallen arch-enemy: "With the collapse of the Soviet Union, American politicians lost an enemy, and now they feel lonesome," writes the renowned Japanese columnist Yukio Matsuyama, quoting a Harvard authority on international issues. Matsuyama adds, "It is not impossible that U.S. firepower will now be concentrated on Japan. The time is past when Japanese-American relations were guaranteed by the security pact, or could be set right by an increased cash contribution" ("*Frankly Speaking*" in *Asahi Evening News*, March 2, 1992).

It seems to me that a people who can contribute 12.45 percent of the total budget of the United Nations (Britain: 5 percent, China: 0.5 percent) and take, in their modest stride, non-membership of the Security Council are unlikely to take the bait implied in the rather high-pitched Japan-bashing currently going on in America.

The main point may not be the U.S.-Japan relation at all. The West needs a new script for a wholly different play which alone can give the *dramatis personae* now required.

The Russian transformation, it seems to me, leaves the West's global imperial leadership unrivalled, maybe, unchallengeable and weakened; indeed, in a quandary.

Weber died (1920) a couple of years after World War I — more than a quarter of a century before global leadership passed out from Europe to its younger kin, America. Weber's analysis of Western history and the rise of modernity and his diagnosis of the sickness of European modernity remains intact and contemporaneous. He had clearly seen and acutely experienced the misery of the no-exit predicament in which the aporias of modernity had imprisoned Western civilisation. He knew that the terrible ineluctable dilemmas and the acute aporias were working away steadily at the very core of modern European civilisation which was thus being irreversibly corroded at a fast speed. But Max Weber firmly refused to don the prophetic mantle for he could see that the time of the prophets was not yet. Indeed, it is highly doubtful if he believed in the social science officialese of "prediction-and-control" as the motto — if not the telos — of the social sciences. He hardly ever went beyond reading the consequences of present realities which is

logico-dialectical and not a futurological exercise. Weber hated *ersatz*. For him the irredeemable decline of the West was a matter not of foreseeing but one simply of seeing.

Max Weber's great discovery was modern man's — and his own — disenchantment with a world — his only world — that had been ruthlessly, relentlessly dispossessed of all its enchantment from which all spirit had been studiously exorcised. That is, he was discovering a deepening disenchantment with the disenchanted world of modernity, that living with disenchantment was virtually impossible especially when disenchantment had been raised to the second power. Of course Weber was aware that the negation of a negative is a positivity. Was it then "re-enchantment"? No; he could no longer think in those terms. Weber hated *ersatz*; his earlier "scientisation" of charisma may not be overlooked; towards the end, he certainly knew better: he stopped at double negation. His insight is penetrating, incisive; but transcendent? Perhaps not.

Weber's time is not Kafka's time.

①) The point involved here is not our littleness as sociologists or even as natural scientists — remember the fate of the greatest physicist or biologist in relation to political power-holders (McCarthyism). The case of social scientists is only more visible and rather pitiable since even as scientists they are not their own masters. The important point noted thematically by both Weber and Marx is the loss of the idea of vocation which has been replaced by careerism, job-holding and job-satisfaction. This is, however, a logical development from the idea of "choice" as the basis of human action (and morality). The Theory of Communicative Action with its feeble, emaciated, provincial notions of understanding and truth is not likely to help the situation.

②) Here we come to (a) one of the crucial aspects of the nature, origin and destiny of modernity; and (b) the essentially and necessarily masking mission of the social "sciences". Let us hope the following parable of Kafka (1883-1924) will illuminate our predicament at the profoundest levels and give us access to some rare apertures opening us to messages from Above.

PARADISE

The expulsion from Paradise is in its main significance eternal: Consequently the expulsion from Paradise is final, and life in this world irrevocable, but the eternal nature of the occurrence (or, temporally expressed, the eternal recapitulation of the occurrence) makes it nevertheless possible that not only could we live continuously in Paradise, but that we are continuously there in actual fact, no matter whether we know it here or not.

Why do we lament over the fall of man? We were not driven out of Paradise because of it, but because of the Tree of Life, that we might not eat of it.

We are sinful not merely because we have eaten of the Tree of Knowledge, but also because we have not yet eaten of the Tree of Life. The state in which we find ourselves is sinful, quite independent of guilt.

We were fashioned to live in Paradise, and Paradise was destined to serve us. Our destiny has been altered; that this has also happened with the destiny of Paradise is not stated.

We were expelled from Paradise, but Paradise was not destroyed. In a sense our expulsion from Paradise was a stroke of luck, for had we not been expelled, Paradise would have had to be destroyed.

God said that Adam would have to die on the day he ate of the Tree of Knowledge. According to God, the instantaneous result of eating of the Tree of Knowledge would be death; according to the serpent (at least it can be understood so), it would be equality with God. Both were wrong in similar ways. Men did not die, but became mortal; they did not become like God, but received the indispensable capacity to become so. Both were right in similar ways. Man did not die, but the paradisiacal man did; men did not become God, but divine knowledge.

He is a free and secure citizen of the world, for he is fettered to a chain which is long enough to give him the freedom of all earthly space, and yet only so long that nothing can drag him past the frontiers of the world. But simultaneously he is a free and secure citizen of Heaven as well, for he is also fettered by a similarly designed heavenly chain. So that if he heads, say, for the earth, his heavenly collar throttles him, and if he heads for Heaven,

his earthly one does the same. And yet all the possibilities are his, and he feels it; more, he actually refuses to account for the deadlock by an error in the original fettering.

Since the Fall we have been essentially equal in our capacity to recognize good and evil; nonetheless it is just here that we seek to show our individual superiority. But the real differences begin beyond that knowledge. The opposite illusion may be explained thus: nobody can remain content with the mere knowledge of good and evil in itself, but must endeavor as well to act in accordance with it. The strength to do so, however, is not likewise given him, consequently he must destroy himself trying to do so, at the risk of not achieving the necessary strength even then; yet there remains nothing for him but this final attempt. (That is moreover the meaning of the threat of death attached to eating of the Tree of Knowledge; perhaps too it was the original meaning of natural death.) Now, faced with this attempt, man is filled with fear; he prefers to annul his knowledge of good and evil (the term, "the fall of man," may be traced back to that fear); yet the accomplished cannot be annulled, but only confused. It was for this purpose that our rationalizations were created. The whole world is full of them, indeed the whole visible world is perhaps nothing more than the rationalization of a man who wants to find peace for a moment. An attempt to falsify the actuality of knowledge, to regard knowledge as a goal still to be reached.

(Kafka, Franz: *Parables and Paradoxes*, Bilingual edition, New York, Schocken Books, 1961), pp.29-33.

33 Foucault, Michel: *The Order of Things* (New York, Vintage Books, Random House, 1970), p.326. (The French text was published by Gallimard, Paris, 1966.)

34 Kierkegaard, Søren: *Philosophical Fragments or a Fragment of Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1944), p.29. (The Danish text was published in 1844 at Copenhagen.)

35 It is too early to see the full meaning and implications and to assess the immediate and long-term impact of the fall and dismemberment of the Union of Soviet Republics. A successful counter-revolution, a throwback of one kind or

another to the fallen system, cannot be ruled out — at least not so quickly. One or two things, however, seem fairly clear to me. Whatever be the future of the present powerful resurgence of sovereign nation-states, the falsely so-called second world is dead whether or not a geo-politically unified Euro-American single world emerges. There can now be no ideological double or divided will as far as the imperial mission of Europeanisation-modernisation of the Earth is concerned. The economics and politics of the Asian, African and Latin American nation-states would tend to be less complicated. The present developments may perhaps quicken and intensify the “development” and modernisation of non-Euro-American people; also, this new phase of “post-colonial” modernisation may see the strengthening of pure colonisation of non-European peoples and nations. Revolutionary and scientific socialism discourse may now be on the way out. I also feel that the false consciousness and the masking strategies of social “scientific” thought may be denser and gain more power now in both the imperial and the colonial countries.

- (36) “Science as a Vocation”, in Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, pp. 147-48.
- (37) Freund, Julien: *The Sociology of Max Weber*, New York, Pantheon Books, 1968, p.25.
- (38) Freund, *op. cit.*, p.22; Weber: “Science as a Vocation”, in Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, *passim*.
- (39) Freund, *op. cit.*, p.25.
- (40) Habermas, Jürgen: *Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Vol. I of his two volume work, *The Theory of Communicative Action*), Boston, Beacon Press, 1984, p.241.
- (41) “Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions”, in Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, p.355.
- (42) Habermas: *op. cit.*, p.242.
- (43) *Ibid.*, p.243.
- (44) *Ibid.*, p.243.
- (45) *Ibid.*, p.243.
- (46) *Ibid.*, p.399.
- (47) I said that the concept of value would be untenable unless it were understood as the finite’s orientation to the Infinite, as the human knower’s awe and wonder before the Unknowable, as the backshining of Eternity. This would be acceptable to Weber, I suggested. I quoted no text, my warrant was deductive. What about the following: “Economics, as an explanatory and analytical science is *international*, but as soon as economics expresses values, it becomes bound up with the substance of our life as a nation The economic policy of a German state as likewise the value standard of a German economic theorist, can therefore, only be German” (Mayer, J.L.: *Max Weber and German Politics*, London, Faber & Faber, 1944, p.41). In what sense is Weber

using 'value' here? Does he mean by it any end to which one is committed irrationally on the basis of his personal or group interest? Consider the following: "Here we reach the frontiers of the human reason (*Begriffsvermögen*), and we enter a totally new world, where quite a different part of our mind pronounces judgments about ethics, and every one knows that its judgments, though not based on reason, are certain and clear as any logical conclusion at which reason may arrive" (Weber's letter to Emmy Baumgarten, quoted in Mayer, J.L., *op. cit.*, p.35).

The totally new world is certainly not the world of nature, of affective life or of irrationality defined either as a defect or failure of reason or residually. It is, as Weber says, a world beyond the frontiers of human reason. It is discontinuous with reason, even if reason is, as Kierkegaard notes, 'passionately' seeking it. The new world of value in this sense is the source both of man's character and conviction and of his fear as well. Traditionally, it is the world of total risk, not in spite of clear and certain judgements it hands down, but precisely because of this clarity and certainty.

It is the inability or unwillingness to take such risk, and bear the life of fear and trembling that perverts man's orientation to the Immeasurable into fanaticism and parochialism.

48) Scrima, Andre: "The Hesychastic Tradition", in *Traditional Modes of Contemplation and Action*, edited by Yusuf Ibish and P.L. Wilson, Tehran, Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1977, p.167.

49) "Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions", in Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, p.359.

50) See note 27 *infra*.

51) "Science as a Vocation", in Gerth and Mills (tr. and eds.): *op. cit.*, p.155.

The text of the dedicatory epistle comes from the English version of Michel Foucault: *This is Not a Pipe* with illustrations and letters by René Magritte (translated and edited by James Harkness; Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1983), p.58. The dedicatory epistle reproduces the first two paragraphs of René Magritte's second letter (of June 4, 1966) to Michel Foucault.

"What was surely the most unexpected and most cherished of the responses Foucault received to the publication of *Les mots et les choses* (1966) was a letter from René Magritte, in which the painter comments on the use of the terms 'resemblance' and 'similitude'. Foucault replied and a few days later received a second letter from Magritte. In 1973, Foucault published a short fascinating study of Magritte entitled, after the artist's own works, *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*. The two letters from Magritte to Foucault are included in an appendix to that book" (Sheridan, Alan: *Michel Foucault: The Will to Truth*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1980, p.88; parenthesis added).

The source of the epigraph is Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy's *Hinduism and Buddhism* (New York, Philosophical Library, 1943), p.26. The words "or others" occurring in parenthesis at the end of the last sentence of the first paragraph are an addition by the author of the present paper to indicate that it would be the same whether one was acting to please oneself or to please others.

The Epilogue comes from Simone Weil (*Selected Essays, 1934-43*, London, Oxford University Press, 1962).

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To elaborate on this even a bit, would be to write a longish personal essay, which is what I would love to do; but this is certainly not the occasion for it. Let me live with this precious debt and cherish and nourish my gratitude within myself.

マックス・ウェーバーとコント社会学の終焉

〈要 約〉

A. K. サラン

本論文は、通常、現代思想の主要な源泉の一人と目されている、マックス・ウェーバーの鋭敏な歴史認識とその壮烈な知的葛藤の足跡のうちに、オーギュスト・コントを嚆矢とする現代社会学の終焉、ひいては、西洋近代文明総体の「死亡報告」を見ようとするものである。

近代に生を享けた知識人として、ウェーバーは終生、その啓蒙主義的普遍主義を越え出ることにはなかつた。にもかかわらず、彼はその知的廉直さによって、宗教的啓示から独立し、形而上学を合理的科学で置き換えることを原理的基盤となす近代精神のアポリアに直面に、「合理化」とそれに伴う「世界の脱魔術化」が、必然的に、破壊的・致命的な「社会の鋼鉄の檻化」に至らざるを得ないことを見抜いていた。ウェーバーをコント、デュルケムやマルクス、そしてさらに両大戦後の主流社会学の一切から分かっているのは、彼が（とりわけ晩年に至るにつれ）この不可避的帰結に脱出口のないことを例外的な明晰さで覚知していた点であり、さらに、地球規模の「産業化」や社会主義的「革命」などに解決を見出す一切の進化論的・未来主義的歴史観を、神学的終末論・救世論の非科学的な「代用品・まがいもの」として受け入れなかつた点である。

したがって、実存としての自己と知識人（科学者）としての自己との間の架橋されざる分裂に由来するウェーバーの苦悶は、近代の人間の根底的ジレンマを、典型的かつ覆い隠すことなく表わしており、第一部では、このジレンマとその解決不能性をウェーバーの論点に即しつつ、「科学を宗

教」,「科学と価値」,「科学と歴史」,「科学と社会学」の四つの側面から検討する。

第二部では,ウエーバーの問題意識の中核をなす「非合理性」の問題に焦点をあて,「合理性」が自らと双生児である「非合理的なるもの」,「他者(the Other)」を解消することの不可能なことを論ずる。ウエーバー以降の主流社会学の特質である,こうした「他者」の還元・周縁化・残基化(residualisation)は,根源的ジレンマの覆い隠しに過ぎず,現代の暴力的現実を「平凡化(trivialise)」せんとする恐るべき「知的感受性の欠如」を表わしている,と指摘する。とりわけ,ウエーバーの「合理性」の類型論をめぐる,ユルゲン・ハーバマスの議論を批判的に吟味する。