831

MARX, MEAD AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

KARL MARX AND GEORGE HERBERT MEAD:
CONTRIBUTIONS TO A SOCIOLOGY
OF KNOWLEDGE

By

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ABSTRACT

The study concerns the historical debate between critics and proponents of the sociology of knowledge: an area within sociology which attempts to conceptualize and investigate the insight that the intellectual and social dimensions of human life are integrally related. Specifically, it investigates the hypothesis that an adequate perspective and response to the critics can be developed through a synthesis of relevant aspects of the writing of Marx and Mead; a hypothesis proposed frequently, but never fully elaborated.

Critics have claimed that an empirical sociology of knowledge is quite impossible, because self-contradictory. If all ideas are fundamentally social, then thought is relativized, the possibility of truth (even for the sociology of knowledge) is denied, and man's capacity to reason is devalued. Sociologists have generally accepted these claims, but, short of denying the possibility of any valid formulation, they have rather denied its radical form and limited the insight's applicability by excluding certain areas of thought for social penetration.

However, despite acceptance of the demand that at least some thought transcend social penetration --

especially the "knowledge about knowledge" presumed by the critics -- no formulation of the insight has successfully dealt with the impasse of relativism, and therefore none fully satisfy the critics. Because of this, the analysis of Marx and Mead is preceded by a detailed investigation of the Critique in order to evaluate its claims and the validity of the continual acceptance of its parameters.

This analysis concludes that the Critique proceeds from positivistic presuppositions and that it is therefore historically rooted in an individualistic conception of knowledge which is antithetical to the insight that knowledge is an essentially social phenomenon. Thus, it is argued that because of this contradiction between insight and criterion by which it is judged, it is indeed impossible to develop an adequate, positivistic elaboration of the insight. At the same time, it is also demonstrated that there are insufficient grounds on which to justify an acceptance of positivistic criteria in preference to the insight.

The subsequent consideration of Marx and Mead is therefore concerned both to discern ideas relevant to the discipline, and to demonstrate that their work "anticipates" the Critique, through development of a non-positivistic conception of thought and its validation

consistent with the insight. It is demonstrated that their work is of essential relevance to the sociology of knowledge a) because they develop compatible, non-positivistic conceptions of objectivity, and b) because while neither position alone is free of inadequacies, a synthesis of their ideas transcends the separate deficiencies and the impasse of relativism characteristic of positivistically oriented elaborations of the insight.

This synthesis characterizes the sociology of knowledge as a critical study of ideas in relation to social form, and, more importantly, in relation to their adequacy to the fulfillment and development of human life. It assumes that men are beings of praxis whose ideas and interaction patterns are dialectically related, interdependent historical products, which are understood as contingent means facilitating human survival and development. As a critical discipline, it deals with an aspect of the issue of the distortion of praxis: the problem of the existence of reified ideas within the more general problem of human alienation; the problem through which man's own products become apparent determinants of subsequent activity. In contrast to positivistic sociologies of knowledge, which intend a grasp of a presumed social-existential determination of ideas (which appears the case

through alienation), the critical perspective intends a grasp of the distortion of the actual, dialectical relationship between thought and social form. Whereas the former sociologies have been unable to resolve the basic issue of relativism, the critical perspective achieves this resolution by positing human praxis itself as the criterion of the objectivity of thought -- a criterion fully consistent with a social theory of knowledge.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I	INTRODUCTION	1
	The Problem Plan of the Study Notes	
II	INFLUENCES AND COUNTER-INFLUENCES IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE	21
	Elements of the Critique Major Influences in the Sociology of Knowledge Summary Notes	
III	CRITIQUE AND CONTRADICTION	75
	The Nature and Presuppositions of the Critique The Contradiction in Historical Perspective The Contradiction and Perspectives in the Sociology of Knowledge Summary and Implications Notes	
IV	MARX: ELEMENTS OF A SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE	139
	Reality and Praxis: The Presuppositions of a Marxian Sociology of Knowledge Praxis and Consciousness: The Marxian Epistemology Alienation and the Social Analysis of Ideas Summary and Implications for a Sociology of Knowledge Limitations Within the Marxian Framework Further Elements of a Theory of Praxis and Alienation Summary Notes	

V G. H. MEAD AND THE PERSPECTIVE OF "SOCIAL BEHAVIOURISM" 231

Mind, Self and Social Process: The Social Theory of Man
Qualitative or Quantitative Difference: The Criticisms of Social Behaviourism
Basic Presuppositions: An Alternate Image of Social Man
Implications for Interpretation of the Social Theory of Man
The Social Theory of Mind and the Sociology of Knowledge
Summary and Conclusions
Notes

VI MARX AND MEAD: CONTRIBUTIONS TO A CRITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE 317

Interactionism and Critical Analysis: Aspects of Compatibility
Mead's Social Theory of Man and the Problem of Alienation
Praxis and Alienation: A Meadian Contribution to the Critical Perspective
Recapitulation and Summary
Notes

VII CONCLUSION: THE CRITIQUE AND THE CRITICAL ORIENTATION 384

BIBLIOGRAPHY 410

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The insight that has inspired the development of the sociology of knowledge, the idea that thought and the social context are related in some manner, has become quite common-place.[1] It is found, at least implicitly, in much of sociology; in the disciplines of psychology and linguistics;[2] and it also informs some of the writing of historians and philosophers of natural science.[3] It is reflected in "new" approaches to deviance[4] and poverty,[5] and it is becoming more familiar in the editorial pages of newspapers. Perhaps the clearest indication of the insight's acceptance at a common-sense level is found in respect to our willingness to view social and political conflicts less as a matter of ignorance than as a result of cultural and sub-cultural differences.[6]

At its simplest common-sense level the insight involves the recognition that differences in comprehension of the same event or process do not vary randomly between persons simply according to individual factors such as intelligence. In general, people admit that knowledge is at least socially distributed,[7] and that this distribution is problematic enough that it creates definite barriers to common understanding and mutual participation between

groups divided along professional, generational, status or class lines.

The full theoretical implications of the insight will be developed as the study proceeds, but it must be emphasized that the common-sense formulations do not express the total significance that the insight has held for a number of writers in the area of the sociology of knowledge. Some writers argue, for example, that the insight demands recognition that there are no transcultural or trans-historical concepts or categories; that what might be called the basic perspective, "Weltanschauung" or simply the "intellectual way of approaching things" varies fundamentally according to socio-cultural and historical differences.[8] In other words, it has been maintained that all knowledge and intellectual process has its source in some particular social milieu.

Whatever the validity of the concern with the relationship between thought and the social context at common-sense or more rigorous theoretical levels, one thing at least can be said: the insight has continually drawn the attention of the central figures in the sociological tradition. The defining assumption of this tradition is that man is an essentially social being (though this be variously understood), and thus the central theoretical issue of conceptualizing this social being requires

consideration of the specific relationship between human thought and this social dimension. The major sociological literature from Comte to Parsons and from Marx to Marcuse is seldom free of reference to, and attempts to deal with this basic question.

The Problem

The sociology of knowledge is characterized by an effort to achieve precise conceptualization and detailed analysis of the relationship between the intellectual realm and the social dimension of our being. It is an attempt to carry the insight beyond the level of assumption and common-sense appreciation. This involves the construction of a conceptual framework which must answer a series of fundamental questions:[9] what is the nature of intellectual process and ideas?, what is the nature of the social aspect of our being?, what is the nature of and degree and extent of relationship between these aspects of our being?, and what approach may be effectively utilized in the analysis of these phenomena and their relationship?

Despite the general acceptance of the insight informing these basic questions, the history of attempts to achieve clarification, elaboration and detailed "objective" analysis has not resulted in any commonly accepted answers. Furthermore, most attempts to achieve

more precise formulation have been countered by the strongest and most persistent criticism; criticism which is not diluted by any similar variation or inconsistency as characterizes the literature supporting the sociology of knowledge. In fact, one can identify a basic and persistent critique in the literature, hereinafter referred to as the "Critique", that is hostile to the discipline; a Critique which consists of four basic elements. First, the sociology of knowledge is accused of a total lack of clarity in respect to basic concepts of knowledge and of the social context. Second, it is argued that the relationship between thought and social context has been so inadequately conceptualized that attempts to impute particular ideas to particular social bases is not empirically testable. The third, and very central element of the Critique, is the charge that the discipline commits the genetic fallacy by associating the validity of ideas with social origin. If this is the case, then the Sociology of knowledge lapses into nihilistic, socio-historical relativism which totally devalues reason by rendering it epiphenomenal. Finally, in its most consistent form, the Critique charges that these factors cannot be overcome and thus that the discipline, in terms of its traditional insight and intention, is theoretically impossible.

As devastating as this Critique appears to be, it has never elicited a direct or convincing response from writers within the field. On the contrary, an investigation of the history of the discipline demonstrates a general, and curiously unreflexive, acceptance of the Critique. This acceptance is manifested by a refusal or inability to work out consistently the full implications of the insight, let alone defend the insight against the ultimate conclusions of the Critique.[10] Furthermore, even efforts to avoid the issues raised by the Critique, namely by accepting it and retreating from the full implications of the insight, do not escape the central charges that the critics level at the discipline.

The intention of this study is to develop an elaboration of the insight as a basis for a sociology of knowledge that can fundamentally challenge the Critique. The study will not avoid the issues raised by the critics, nor will it retreat from the implications of the insight. On the contrary, it will argue for the validity of a sociology of knowledge against those who have concluded that the discipline is theoretically impossible.[11] More specifically, the study will demonstrate that a sociology of knowledge is possible, through a synthesis of selected elements of the writing of Karl Marx and George Herbert Mead.

This particular approach to the development of a valid sociology of knowledge, through the works of Marx and Mead, promises to be fruitful for two basic reasons. First, most of the criticism of the discipline has been at least indirect criticism of what have been taken as Marx' pronouncements on the relationship between consciousness and social context; or of elaborations of these ideas in the writing of other theorists such as Mannheim. However, in the light of numerous recent evaluations of Marx' work, it is no longer clear that the critics adequately comprehend the elements of a sociology of knowledge to be found there.[12] In other words, it is important to consider the implications of the distinction that has been made between Marx as a critical theorist and the a-critical, positivistic or deterministic sociology that has traditionally been associated with his writing. Second, the interest in Mead's work stems from the repeated suggestion that various undeveloped or perhaps underdeveloped, and thus unclear and ambiguous, elements in Marx' perspective can be adequately completed and clarified through a use of particular Meadian ideas.[13]

Plan of Study

The analysis takes the form of an investigation of two specific hypotheses in regard to the work of Marx and Mead that have been expressed in the literature in various forms. First, it is argued that the work of both Marx and Mead contains what can be interpreted as "anticipations" of the Critique of the sociology of knowledge, anticipations that have previously been overlooked. This is perhaps more immediately plausible in reference to Marx, following the recent re-evaluations of his perspective in the light of previously unavailable manuscripts, but it is nonetheless true of Mead as the following chapters will attempt to demonstrate.

Though it must be acknowledged, that both Marxian and Meadian sociologies are in themselves limited in respect to the insight and to the claims of the critics, the second hypothesis argues: a) that there are basic presuppositions and concepts in their perspectives that are compatible, b) that a theory may be constructed which is a synthesis of these specific elements, and c) that the synthesis will prove to be an adequate ground for the insight of the sociology of knowledge. Essentially this is to argue that, given compatible elements have been identified, the different emphases in each theorist's work can be utilized in the construction of a theory which will

complete the undeveloped and limiting aspects of either perspective taken alone. It is in these terms that an adequate response to the Critique, which is at the same time consistent with the insight informing the sociology of knowledge, can be developed.

The study begins with a detailed presentation of the Critique of the discipline. Major elaborations of the insight are reviewed in order to a) clarify the elements of the Critique, b) demonstrate the apparent power of the Critique, and, c) demonstrate the central and recurrent inadequacies of existing perspectives in the area. The second chapter concludes with a question which the review makes obvious, but which has not received adequate attention in the literature. Specifically, this question concerns the extent to which the persistent failure to elaborate the insight in a manner acceptable to the critics indicates that there is a fundamental contradiction between critics and proponents, and _not_ that the Critique must necessarily take precedence over the insight.

The third chapter is devoted to a more intensive analysis of the Critique, in terms of its basic pre-suppositions, in order to determine an answer to this question. The literature in the area has not squarely faced the Critique in this manner, and thus has not taken seriously the possibility that any attempt to elaborate the

insight, within the parameters of the Critique, is inherently self-contradictory and self-defeating. The conclusion of this part of the analysis is that the root presuppositions of the Critique, and the implications of the insight are indeed inherently contradictory. Furthermore, it is demonstrated, through a consideration of the perspectives of Durkheim and Mannheim, that the attempt to adhere to both the insight and to the parameters of the Critique precludes any resolution of the issue.

In general terms, the analysis demonstrates that the Critique presupposes the positivistic conception of science or objective thought. This conception, which has been the subject of repeated criticism itself, in other areas, reserves the label "knowledge" for those ideas which are achieved ideally through the observational, experimental methods of the natural sciences. It is a position which therefore treats the "intrusion" of the social context in thought as but a source of error and bias. Thus, by definition, positivism precludes the possibility that knowledge is a fundamentally social phenomenon. Furthermore, as will be shown, positivism is in turn rooted in individualistic philosophies which again, by definition, conceive the act of validation as an act of separate individuals. Thus, in these terms as well, the insight

into the fundamentally social character of thought must be considered erroneous. The chapter therefore argues that the basic charge, that the sociology of knowledge relativizes thought and must therefore be self-contradictory, reflects an adherence, on the part of the critics, to a conception of knowledge totally antithetical to the implications of the insight. The effort of some writers in the area to be faithful to both insight and Critique is thus shown to be inherently self-defeating, precisely because the demonstrated contradiction undermines the insight and any elaboration attempted in these terms.

These considerations in turn raise an important question about the hypotheses outlined above in regard to Marx and Mead. Specifically, a question is posed as to the conditions under which the hypotheses could be granted any plausibility whatsoever. If all previous attempts to develop adequate formulation of the insight have failed, it is not immediately clear why the approach through Marx and Mead can be expected to be fruitful beyond the unelaborated suggestion found in the literature.[14] However, having demonstrated the contradiction between insight and Critique, in respect to basic conceptions of knowledge, it can be stated that the minimal condition that must be met involves the presence, in the writing of Marx and Mead of a conception of knowledge that is consistent

with the insight and antithetical to that informing the Critique. Only if this condition is met does it remain plausible to pursue the hypothesis present in the literature.

Chapter three thus results in a specific formulation and clarification of the issue at stake, and this in turn provides a framework for the subsequent analyses of Marx and Mead. Chapter four analyses Marx' writing and interprets those aspects that are relevant to the problem. Since, for purposes of this study, the most important elements are to be found in the earlier writings, attention is primarily directed to the Paris Manuscripts and to the German Ideology. The chapter is organized around four primary considerations: a) an analysis of the basic presuppositions underlying the perspective -- Marx' concept of praxis -- with specific attention paid to his conceptualization of objectivity in thought; b) an analysis of the basic problematic of concern to Marx -- the issue represented by such terms as alienation, reification, fetishization, false-consciousness; c) implications of these aspects of his work, both in relation to the insight, and as anticipations of the Critique; d) limitations of the perspective and suggestive elements within the writing which indicate a direction that might be pursued in overcoming these limitations. It must be emphasized that this

analysis is directed to the discovery of elements in Marx' writing that are relevant to the sociology of knowledge; it is not intended as an exercise in detailed Marxian scholarship.

Chapter five is an analysis of Mead's work, but though it involves the same questions in respect to elements relevant to the sociology of knowledge, the analysis is structured somewhat differently. This is necessitated by the fact that the conventional, "interactionist" interpretation of his perspective is subject to the charge that it entails an "over-socialized", and totally deterministic conception of man; a conception which is antithetical to Marx' perspective as outlined in the previous chapter. This, of course, casts considerable doubt on the hypothesis that there are compatibilities between their work, and is therefore a central problem that requires specific attention. Thus, the analysis involves the following: a) an analysis of Mead's perspective as it appears in the work of most interest to sociologists, _Mind, Self and Society_; b) an analysis of the criticisms of the perspective; c) an analysis of the broader context of Mead's work which contains elaborations which overcome several of the issues raised by critics, and which suggests a perspective not unlike that of Marx; d) a consideration of the implications of elements of the perspective for the sociology of knowledge, and as

"anticipations" of the Critique; and e) analysis of remaining limitations within the perspective.

Both the analysis of Marx and that of Mead demonstrate that, separately, the perspectives contain elements which "anticipate" the Critique of the discipline, in that both contain the elaboration of conceptions of objectivity consistent with the insight; conceptions which are quite antithetical to the positivistic conception of objectivity informing the Critique. However, it is also demonstrated that the perspectives, taken separately, constitute inadequate bases for a sociology of knowledge. The sixth chapter then proceeds to a demonstration of the hypotheses of central concern to the study. It is shown that the perspectives of these theorists are compatible, and that this is especially the case in respect precisely to their conceptions of knowledge. Compatibility is also demonstrated in respect to their conceptions of man and of the social context. The discussion then reiterates the extent to which each perspective is limited by itself, but demonstrates that the specific emphases in the separate works can be successfully synthesized to provide a consistent conceptual basis for the sociology of knowledge. It must be noted, however, that the fruitfulness of the analyses of Marx and Mead is not quite what was supposed and expected by previous writers, and that the sociology of

knowledge proposed is radically at variance with previous elaborations of the insight.

In general terms, it is demonstrated that neither Marx nor Mead imply a sociology of knowledge which is concerned simply with the empirical investigation of the relationships between specific ideas and specific existential factors. Neither writer accords ontological status to the social context; both writers conceive of "society" as but patterns of interaction which are historical human products, which are contingent on their continued relevance to the fulfilment and development of human need, and which may be changed through direct human effort. In simple terms, Marx and Mead develop an image of man as a social being who creates specific forms of interaction as means in the achievement of related cultural and material ends. Furthermore, this generating, productive process is understood as a reflexive process such that social forms are comprehended as objectifications of ideas developed in response to collective problems that arise between man and nature; objectifications which are understood as standing in a reciprocal, dialectical relationship with the ideas of the individuals acting within them. Thought and the social dimension of human life are conceptualized as integrally related aspects within the whole that constitutes human life. They are conceptualized as related,

functional processes or capacities in relation to the fulfilment of human need and the further development of human potentiality.

As will be demonstrated as the study proceeds, this conception of the social and reflexive dimensions, as dialectically related, functional aspects of human life, has two central consequences in relation to traditional elaborations of the sociology of knowledge. First, the criteria of the objectivity of ideas that is implied is antithetical to that of positivism. Ideas are evaluated within this perspective, not according to their degree of "fit" with present empirical observation, but are evaluated according to their functionality in practice, in relation to need and potential. Second, the relationship between thought and social context ceases to be an empirical question, and is treated more precisely as a conceptual question prior to any empirical investigation that is called for. The relationship is presumed to be dialectical, and both ideas and reciprocally related social forms are presumed to be historical, or are presumed to constantly change, as problematics are encountered between men and nature, and as men reflexively attack these problems.

The central question for a sociology of knowledge in this framework of implications is not a question, there-

fore, of how and to what extent social factors determine ideas; it is rather a question of the dysjunctions or problematics that can and do occur in the dialectical relation between thought and social form -- problematics which are captured in the terms "alienation" and "reification". The sociology of knowledge that emerges, through a synthesis of aspects of the writing of Marx and Mead, will, therefore, be shown to be basically a critical analysis of ideas in relation to their social context. The discipline is thus shown to be possible (in contrast to the claims of the critics), but only as a critical effort to identify those ideas which, through reification, have ceased to perform a positive role for men in relation to need and potential. Furthermore, it is an effort to identify the basis, in existing social form, for the persistence of such ideas that have become problematic.

The final chapter reviews the basic results of the study and directs attention to the implications of the synthesis as a response to the Critique, and thus as a redefinition and resolution of the debate between critics and proponents of the insight, that knowledge is an essentially social phenomenon.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1]F. E. Hartung, "Problems in the Sociology of Knowledge", Philosophy of Science, XIX (January 1952), 17-32, 18. Throughout the discussion, the word "insight" refers to the insight of the sociology of knowledge as expressed in the opening line.

[2]L. P. Chall, "The Sociology of Knowledge", in Roucek, ed., Contemporary Sociology (New York: Philosophical Library, 1958), pp. 286-303.

[3]See, for example, T. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962); P. K. Feyerabend, "Problems of Empiricism", in R. G. Colodny, Beyond the Edge of Certainty (Engelwood-Cliffs, New Jersey: Englewood-Cliffs, 1965).

[4]See, for example, H. S. Becker, Outsiders (New York: Free Press, 1966), or R. Quinney, The Social Reality of Crime (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971).

[5]For example, the "culture of poverty" approach and its variations; see, J. R. Hofley, "Problems and Perspectives in the Study of Poverty", and O. Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty", both in J. Harp and J. R. Hofley, Poverty in Canada (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1971).

[6]This is true, for example, of the French/English conflict especially insofar as the French Canadian has framed his argument in terms of cultural differences and their validity.

[7]See for example, P. Berger and T. Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality (New York: Anchor Books, 1967) and B. Holzner, Reality Construction in Society (Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Co., Inc., 1972).

[8]See, for example, I. D. Currie, "The Sapir-Worf Hypothesis", in J. E. Curtis and J. W. Petras, The Sociology of Knowledge: A Reader (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp. 403-421. It is held by some that in different societies the conceptual frameworks in terms of which persons comprehend and explain

their world, both physical and social, may lack categories fundamental to other frameworks or may define these categories in fundamentally different ways. Within and between societies, the conflicts that arise often appear to involve some degree of social rootedness and such conflict can often be related to differing interpretations and thus amount, in part, to "talking past one another". Attempts at translation from one perspective to another and from one language to another or from one historical period to another, all underscore how deep divisions may be. Even the very idea of cultural transmission carries the implication that ideas are "received" for the most part and not discovered or constructed. Ideas are received within a social context and are held and maintained often unreflexively as part of one's affective as well as cognitive makeup. The image of "irrational" or determined man that is implied seems well supported by the degree to which different or new ideas are so often met less by rational criticism than by impassioned, diffuse rejection based on insistent but nonintellectual grounds: interests, power, status, age, etc. -- see also, Berger and Luckmann, op. cit., especially chapter 2.

[9] R. K. Merton, "A Paradigm for the Sociology of Knowledge" reprinted in Curtis and Petras, pp. 342-372. It should be noted that these basic conceptual questions are phrased somewhat more generally than in the case of Merton. For example, he uses the phrase "existential base" in reference to the social aspect of human life and this clearly prejudges both the nature of the social dimension and the nature of the relationship between social aspects and thought. The more general phrasing of basic questions is an attempt to avoid such prejudging and the importance of this will become apparent in subsequent discussion.

[10] We refer here basically to the tendency for the sociology of knowledge to be conceived primarily as analysis of communication, media impact, propaganda or the study of the social distribution of ideas within the functional divisions of a society; generally the study of the "functional" interrelationships of ideas taken as such and social-structural elements or characteristics. This point will be elaborated in Chapter II. As an example, see F. Znaniecki, The Social Role of the Man of Knowledge (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940).

[11]As Nisbet has argued in The Sociological Tradition (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p. viii, "In the history of ideas, influences always demand counter-influences for their nourishment. . . . . So long as these conflicts [of ideas] continue, will the sociological tradition remain the evocative and relevant tradition that it has been for more than a century". Counter-influences to various social theories of knowledge exist in profusion but adequate response to this "nourishment" has not been forthcoming within the field. An effort to transcend the current impasse needs once again to be undertaken.

[12]I refer here for example to the work of the Frankfurt school which is discussed, particularly in regard to the critical implications of Marx' work, by T. Schroyer, The Critique of Domination (New York: G. Braziller, 1973). See also, F. Hearn, "The Implications of Critical Theory for Critical Sociology", Berkely Journal of Sociology (1973), and C. Fletcher, Beneath the Surface (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974).

[13]At least twenty-five years of literature in the area abounds with indications not only of the need to formulate an adequate framework which counters the Critique, but that the promise of such a response lies in a sociology of knowledge constructed on the basis of compatible elements of Marxian and Meadian sociologies. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills in their text Character and Social Structure (New York: Harbinger, 1964, first published in 1954), p. xv, Mills himself in Power, Politics and People, ed. I. L. Horowitz (New York: Oxford, 1967), part 4, A. Gouldner in his The Coming Crisis in Western Sociology (New York: Equinox, 1966), p. 116, and J. Israel in his Alienation: From Marx to Modern Sociology (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p. viii and p. 20 all suggest that there is considerable potential in a synthesis of their writings. Other writers such as Stark, The Sociology of Knowledge (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), A. Child, "The Problem of Imputation", Ethics, LI (June 1941), 153-185, B. Bauman, "G. H. Mead and Luigi Pirandello: Some Parallels" in P. Berger (ed.), Marxism and Sociology (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1969), E. Urbanek, "Roles, Masks and Characters: a Contribution to Marx's Idea of Social Role", Social Research, XXXIV (1967), J. McKinney, "The Contribution of G. H. Mead to the Sociology of Knowledge", Social Forces, XXXIV (1955) and K. Wolff, "The Sociology of Knowledge in the United States of America", Current Sociology (1966) have placed specific

emphasis on the relevance of Mead's work in relation to the epistemological problems of the discipline raised by the critics. The efforts of Berger and Luckmann in The Social Construction of Reality, imply a complementarity of the Marxian and Meadian perspectives insofar as they claim to draw their "anthropological presuppositions" and their "dialectical" modification of Durkheim's image of society from Marx, and their "social-psychological" presuppositions from Mead. They suggest in particular that problems associated with the concepts of alienation and reification might be effectively dealt with in terms of Mead's approach to the socialization process. In contrast to Berger and Luckmann, one finds much more detailed if yet incomplete efforts to deal with the suggested compatibilities in recent efforts by R. Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism and Social Reality: Some Marxist Queries", Berkely J. of S., XV (1970), R. Ropers, "Marx, Mead and Modern Sociology", Catalyst, no. 7 (1973), G. F. Cronk, "Symbolic Interactionism: A 'Left-Median' Interpretation", Social Theory and Practice (1972), and I. Zeitlin, Rethinking Sociology (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1973). There are of course other efforts to construct an adequate sociology of knowledge in the face of the Critique such as those of Stark, op. cit., Berger and Luckmann, op. cit., N. Elias, "Sociology of Knowledge: New Perspectives", Sociology (May 1971), and S. Taylor, Conceptions of Institutions and the Theory of Knowledge (New York: Bookman Associates, 1956), but none proceed in precisely the direction of this study in an attempt to consider the hypotheses in respect to the importance of Marx and Mead.

[14]There is, of course, an additional problem that might be raised. To some it may simply appear to be a fruitless task to return to such classical thinkers for guidance in respect to contemporary issues and debates. However, in Nisbet's words, it is assumed here that, ". . . in the same way that a novelist will always be able to learn from a study of Dostoevski or James -- to learn a sense of development and form as well as to draw inspiration from the creative source -- so the sociologist can forever learn from a rereading of such men as Weber and Simmel". Current efforts of re-evaluation of various classical writers have not gone unrewarded in relation to the "crisis of Western sociology" and compliment Nisbet's early suggestion. It is hoped that this study constitutes a modest addition to these efforts in relation to the development of a valid sociology of knowledge, and, more generally perhaps, to a valid sociology. See Nisbet, op. cit., p. 20.

CHAPTER II

INFLUENCES AND COUNTER-INFLUENCES IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

Few would deny that thought is influenced by the social context to some degree. However, there is no wide agreement as to the formulation which adequately captures the nature and extent of such social influence. Furthermore, none of the existing formulations of the relationship between knowledge and social phenomena have dealt effectively with the criticisms brought against the sociology of knowledge.

This chapter will consider these contentions in greater detail. First, the four elements of the Critique will be considered. Second, the chapter will review the work of those particular theorists who made significant contributions to the elaboration of the insight. This analysis will demonstrate the range of possible elaboration that has been attempted, and thus the considerable variation which exists within the area, and is of concern to the critics. In each case considered, attention will be focused on the basic questions that must be answered by any sociology of knowledge: the theorist's conceptions of knowledge and the social context, his conception of the

relationship presumed to hold between these terms, and his approach to analysis. The review will also be concerned to clarify the meaning and apparent significance of the Critique by considering each framework in terms of its success in dealing with the central charge of relativism. It will be demonstrated that the Critique, in its hostility to the discipline, is extremely powerful, and that its apparent finality of judgement is not impaired by any save perhaps one of the perspectives considered.

However, the analysis imposes a further consideration which stems in part from the very strength, consistency and persistence of the Critique. The very fact that no particular elaboration of the insight can be judged acceptable, in terms of the Critique, may well indicate the impossibility of a sociology of knowledge. It may also indicate, as is later shown, that the debate between critics and proponents of the discipline involves a complete lack of comprehension of the nature of the differences separating them. In particular, the debate may be more aptly characterized as a basic conflict of incompatible conceptions of knowledge. This possibility is indicated by the present analysis and is the subject of more detailed investigation in the following chapter.

Elements of the Critique

Merton has argued that the most general statement describing the sociology of knowledge is that it is ". . . concerned with the relationships between knowledge and other existential factors in the society or culture".[1] While there are severe reservations regarding the adequacy of this formulation,[2] it will suffice for the moment, if only because the majority of writers have perceived their task in these or in very similar terms; that is, as a task concerned with conceptualizing "knowledge"; with conceptualizing the "existential" factors of society or culture; and with the question of the relationship between knowledge and these particular existential factors. These questions have been provided with answers, indeed a variety of answers. However, each formulation and the discipline as a whole has failed to satisfy the critics.

These critics argue first that individual writers and the area in general provide no clarity or agreement on the conceptualization of the terms of the relationship. Just what mental productions are related to social factors and which, if any, are free of such influence? What is the character of "knowledge" that it can be so integrally influenced as claimed? On the other hand, it is seldom clear what the social factors are that influence belief,

or what the character of such factors is that they can have such influence or (reciprocally) be so influenced.[3]

Second, and of more central concern, critics argue that the relationship itself is poorly defined in the literature. This criticism concerns the problem of imputation -- the problem of clarifying the relationship between knowledge and social factors such that particular ideas (or the perspective in which they are based) may be non-tautologically imputed to the appropriate social context. Is the relationship immediate or mediated?, a one-way causal connection?, a functional or reciprocal relation?, or perhaps a dialectical relationship? What criteria allow one to demonstrate "unequivocally" that the imputed relationship between specific ideas and a specific social context does indeed hold?[4]

In terms of these criticisms, the sociology of knowledge is, of course, not fundamentally impugned. To argue that no framework has been developed that is conceptually adequate, consistent and empirically testable, is not sufficient ground to conclude that it could not be so developed. However, the third and central criticism is of this nature and is, therefore, of more fundamental importance to this study. Even should the problem of conceptual clarity be overcome, there remains the issue

of the implications of the idea of social existential elements in thought: the closer a position or perspective is to adequate formulation and consistency with the insight, the more likely it is to be charged with committing the genetic fallacy and with relativism.[5]

This element of the Critique argues that if it is held that the intellectual sphere is totally rooted in "existential" factors, and, therefore, that it can and must be "extrinsically" interpreted or explained, then all statements of "fact" must be regarded as but relative statements of opinion, if not pure rationalization, reflecting the social biography, social location and interests of an individual or group. If this is true, then clearly even the statements in regard to social conditioning of the sociologist of knowledge must be reflections of his own social biography. If the status of fact, of objectivity or of truth is claimed for such statements, then they are self-contradictory. Either such statements are true, thereby refuting their own claims about existential conditioning, or they are false and the position is obviously refuted.

Such a position is, in these terms, clearly nihilistic. It commits the "sin" of connecting validity and origin (the genetic fallacy), and, at worst, it represents thought as pure epiphenomenon, legitimation;

the view devalues reason, destroys concepts of responsibility, freedom, morality, creativity, etc. -- all ideas which have historically been associated with our very capacity for reflection.[6]

Taken this far, if the sociology of knowledge is to serve any function at all it cannot be a scientific one; it becomes pure "debunking" and an historical moment along the "road to suspicion"[7] of all thought. Marx, for example, may have "exposed" the bourgeoisie by demonstrating the apparently ideological, "interest-supportive" character of their thought; but, it would appear that his own mode of argument ultimately loses all credibility when it is turned against him via Mannheim's development of a concept of total ideology.[8]

To express this third and most important element of the Critique in slightly different terms, it is basically the argument that an acceptance of the insight of the discipline is, at the same time, a denial of all absolutes; a denial of all criteria in terms of which any statements could be judged as ultimately true or false. Criteria of truth or objectivity are themselves intellectual products, at least within the scientific, positivist epistemological tradition of the West. To suggest that all intellectual products, including criteria of objectivity, have a social-existential genesis is, in particular, to

call into question the supposed universality of the criteria of objectivity fundamental in Modern Western thought, the positivistic canons of scientific, empirical analysis.[9] If these criteria are socially relative then "truth" loses its traditionally accepted meaning and the objectivity of particular statements would appear to become but a "relative objectivity" tied to the specific socio-historical context in which these statements are made. In these terms it would appear that one must therefore accept as many "truths" as there are essentially different socio-cultural milieux, and this renders the adjudication of disputes over policy and over fact a matter of force and violence -- the power of the speaker, despite any "gloss" of intellectual "rationalization" or justification.

This third element of the Critique leads immediately to the fourth: that the sociology of knowledge, understood as an empirical science, is theoretically impossible or of but severely restricted meaning. The insight can and has been taken to mean that knowledge is radically social; that thought itself and all ideas are inextricably rooted in the social context or process. But since this implies the socially determined character, and thus the relativity of even the accepted criteria of validity and truth, the discipline is in essence self-

contradictory, self-refuting and therefore theoretically impossible. In other words, the critics must ultimately argue that one cannot rationally adhere to the insight in its radical form for such complete adherence runs counter to or contradicts the possibility of attainment of an atemporal objectivity or truth. To be consistent the Critique must render this verdict, although not all critics have done so.[10]

From this standpoint the only "valid" sociological analysis of knowledge appears to be the much less radical study of the "functional" interrelationship of specific ideas and perspectives and the specific social group that can be shown factually to hold and act according to these ideas. However, such functional analysis bears little relation to traditional concerns of the discipline. Furthermore, as will be shown, even such restricted versions of the insight do not escape the criticisms they were thought to resolve.

Major Influences in the Sociology of Knowledge

As the following review of major perspectives[11] demonstrates, there is, indeed, considerable warrant for the several and persistent accusations of the Critique. For example, there is evidence of considerable conceptual variation in regard to the implications of the insight

for an understanding of ideas, the social context and their presumed relationship; a diversity which clearly supports the charge of conceptual confusion. Irrespective of this general diversity however, all save perhaps one of the perspectives considered do share the same intention. In each instance, the elaboration of the insight reflects the effort to avoid or transcend the pitfall of relativism. Nonetheless, all these elaborations fail to achieve a convincing resolution of this central issue. From Durkheim through Mannheim to the most recent efforts of Berger and Luckmann, the varied results of considerable effort have not successfully dealt with the critics' charge that an empirical sociology of knowledge is impossible, in terms of its traditional implications, because it is relativistic and, therefore, self-contradictory.

Furthermore, it is of particular interest to note that even those efforts to restrict the range of applicability of the insight, as a possible approach to avoiding this self-contradiction, have not been convincing. This approach generally involves exempting the canons of empirical analysis from social penetration. But in this regard, no adequate argument has been put forward as a basis on which to accept such restriction of the insight in preference to its more radical impli-

cation; the implication that all ideas, including these canons, are socio-historically relative. Why some ideas should be integrally social in genesis while others are not remains unclear in the absence of such argument.

Durkheim forexample, one of the first sociologists to address directly the question of the social rootedness of knowledge in any detail, failed to transcend the central arguments of the Critique, despite the fact that he appeared to grasp the essential difficulties. Durkheim conceptualized society as a "reality sui-generis", a reality of "social facts" which must be treated as "things" and studied according to the specific canons of empirical science.[12] Persons, in his view, are of dual character, both biological and social creatures. In both instances, persons are fundamentally derivative entities in relation to the "prior" social and physical contexts.[13] Equally, the thought of individuals was considered derivative. Specific ideas were conceived as reflecting a conceptual framework and categorical structure which consisted of "collective representations" rooted in and determined by the underlying social reality or "Society".[14] In his view, ideas existed and were apparently true in relation to their functionality for society and its evolutionary change.[15]

But Durkheim did not actually adhere consistently to a conception of thought as derivative of the social context; that is, he did not remain consistent with the full implications of the insight. This is demonstrated most clearly through a consideration of his demand that sociology itself be an empirical science which would proceed according to the canons of positivistic methodology; the canons of observation, measurement and experiment. He considered that his own thought _about_ the relation between thought and social-existential factors, proceeded according to these canons and for this reason gained objectivity.[16] Durkheim thus _exempted_ at least the methodology of positivistic, empirical analysis -- itself knowledge about knowledge -- from social determination, and, thereby, limited the applicability of the insight. However, he did not develop a convincing argument to justify this exemption. In fact, he contradicts several of his statements in regard to methodological issues precisely in this exemption.

For example, at one point Durkheim very clearly rejected both empiricism and a priorism as adequate theories of knowledge.[17] First, he rejected empiricism on the recognition that all thought proceeds in terms of basic categories and concepts and is never purely inductive or presuppositionless. In doing so, he agreed with Kant,

but he could not accept the Kantian argument that basic categories existed "a priori". He argued, in contrast, that the categories must be explained, and, furthermore, that such explanation could be and must be obtained by empirically demonstrating the emergence of the categories from the social context.[18]

However, Durkheim is then left with the problem of demonstrating the non-relative character of the presumed empirical approach; a demonstration that could only proceed on the assumption of this very approach as objective or non-relative; that is, on the presupposition of precisely what he had to prove.

This unexplained differentiation between the character of Durkheim's own thought and that of others is reflected even more clearly in the fact that he reduced the relationship between specific categories and social facts to an inductive, empiricist relationship between particular persons and their social context. He argued that a culture's basic categories emerge out of the participant's observation of, and participation in, the spatial and temporal configuration and ritual of the group to which they belong.[19] On the one hand, this position contradicts Durkheim's previous rejection of empiricism. On the other hand, it does not explain why the empiricist basis of others' categories is not applicable to his own

thought.[20]

Durkheim was certainly not unaware of this issue for he did argue: a) that Society is an integral part of nature and therefore, that socially derived ideas, though socio-historically relative, are always "adequate", in degree, to other aspects of nature,[21] and b) that societal change is an evolutionary process in nature such that the changes in categories that do occur remain in harmony with nature.[22] However, while these considerations could perhaps justify the adequacy of empirical sociological method in the study of present categorical frameworks, they do not adequately justify Durkheim's belief in the non-relative character of these methods, nor his application of them indiscriminately to all historical periods.[23] Again, without the necessary argument which would justify Durkheim's exemption of his own methods from relative social influence, his work remains inadequate in relation to the charge of relativism.

Durkheim's work therefore reflects an interesting conflict and this will be considered in greater depth in the next chapter. Briefly, he is one writer who attempted to adhere both to the canons of empirical, positive science and to the insight that all intellectual phenomena are socially rooted. The repeated contradiction in his work, and the inability to provide criteria which

would exempt the former from the latter, is apparently rooted precisely in this attempt to unite these two premises.

The work of Max Scheler, who named the discipline, is also clearly subject to the elements of the Critique. Like Durheim, Scheler took the basic insight quite seriously and, in his case, he did so as a prelude to the development of an epistemology which would take cognizance of the impact of social factors on intellectual processes and products.[24] However, he is no more consistent than Durkheim in this regard.

In the first place, Scheler did not proceed with any detailed analysis of the full implications of the insight. In fact, his work began with the premise that some ideas, especially basic categories, exist in an ideal realm separate from any material, empirically available realm.[25] His concern was ultimately a desire to achieve a basis on which to determine which specific mental constructs are essentially socially rooted and which are "universal" or detachable from such rootedness.[26] Thus, while granting that social factors in knowing must be taken seriously, Scheler essentially stood in agreement with the Critique insofar as he sought an ideational content free of social influence as the necessary basis of achieving non-relative, objective statements.

What remained of the idea of a "positive", integral relationship between thought and social context in his writing was reduced to the idea of "selection".[27] The ethos or categorical framework of groups was seen to vary, but to vary in terms of the "selective relevance" of various factors predominant in a given group. Such factors "determine" thought, not in a causal sense, but in the sense that they select from among a finite number of pre-existent, basic ideas within an ontologically distinct ideal realm. The specific selection was held to reflect the predominance and configuration of certain "real factors" or the "ruling social interest perspective" of a group: race or kinship (sex drive), politics (power drive), economics (hunger drive), etc. These factors were also held to determine the forms in which thinking takes place and advances.[28]

Though Scheler reduced, and thus limited, the idea of the relationship to one of selective relevance, he did, however, go beyond Durkheim in arguing that this, in turn, suggests that historical existence of only "relatively natural world views". In these more or less narrow perspectives (in relation to the full content of the ideal realm) he was willing to include the positivistic perspective that is shared by Durkheim and the Critique, as well as religious and metaphysical world views.[29] Un-

like Durkheim, Scheler is not so ready to accept the truth-value of positivistic criteria in relation to and in preference to the implications of the insight.

However, the goals of his own phenomenological methodology were not dissimilar to those of Durkheim in that he sought: a) to describe the connections between specific, selected ideas predominant in a group and at a time, and the essential configuration of real factors,[30] and b) to discern the "laws of transformation" among these various perspectives in terms of a "genetic psychology" dealing with the variation and combination of the real factors of selection.[31] Ultimately his goal as well was the same "truth", ultimately independent of the selective relevance of social factors. Thus, despite the fact that Scheler viewed even positivism as but a "relatively natural world view", he retreated from the full implications of the basic insight.

There are several criticisms directed as Scheler's perspective, not the least of which concern his attempt to explain the historical variation in thought in terms of a set of static, real and ideal factors,[32] and a concern with the tautological character of his basic premises.[33] The central criticism is, however, the same as that directed at Durkheim: Scheler's position remains

relativistic in that he advanced no criteria by virtue of which one would be convinced that his own approach, and the idea of the relationship as selective, are indeed "absolute" and exempt themselves from falling into the category of being but a "relatively natural world view". This problem overlaps with another, also noted in conjunction with Durkheim's position. Scheler basically views the sociology of knowledge as but a prelude to erasing the "problem" of coexisting world-views which impede the discovery of truth in some total sense.[34] This view implies a retreat from the radical implications of the insight and yet, once again, there are no criteria given or supported which would render such retreat necessary and convincing.[35]

In contrasting the perspectives of Durkheim and Scheler it begins to be apparent why the discipline is also open to the specific charge that it lacks clarity in regard to its central concepts. These writers demonstrate little agreement in regard to the character of the social context and the nature of intellectual phenomena, and even less correspondence can be discovered in terms of their conception of the relationship presumed to hold between these factors.

Pitirim Sorokin has been a peripheral figure in the discipline but his perspective is nonetheless in-

structive in several ways. Sorokin picked up on and made central the idea found in Scheler's work that the ideal-cultural realm is independent of the social-existential realm. However, he then developed a conception of the relation between thought and social context which is quite the reverse of that usually assumed in the discipline. Sorokin argued that action and forms of social action are but manifestations of, and logically related to, thought.[36] In these terms, his sociology of knowledge dealt strictly with the socio-cultural realm, which was conceived of as a "super-organic" sphere. In taking this position, he emphasized the "meaningful" character of human interaction that is superimposed on and guides the purely physical-existential character of immediately observed interaction. Furthermore, he argued that this meaningful element encompasses, for the most part, what we mean by the social.[37] Thus, the social in Sorokin's perspective is neither "existential" in itself (Durkheim), nor is it reducible to the organic, physical level (Scheler).

This "super-organic" realm is constituted by three basic "cultural premises". What we know and, therefore, how we act at a specific place and time, was presumed to be rooted in one or some combination of these premises. On the basis of these premises, which sometimes co-exist as they cyclically follow one another through time,

"cultural mentalities" are immanently constructed, and these order reality, allow activity to proceed and allow forms of activity or a society with a specific character to be developed. The ideational or adaptive premise leads to an interpretation of the world in primarily spiritual terms; the sensate premise limits reality for man to that which can be perceived through the senses; and the idealistic premise is constituted by a rough balance of the first two types.[38]

No one of these cultural mentalities was conceived of as totally adequate to physical nature. In Sorokin's perspective, each type of culture develops "immanently" over time according to an extension of thought in terms of the premise predominant in that period. This extension gradually accentuates the inadequacies of that premise by itself. In turn, the inadequacies lead to criticism and rejection of that particular premise, and its eventual replacement by one of the others as a new basis of thought and action.[39] Thus, history is cyclical; a continual, constantly repeated movement through each premise.

Sorokin therefore presented an "idealistic" conception of the discipline in arguing that both specific thought and specific forms of action are derivatives of

independently existing culture premises. His position is thus quite the reverse of the predominant image of the field. However, his perspective is nonetheless open to the elements of the Critique. If, for example, his position on the relationship between knowledge and forms of social activity is true, then his own statements must be regarded as reflecting one or other or some combination of the basic premises. This being the case, his statements have only a relative, temporal objectivity; a "truth" in relation to the ascendancy of that particular premise. Sorokin's position is, therefore, as relativistic as the others, for he, no more than Durkheim or Scheler, presented criteria in terms of which his own thought could be considered as transcending the relativism his position implies.[40]

It should be emphasized, as well, that Sorokin's work is not only relativistic, but also that it represents a third and different conceptualization of the character of thought, the character of social phenomena and the character of the relationship holding between these terms. The lack of clarity, or consistency that the discipline is accused of, receives further support as a warranted criticism.

To add to the sense of diversity, if not confusion, within the discipline, one need only consider a fourth

possible stance that is implicit in the work of Max Weber. If Sorokin's work is usually of but peripheral and historical interest to the field (primarily due to the idealistic implications), Weber's studies are not often referred to as relevant at all.[41] However, the work on religion, the notions of charisma and elective-affinity and the discussion of rational systems of organization as rooted in fundamental belief-systems, definitely involve a particular and considerably different conceptualization of the meaning of the insight.

Unlike Durkheim, Weber did not root knowledge in some "more real" social substratum of existence. He tended to grant the ideational realm an "independent" significance and status.[42] But unlike Sorokin or even Scheler, this ideal realm in Weber's work refers more to the individual; that is, his work contains no conception of an ideal cultural realm of which persons only selectively partake.

This "existentialist" element in Weber's perspective is clarified by reference to his conception of the social. Social actions are those actions which are based on the individual's comprehension of his situation, but, only insofar as this comprehension includes an appreciation of the other's comprehension, feelings, values, etc. In this view, persons are not essentially social

by nature but are social only insofar as their actions are intentionally oriented with reference to one another.[43]

Equally, "knowledge", at least basic belief systems such as the Protestant Ethic, have their origin as constructions in the minds of individuals, especially charismatic figures such as Luther and Calvin.[44] Such construction of basic beliefs does involve a response by such individuals to existing social conditions or traditionally accepted action patterns, but Weber emphasized the central importance of individuals themselves as the source of the new ethos. Such belief is not fully responsible for the emergence of new social, interactional patterns, but it is an essential and independent element which finds "elective affinity" with actions and forms of action developing within specific practical realms of existence -- the political, economic, etc.[45] The basic thrust of Weber's religious studies represents an attempt to prove this essential relevance of the Protestant Ethic to the emergence of the unique system of Western, rationalized capitalism.[46]

In general, Weber's views diverge both from the sociological determinism implied by Durkheim and from the idealism of Scheler and Sorokin in regard to knowledge. On the one hand, persons and their beliefs are not simply derivatives of a pre-existent, more real social sub-

stratum. On the other hand, thought and action are not rooted in a pre-existent ideal realm from which some sort of cyclical selection takes place. Patterns of action and thought are both, in Weber's perspective, but means or functions in the human "struggle with nature for survival": both are interacting or interpenetrating "constructions" understood in relation to need and value.[47] For Weber, the subject matter of sociology is meaningful human social activity;[48] in his view, belief and action are integrally connected, but in the sense of elective affinity rather than existential determination.

There is one specific sense in which Weber was concerned at least with an "apparent" existential determination of thought. However, in his work, this concern involves a critique of such situations which implies a unique and highly suggestive approach. As indicated above, the source of an ethos or structure of basic ideas is the charismatic individual in his response to the existing and negatively interpreted social situation. To the extent that the new ethos is accepted, charismatic influences are followed by their routinization,[49] or their being worked out into integrated systems of interaction in terms of the elective affinity between the new belief system and what are initially minority activities developing on a practical level. In turn, however, such routinization

is generally followed historically by a period of "means/ end reversal"; the "iron-cage" of capitalistic social form for example.[50]

This "reversal" is presented by Weber as a situation in which the rational nature of individuals, an essential root of the specific form of social activity, is subordinated to or negated by the "demands" of the "rational", integrated social system that has developed.[51] Under such conditions it "appears" that there is a fundamental social-existential determination of persons activity and thought; but, in Weber's perspective, the reversal is not a natural, existential or given state, but rather a problematic to be understood and dealt with.[52]

The basis of this peculiar "determination", which distorts the underlying and real relationship between thought and action, lies in at least two factors that are mentioned briefly, but never fully developed by Weber. The first factor amounts to the "necessity" faced by any specific individual that, if he is to survive, his only apparent choice is action according to the predominant system of relationships.[53] The second factor involves the "reality" that individuals come to accord to collectivities and terms referring to collectivities. For example, the "state" in Weber's view does not exist as an entity in itself -- all that exists is individual

persons acting according to particular ideas vis a vis particular ends.[54] However, this does not permit the analyst to ignore the tendency among people (which is related to the category of traditional action) to treat such words as entities; that is, to predicate their activity on the idea of such forms as materially, deterministically existent in themselves.[55] Such is the bureaucratic type of person who predicates his action on the organizational necessity, its formal demands of him, etc., rather than on his own potential rational insight into problematic situations. In such terms, Weber understood situations in which the assumed integral relationship between thought and activity is distorted, and it is this type of problematic which implies the necessity of a specific social analysis of knowledge.

This brief consideration of the implicit elements of a considerably unique sociology of knowledge in Weber's work is presented for a number of reasons. In the first place, it constitutes a fourth position in regard to the character of knowledge, the social and their relationship which contributes to the confusion and lack of clarity or agreement within the field. Second, the position suggests an interesting, suggestive possibility which has not played any significant part in the development of the discipline.

In this regard, the basic point is that Weber's position, while clearly relativistic from the point of view of the Critique, does contain a particular notion of objectivity nonetheless. The dynamic complex of thought and activity, understood in terms of elective affinity, is presented by Weber in much of his work as a means or functional element in relation to the survival and development of the human species as individuals in their "struggle with nature". The problem to be investigated, and partially by a social analysis of ideas, is not the relationship itself (whose character is presumed), but the distortion of the relationship which occurs through and in terms of the phenomenon of the means/end reversal. The "objectivity" or truth of the results of such analysis is predicated less on a specific intellectual method (Weber argued all analysis is infused with value despite methodological guarantees)[56] than on the "functionality" of such analysis in relation to the presumed character or nature of persons and their historical development.[57]

Now in terms of the implications of the basic insight informing the sociology of knowledge, Weber's work represents a consistency, in at least one sense, which has not been found in the other perspectives considered. He accepted the integral or positive relationship of thought and activity; he accepted the implications of

this idea in terms of differences between cultural and physical analysis; and he presented a specific criteria of objectivity which would appear to be consistent with these ideas. Weber's work is less concerned with "truth" in the usual sense of being independent of the "negative" influence of social factors, than it is ultimately concerned to analyse the conditions and factors of distortion of the actual, positive role for persons of meaningful social activity. Such a position could not satisfy the Critique, insofar as it is a position which represents an acceptance of the relativity of thought in relation, at least, to traditional conceptions of objectivity. This problem, and the direction suggested in Weber's work in relation to the Critique, become important in subsequent chapters.

In contrast to Sorokin and Weber, Mannheim's efforts receive a great deal of attention from the critics. He is perhaps the central figure in the development of the discipline, and one who struggled continuously with the problem of the contradiction between the radical implications of the insight and the desire for truth, independent of such influence.

Essentially, Mannheim accepted the fact that there are different points of view, perspectives or stylistic structures which, as organizing, categorical structures,

are responsible for specific ideas about reality.[58] He was concerned, in much of his work, with the comprehension of social conflicts and disorganization in terms of the development of different, contradictory and therefore conflicting perspectives, both within and between societies or cultures.[59] In turn, such perspectives were interpreted as rooted in the differentiated, "existential" social situations of the individuals sharing these perspectives. Specific generational groups, classes, parties, occupational groups, etc., tend to evolve characteristic and, in degree, distinct modes of thought.[60]

Reminiscent of Scheler's "relatively natural world views", Mannheim argued that each perspective is a partial orientation and never adequate to total reality.[61] However, he differed from Scheler and paralleled Durkheim's efforts in accepting the notion that such perspectives are products of an "existential" social base rather than a "selection" from a finite number of categorical elements in an ideal realm.[62]

Mannheim's "programme" of analysis bears out these basic elements of his framework. He argued that the sociology of knowledge must begin with "understanding", with an attempt to reconstruct the thought style or perspective underlying the specific ideas held by a particular group. Second, the analysis must determine if that group

of persons actually thinks in terms of the reconstructed perspective. Finally, and only then, analysis proceeds to a determination of the actual connections between the perspective and the social, "existential" aspects of the group's situation.[63]

The criticisms of Mannheim range from an accusation of failure to specify clearly what range or aspect of belief is existentially determined, to the accusation that he failed to specify clearly, in a manner allowing empirical substantiation, just what character the relationship has.[64] Centrally of course, despite his efforts, Mannheim is continually criticized for his failure to transcend relativism.

His particular efforts to deal with this issue are two-fold. First, he argued that specific ideas are "relationally" true; that is, "true" in relation to the perspective on which basis they are developed.[65] Several authors have demonstrated that in terms of the traditional notions of objective thought, "relationism" is but another word for relativism insofar as it fails to transcend the basic issues it was designed to meet.[66] Second, Mannheim argued that it would be possible to investigate all partial perspectives and thereby arrive at a synthesis that would be fully adequate to reality. This task was considered a possibility through the efforts of a "free-

floating intelligentsia"; a group of individuals free of the limitations of specific and narrow social contexts.[67] Equally, this "solution" is rejected on the grounds that no criteria were adduced through, and in terms of which, such a "total" perspective could itself be judged adequate and thereby avoid the self-contradiction.[68] Furthermore, given the basic notion of social determination, it is not at all clear, within Mannheim's framework, how this group could possibly transcend their own social ties.

Closer inspection of Mannheim's work than is usually found in critical appraisals does, however, reveal elements which raise doubts about the adequacy of the determinist, and thus relativist, interpretations of his writing. These elements include the inclusion of "volitions, interests and intentions" of the individuals as essential aspects of the so-called "existential" social base. To the extent that these elements are indeed part of the social context, the "existential" nature of this context is called into question. In turn, questions are implied about the adequacy of the causal interpretation of the relation between thought and context. This aspect of Mannheim's work is usually ignored by the Critique, however, and will be taken up in the analysis of the following chapter.

Talcott Parsons has attempted to delineate an

appropriate framework for a sociological analysis of knowledge within the confines of his own, broader, "action frame of reference". The action frame of reference is basically a conceptual framework which is adequate, in Parson's view, to the analysis of ordered social life.[69] The framework suggests the "existence" and interpenetration of four basic sub-systems of reality -- the biological-physical system, the personality system, the social system and the cultural system.[70] Sociological analysis is, in general, directed to the _functional_ interaction and operation of the latter two systems in relation, primarily, to the prerequisites of society and its development.[71]

The sociology of knowledge is concerned with specific aspects of this articulation between "given" cultural and social systems. The character of analysis is, therefore, functional; the systems are taken as givens, and one attempts to gain empirical knowledge of this articulation or relationship in terms of its functionality or specific role in the maintenance (fulfilment of system requisites) of society as a whole.[72] Parsons, therefore, does not presume a "one-way" relationship between social and cultural systems (though he does define the cultural sphere as a higher order of control).[73] It is essential to recognize that, in this view, it is precisely the

"systems" in which he is interested which, in turn, are understood as determinative environments of individuals and groups;[74] specific beliefs and actions result from the specific articulation of these two prior and transcendent systems which can be analysed in themselves.

The cultural system includes "knowledge" which he defines as "cognitively ordered orientations to objects",[75] both physical and social. These orientations have reference to both "empirical facts" and "problems of meaning" or values.[76] These problems of meaning link knowledge to value or "conceptualizations of the desireable"; a second aspect or element in the cultural sphere.[77] The social system, on the other hand, is a structure of activity which is organized in roles and collectivities, and which takes place according to norms which, in turn, are controlled from the cultural sphere by values.[78]

One basic relationship between these systems involves socialization and institutionalization -- the individual internalizes the basic values and norms and learns to fulfill these according to institutionalized patterns of action.[79] "Knowledge", as an articulation between value and fact, performs a function within this articulation; a function of integration in terms of mediating the demands of the physical, organic system and those of the cultural system (values).[80] In other

words, while values, internalized from the given cultural system, ultimately direct activity, such values must be articulated with what is factually possible. Such articulation is "knowledge", and is expressed in the social system as specific norms of action.

Parsons holds, at the same time, that empirical-rational, objective knowledge is possible, and that such knowledge constitutes "an authentically independent component of cultural systems".[81] In other words, he maintains that it is possible to acquire objective knowledge of that understanding of persons that is relative to and functions within the articulation of given social and cultural systems. Indeed, the main task for the sociology of knowledge, as he conceives the discipline, involves the study of the extent to which "the normative cultural in fact determines concrete social action".[82] Such analysis apparently allows one to determine, objectively, the existence of "ideologies" which are understood as deviations from the particular fact-value integration of a society, and which lead in turn to actions not consistent with the over-riding normative and value systems.[83] Such deviations in thought and action are presumed to be rooted in "structured strain";[84] discrepancies or imbalances between the subsystems of the larger whole of society. There is a strong implication, in this

perspective, that such study of deviations or ideologies is understood as itself part of the functionality of "knowledge" for the sytem.[85] Ideologies reflect "strains" which imply the "necessity" of readjustments in relation to functional equilibrium.

Parson's image of what would constitute a valid sociology of knowledge is, in many ways, similar to the positions of Sorokin and Scheler, especially in regard to the independent status accorded to the cultural realm. However, unlike these other writers, Parsons explicitly exempts the "empirical-rational" type of knowledge from what amounts to an otherwise extremely relativistic and deterministic position. His conceptualization of knowledge in relation to society implies the relativism of all knowledge (the value sphere to which knowledge is related is independent of human volition); and he fails to offer any criteria by which such exemption can be justified or convincing. His emphasis on the character of others' knowledge as functional for society, and the implication that the sociological analysis of knowledge participates in, or has the same character of, this functionality, strongly reinforces this overall relativism. Stated from a second angle, Parsons implies, in spite of his unsupported exemption of rational-empirical analysis from socio-cultural determination, that the criteria of

objectivity or the truth of statements, is essentially the functionality of such statements in relation to an equilibrium between specific social and cultural systems.[86] Thus, if social and cultural systems vary in time, and between societies, no universally valid ideas can be found.

Despite the fact that Parsons nods to the Critique of the discipline (in his attempt to exempt scientific knowledge from socio-cultural determination), the predominant thrust of his perspective implies the relativistic contradiction of central significance to the critics of the field. Once again, the apparent incompatibility between the epistemological demands of the Critique and the implications of the insight does not find adequate resolution.

One of the most recent efforts to develop a valid sociology of knowledge consistent with the insight is that of Berger and Luckmann. Their approach to the problem involves an attempted synthesis of various elements taken from the perspectives of Marx, Durkheim, Mannheim, Weber and G. H. Mead.[87] They wish to develop a position which allows investigation of the social distribution, maintenance and change of ideas, and which does not, at the same time, make the mistake of becoming embroiled in the epistemological problem of relativistic implications.[88] In other words,

like most of the figures considered here, they desire an "empirical" discipline which permits statements about the presumed relationship between consciousness and the social which, yet, are objectively valid.

Berger and Luckmann contend that they develop a sociology of knowledge which interprets and analyses knowledge in terms of its role within a basically "dialectical" relationship between individual and society.[89] Society is apparently regarded as a human collective "product"; patterns of interaction which are based in reciprocal typifications[90] of a group's experience of the physical world. This first "moment" in the dialectic, the production of interaction patterns, is followed by the second moment; objectification, or institutionalization, whereby social forms take on a "facticity" capable of acting back on the producers. This latter influence, the third moment of the dialectic, is primarily constituted by internalization, or the socialization process, and renders man a "social product".[91]

In these terms it is implied that, initially, individuals come to "know" their world in relation to fulfilling their basic needs. On this basis, and in terms of typifying each other's actions, they construct social patterns permitting a collective, co-ordinating relationship to physical nature. In degree, such a position

parallels Weber's conception of knowledge and social forms as products and tools, or means, in relation to human needs. It would, therefore, appear to be the opposite of those perspectives which render knowledge a determined product of social-existential factors (Durkheim), or which place the source or origin of ideas in a cultural sphere, independent of individual volition (Scheler, Sorokin and, in degree, Parsons).

However, despite a footnote cautioning against such deterministic positions,[92] Berger and Luckmann themselves spend but few pages presenting a paradigmatic, but hypothetical example[93] of this first moment of their "dialectical" conception, and devote the remainder of their study to the other two moments.[94] In this theoretical work, they completely lose sight of an otherwise suggestive starting point, and present a conception of knowledge and its relationship to the social which is almost totally deterministic and relativistic.

The second and third moments of their dialectic are essentially one moment on closer examination: society becomes an objective reality (at least in men's minds) via institutionalization which is a process rooted both in legitimization[95] and in the supposedly distinct third moment, internalization. The process is also rooted in clearly psychological, static factors as well; basic fears

of the unknown and the different.[96] Institutionalization remains incipient among the originators of reciprocal typifications; for them, initial patterns of interaction are understood and remembered for what they are in reality, human products, and are appreciated as but means to ends (at least in terms of the paradigmatic example).[97] However, each new generation develops or is socialized within already established patterns, and to them such patterns are basically a "given" part of the real world.[98] Furthermore, Berger and Luckmann argue that various legitimations are then developed both to justify such patterns to each new generation[99] and to explain away discrepancies between specific spheres of activity.[100]

Thus, on the one hand, "apparent" social "facticity", despite the actual constructed character of society, is related to the peculiarities of the socialization process. On the other hand, the construction of ideas, of "knowledge", is given a primary role in the development of this "facticity". Berger and Luckmann continually emphasize the role of "knowledge" in providing individuals with reasons to conform and to adjust conflicting activities wtihin a group.[101] Ideas are then not only "determined" for each new generation through socialization; new knowledge is "constructed" essentially to play a role in overcoming social tensions and conflicts not handled by

socialization and previous legitimations. Thus, knowledge is directly a social product in terms of internalization, and it is a social product indirectly for it is developed in relation to the needs of the social order. In both cases it is reduced to the function of legitimation or rationalization.

The writers do contend that knowledge is a fundamental factor in social change.[102] However, where this process is discussed, knowledge is once again given but a secondary function in relation to basic social conflicts which are primarily explained in terms of processes of societal differentiation.[103] Given sufficiently differentiated groups in a once cohesive society, counter definitions of reality begin to emerge within the confines of these differences, and they again have the fundamental character of legitimations. Furthermore, the conflicts such counter-definitions reflect, are solved, not in terms of any truth or objectivity of the ideas developed by each group, but by the differential power possessed by these different groups.[104]

In summary, despite an interesting notion of knowledge as functioning within a relationship between ideas and social form, conceived of as dialectical in character, the overall formulation that Berger and Luckmann present denies any dialectically independent significance

to ideas in the traditional sense. Knowledge becomes essentially epiphenomenal -- a matter of legitimation or rationalization. It is interesting that even their brief reference to such a supposedly social-scientific, empirical discipline as psychology places it in the realm of "universe-maintenance" or legitimation of existing social relationships.[105]

Such a position can not help but raise doubts about itself. Berger and Luckmann explicitly "bracket" epistemological considerations, but they offer no criteria by which their own pronouncements can be considered anything but legitimations themselves. Their work on knowledge, therefore, constitutes an inadequate reply to the Critique, especially in regard to the charge of relativism.

Summary

Clearly, the insight informing the sociology of knowledge has been elaborated in several different ways. However, none of the major positions reviewed provides an adequate resolution of the issues raised by the critics of the discipline, despite the fact that such positions vary from the extreme sociologistic, in the instance of Durkheim, to the extreme idealistic, in the instance of Sorokin.

First, the very range of positions developed

supports the first element of the Critique. The lack of clarity or consistency in respect to conceptions of knowledge and the social context that is alleged by the critics is certainly well founded. Second, the area has obviously not developed an agreed upon conception of the relationship presumed to hold between thought and social context. Specific elaborations range from vague notions of "consistency" and manifestation, through notions of selective relevance, to a heavy and repeated emphasis on a functional interaction between thought and social context which reflects the prerequisites or needs of the given society.

However, of greatest importance is the fact that the review demonstrates the unresolved presence in each perspective of the central and basic issue of relativism. Despite the fact that each writer is, to some extent, aware of this issue, they nonetheless fail adequately to resolve the contradiction that is apparently entailed by any attempt to achieve objective statements about the hypothesized socially based, and thus relative, ideas of others.

Durkheim, for example, exempts his own positivistic method of analysis from social determination, but he fails to argue convincingly how this exemption is possible, if even the basic categories of thought are socially rooted,

and thus relative. Mannheim argues that despite the fact that knowledge is only "relationally" true, nonetheless, it is possible for a "free-floating intelligentsia" to achieve a synthesis of such partial perspectives which would result in objective, non-relative knowledge. Again, however, Mannheim does not provide a convincing argument as to how the intelligentsia is to escape its own social bounds. Even the writers who eschew concern with epistemological questions and concentrate simply on the demonstration of the functional relationship between ideas (legitimations) and social forms, do not resolve the issue. On the one hand, they suggest that the "truth" of ideas studied is to be measured by the functional importance of such ideas in relation to the maintenance of the existing social form in which such ideas are found. On the other hand, these functional theorists clearly exempt, without argument, their own thought about the functional role of ideas from the possibility that it, too, is but a functional element within their own social situation.[106]

One common characteristic can be seen in each of the efforts to transcend the issue of relativism. Each theorist approaches the problem precisely by hesitating in the face of the idea that knowledge is an essentially social phenomenon. Each theorist seeks a way to achieve

objective, and therefore non-socially based, knowledge about that particular knowledge which is viewed as generally socially relative. In other words, it would appear that the only resolution of the issue that has been considered entails a denial of the full meaning of the insight. And yet it is immediately apparent that the effort to resolve the issue in this manner has not been successful. At least this remains the case insofar as no convincing and generally accepted argument exists that would both justify the retreat from the implications of the insight, and firmly establish the non-relative character of the type of knowledge exempted from social penetration.

Together, these limitations in all major formulations of the insight give considerable credence to the ultimate conclusion of the most consistent critics, who hold that a sociology of knowledge is impossible because it is self-contradictory. This conclusion implies that, at least from the perspective of the Critique, the insight in which the discipline is based, is quite simply false. However, this conclusion is not acceptable to even those who would limit the implications of the insight. And, before this conclusion is accepted here, it is essential first to consider the debate between critics and proponents in more detail.

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, the very failure of such a wide range of possible elaborations of the insight, as reviewed here, suggests another conclusion besides that of the impossibility of the discipline. Though not a central theme in the literature, some writers have indicated that the debate between critics and proponents of the insight is more aptly characterized as reflecting a basic contradiction between different explicit or implicit conceptions of knowledge. If this is the case, then the very effort to resolve the issue within the parameters of objectivity laid down by the critics must fail. Furthermore, the basic requirement of developing an adequate sociology of knowledge would then centre on the elaboration of a conception of objectivity consistent with the insight.

In the following chapter, this question of the nature and extent of the differences between critics and proponents will be analysed in greater detail.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1]R. K. Merton, "The Sociology of Knowledge", in Gurvitch and Moore, eds., Twentieth Century Sociology (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1945), pp. 366-405.

[2]These reservations are the subject of the following chapter. They concern the extent to which this "general" statement is indeed not as general as it might be and thus, the degree to which Merton prejudges the character of a possible sociology of knowledge, especially in his use of the term "existential".

[3]Merton, "Soc. of Knowledge", suggests that in regard to the term knowledge, "Even a cursory summary is enough to show that the term . . . has been so broadly conceived as to refer to every type of assertion and every mode of thought ranging from folk belief to positive science . . . [and these] . . . are more or less indiscriminantly held to be 'existentially conditioned'", pp. 379-80. See also, Hartung, "Problems", A. Child, "The Existential Determination of Thought", in Ethics, LII (1942), 200-249; J. Plamenatz, Ideology (Toronto: Macmillan & Co., 1971), chapters 1-3.

[4]On this criticism, see especially, A. Child, "The Problem of Imputation in the Sociology of Knowledge", Ethics, LI (1940-41), 200-249; V. Hinshaw, "The Epistemological Relevance of Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge", Journal of Philosophy, XL (1943); S. Taylor; "Conceptions"; Merton, "Paradigm".

[5]This central criticism of the discipline appears in almost every comment on the field. See in particular, Merton, "Conceptions"; Taylor, "Conceptions"; B. Walter, "The Sociology of Knowledge and the Problem of Objectivity", in L. Gross, ed., Sociological Theory: Inquiries and Paradigms (New York: Harper-Row, 1967); Hinshaw, "Relevance"; R. H. Coombs, "Karl Mannheim, Epistemology and the Sociology of Knowledge", Sociological Quarterly, VII (1966); A. Child, "The Existential Determination of Thought".

[6]Hartung, "Problems", 21.

[7]G. Remmling, The Road to Suspicion.

[8]K. Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia (New York: Harvest Books, n.d.) pp. 64-85.

[9]Not all critics or proponents of the discipline recognize the depth of this issue. In many cases the critic simply argues against the extension of "social determination" to "science" itself and proponents conceptualize their work within the "scientific" framework. That is, they argue for or presume the exemption of scientific thought from such social determination as exists in respect to other ideas and thus promote a scientific sociology of knowledge. For example, Franz Adler, among others, argues that, "If the sociology of knowledge is to develop healthily . . . and if it is to take its place with dignity among the other branches of sociology, the sociologies of knowledge will have to . . . abide by the canons of scientific research and the methods of verification accepted in this culture . . . ; they will have to throw off the ballast of inflated language and the esoteric metaphysical speculations with which past authors have encumbered the field". F. Adler, "The Sociology of Knowledge Since 1918", Midwest Sociologist, XVII (1955), 12, and also "Werner Stark's Sociology of Knowledge", Kyklos, XII (1959); "The Range of the Sociology of Knowledge", in Becker and Boskoff, Modern Sociological Theory (New York: Dryden Press, 1957). Cf. Hinshaw, "Relevance"; Hartung, "Problems"; Coombs, "Mannheim"; Merton, "Paradigm".

[10]A. Child, "The Theoretical Possibility of the Sociology of Knowledge". Child is the one critic who impugns the discipline to this fundamental extent and, in fact, denies the traditional meaning of the insight entirely. His argument, its basis and implications, will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

[11]The particular perspectives discussed below have been chosen for a number of reasons. First, they represent the major possible ways in which the insight can be, and has been interpreted. Second, they are either central classical statements or influential contemporary variations on, and attempted syntheses of, such classical statements. Marx and Mead have been left aside for obvious reasons, but

Weber has been included (though his work has not had major significance for the discipline) because his perspective has unique implications which are later found in the writing of Marx and Mead, and which become centrally important.

[12] E. Durkheim, The Rules of the Sociological Method (Toronto: Free Press, 1966), chapter 1.

[13] Idem, "The Dualism of Human Nature and Its Social Conditions", in K. Wolff, ed., Emile Durkheim: 1858-1917 (Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University Press, 1960).

[14] Idem, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, J. Swain, trans. (New York: Free Press, 1969), especially introduction and conclusion. See also, Durkheim and M. Mauss, Primitive Classification, R. Needham, trans. (Chicago: Phoneix Books, 1967).

[15] Idem, "Individualism and the Intellectuals", in S. Lukes, "Durkheim's Individualism and the Intellectuals'", in Political Studies, XVII (1969).

[16] The Rules of the Sociological Method, conclusion; The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, p. 13.

[17] The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, ibid., pp. 26-32, 479-495.

[18] Ibid., p. 483.

[19] Ibid., pp. 22-25.

[20] Ibid. It should be noted as well that the "social facts" which are responsible for such categories, cease to be social at all and become physical, temporal facts in his writing. Durkheim therefore impugns the sociology of knowledge by reducing categories to facts of a non-social order.

[21] Ibid., pp. 31-32.

[22]This idea is implied, for example, in Durkheim's discussion of the emergence of the idea of the division of labour and of individualism; see Division of Labour in Society (New York: Free Press, 1964), and "Individualism and the Intellectuals".

[23]This basic contradiction in Durkheim's sociology of knowledge will be considered in detail in the following chapter. For critical considerations of his work which include some reference to this problem see, P. M. Worsely, "Emile Durkheim's Sociology of Knowledge", Sociological Review, IV (1956); E. Benoit-Smullyan, "The Sociologism of Emile Durkheim and his School", in H. E. Barnes, ed., An Introduction to the History of Sociology (Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1967); A. Giddens, Emile Durkheim: Selected Writings (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1972), intro., and especially S. Taylor, "Conceptions".

[24]M. Scheler, "On the Positivistic Philosophy of the History of Knowledge", R. Kochne, trans., in Curtis and Petras, pp. 162-63.

[25]Ibid., p. 168; see also, H. O. Dahlke, "The Sociology of Knowledge", in Barnes and Becker, Contemporary Social Theory (New York: Appleton-Century, 1940), p. 73; Becker and Dahlke, "Max Scheler's Sociology of Knowledge", in Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, II (March 1942), 314.

[26]"On the Positivistic Philosophy of the History of Knowledge", ibid., 163.

[27]Dahlke, "Soc. of Knowledge", 74-75; see also, K. Mannheim, "Sociology of Knowledge from the Standpoint of Modern Phenomenology: Marx Scheler", in Remmling, Towards the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 192; Remmling, Road to Suspicion, p. 37.

[28]P. Hamilton, Knowledge and Social Structure (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 82.

[29]M. Scheler, "The Sociology of Knowledge: Formal Problems", R. Kochne, trans., in Curtis and Petras, pp. 177, 182.

[30]Mannheim, "Max Scheler".

[31]Scheler, "Formal Problems", 178.

[32]Mannheim, "Max Scheler", 200.

[33]A. Child, "The Theoretical Possibility of the Sociology of Knowledge", 405.

[34]Scheler, "On the Positivistic Philosophy of the History of Knowledge", 169.

[35]It should be noted that Scheler is not at all clear that social factors lie at the basis of thought and thus that he, like Durkheim, inadvertently impugns the very possibility of a sociology of knowledge. The social context, in this case, is not basic, but is rather a manifestation of deeper psycho-biological factors of hunger, sex, will to power, etc. The social context is thus relegated to the status of an intervening variable. Cf. Child, "The Existential Determination of Thought", 155.

[36]For a good critical introduction to Sorokin's work in relation to the sociology of knowledge see J. J. Maquet, The Sociology of Knowledge (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1951); see also, H. Speier, "The Sociological Ideas of P. A. Sorokin: Integralist Sociology", in H. E. Barnes, An Introduction to the History of Sociology (Chicago: Phoenix, 1967), pp. 462-479; and also H. O. Englemann, "Sorokin and the Sociology of Knowledge" and R. K. Merton and B. Barber, "Sorokin's Formulations in the Sociology of Science" both in G. C. Hallen, ed., Sorokin and Sociology (Moti Katra, Agra, India: Satish Book Enterprize, 1972).

[37]Maquet, Soc. of Knowledge, chapter 7.

[38]Ibid., chapter 7, "the cultural realm".

[39]Ibid., chapter 8.

[40]Speier, "Sorokin", 468-69.

[41]An exception is found in a discussion by Peter Hamilton, "Knowledge and Social Str.", 88-102. Curtis and Petras, pp. 387-402 also include a selection from The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. See

also, J. E. T. Eldridge, Max Weber: The Interpretation of Social Reality (London: Michael Joseph, 1971), pp. 11-19.

[42]Thus Weber's Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Captialism (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), in the context of his studies of world religions, is an attempt to demonstrate the necessary and essential, though not the only or necessarily predominant, role of ideas in history.

[43]M. Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (New York: Free Press, 1966), p. 88. See R. Lichtman's critical comparison of Weber with Marx and Mead on this point in his "Symbolic Interactionism: Some Marxist Queries", Berkeley Journal of Sociology, XV (1970), 76.

[44]Weber, ibid., p. 363.

[45]H. Gerth and C. W. Mills, eds., From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 61-63, 284-287.

[46]Basically, Weber attempts, in these studies, to demonstrate that the one factor, among all important factors, missing from societies that did not rationalize in the Western manner, was that of a rational ethic similar to that found in Protestantism. He thus concludes that the ethic was of fundamental importance historically, though not of course of sole importance.

[47]Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. and edited by E. A. Shils and H. N. Finch (New York: Free Press, 1949), pp. 55, 106-107.

[48]The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, pp. 94-96.

[49]Ibid., pp. 363-372.

[50]The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, pp. 180-183.

[51]Ibid., p. 181, see also "Power and Bureaucracy", in K. Thompson and J. Tunstall, eds., Sociological Perspectives (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1971), pp. 67-69.

[52]Weber writes: ". . .if I have become a sociologist . . . it is mainly in order to exorcise the spectre of collective conceptions which still lingers among us", quoted in Eldridge, p. 25.

[53]The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, p. 181.

[54]Theories of Social and Economic Organization, p. 102; Eldridge, pp. 25-26.

[55]Weber, ibid., pp. 102, 118-119.

[56]The Methodology of the Social Sciences, pp. 51, 67, 71-72.

[57]Ibid., pp. 106-107.

[58]K. Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia (New York: Harvest Books, n.d.), chapter 1, part 1 and chapter 5.

[59]Ibid., part 2; see also, "Conservative Thought" and "On the Diagnosis of Our Time", both in K. Wolff, ed., From Karl Mannheim (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

[60]Ideology and Utopia, p. 276.

[61]Ibid., pp. 290-297.

[62]Ibid., pp. 267-279.

[63]Ibid., pp. 306-309.

[64]Hartung, "Problems", 25-26.

[65]Ideology and Utopia, pp. 282-283.

[66]See, for example, Hartung, "Problems"; Merton, "Paradigm"; Walter, "Objectivity"; Taylor, "Conceptions".

[67]*Ideology and Utopia*, pp. 147-164.

[68]Hartung, "Problems", 31; Hamilton, pp. 132, 134.

[69]T. Parsons, *The Social System* (New York: Free Press, 1966), pp. 536-537.

[70]Idem, *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), pp. 28-29.

[71]*The Social System*, pp. 26-35, 167-180.

[72]Parsons, "An Approach to the Sociology of Knowledge", in Curtis and Petras, p. 304.

[73]*Societies*, pp. 28-29.

[74]Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (New York: Free Press, 1968), pp. 743-750.

[75]"An Approach to the Sociology of Knowledge", 284, 304.

[76]*Ibid.*, pp. 285-287.

[77]*Ibid.*, p. 289.

[78]*Ibid.*, p. 283.

[79]*The Social System*, pp. 201-235.

[80]*Ibid.*, pp. 326-332.

[81]"An Approach to the Sociology of Knowledge", 291-295.

[82] *Ibid.*, pp. 293-294.

[83] *Ibid.*, pp. 301-304.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 296.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 297.

[86] In suggesting that the role of a "scientific" sociology of knowledge is to distinguish between distorted and undistorted beliefs within the relationship between social and cultural systems, and in relating this role to the problem of "structured strain", Parsons clearly implies a criteria of truth which involves the functionality of the discipline for the achievement and maintenance of system equilibrium.

[87] P. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), p. 17.

[88] *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

[89] *Ibid.*, p. 186.

[90] *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31, 56-57.

[91] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[92] *Ibid.*, p. 197, footnote no. 29.

[93] *Ibid.*, pp. 56-62.

[94] That is, objectification or institutionalization and internalization are the two "moments" of basic concern in their writing.

[95] *Ibid.*, pp. 92-128.

[96] P. Berger and Pullberg, "Reification and the Sociological Critique of Consciousness", *New Left Review*, XXXV (1966).

[97]Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction of Reality, p. 58.

[98]Ibid., p. 59.

[99]Ibid., p. 62.

[100]Ibid., p. 63.

[101]Ibid., pp. 65-66, 71.

[102]Ibid., p. 87.

[103]Ibid., pp. 163-173.

[104]Ibid., pp. 108-109.

[105]Ibid., pp. 174-180.

[106]Functionalism, in itself, cannot be considered a methodology if it is to transcend the problem of relativism. To demonstrate that certain ideas are "functional" for the maintenance of certain action patterns does not guarantee the truth of these ideas. In turn, the statement itself that an idea is "functional" must be judged as true or false on other than functionalist grounds. In fact, the grounds present in most functionalist analysis are those of positivism.

CHAPTER III

CRITIQUE AND CONTRADICTION

The review of major elaborations of the insight demonstrates that the criticisms brought against the sociology of knowledge are apparently well founded. In particular, none have adequately dealt with the basic issue of relativism. However, the review also raises important questions which are not persuasively answered in the literature. Specifically, it is not clear why the Critique should be so readily accepted, especially when even those attempts to elaborate the insight within its parameters are not successful. The critics' claims are generally treated as "self-evident", and yet the repeated failure to achieve a position acceptable to the critics could just as easily suggest a "self-evident" contradiction between their conception of objective thought and the implications of the insight in regard to the social character of knowledge. To accept the Critique, without clear argument as to why this is necessary, is to retreat from the implications of the insight in a totally uncritical and perhaps unwarranted manner. It is, therefore, essential to consider the differences between the Critique and the insight in greater detail by submitting the

position of the critics to closer scrutiny.

The analysis demonstrates that the Critique is positivistic in character; that it presupposes the positivistic conception of valid knowledge as rooted in those empirical methods thought to characterize the work of natural science. Second, it is argued that there are no self-evident grounds on which to demonstrate that the positivism in which the Critique is based, is itself either an adequate solution to the issue of relativism, or a position which must, necessarily, take precedence over the insight. Third, it is demonstrated that there is indeed a fundamental incompatibility between the Critique and the insight; a contradiction especially evident in respect to conceptions of knowledge or criteria of objectivity.

Given that this contradiction can be demonstrated, <u>and</u> that there are no grounds on which to justify an acceptance of the Critique over the implications of the insight, then it becomes possible to consider the condition under which an adequate elaboration of the insight might be possible. It is argued that this condition involves a prior elaboration of a conception of knowledge or objectivity consistent with, and implicit in the insight. In other words, it is argued that the insight can indeed <u>not</u> be elaborated within the parameters of the Critique, but only because the insight entails a conception of

objectivity contrary to that presumed by the Critique.

Obviously, none of the writers considered in the previous chapter agreed with their critics that the insight ultimately has no validity. However, in each case, they retreated from the insight precisely to the degree that they uncritically accepted the Critique in respect to their conception of objectivity. As will be demonstrated in the cases of Durkheim and Mannheim, this unargued acceptance of the Critique deflected their attention away from the inadequacy of positivism as itself a "solution" to the issue of relativism, and away from the possibility of fully developing an alternative conception of objectivity consistent with the insight. In turn, the constant effort to work within the parameters of the Critique introduced the very contradiction into their work which negated the possibility of ever achieving an adequate elaboration of the insight.

These findings, both in respect to a contradiction between insight and Critique, and in respect to the absence of a convincing argument favouring the Critique over the insight, are then shown to have considerable consequence for the investigation of the hypothesis central to this study. Several writers, who have suggested the fruitfulness of a Marx/Mead synthesis in relation to the problems of the sociology of knowledge, have couched this possibility

in positivistic terms; that is, in terms of the very parameters of the Critique. However, precisely because of the contradiction between Critique and insight, the hypothesis must be false when presented in these terms. Nonetheless, the hypothesis still promises to be fruitful, if the writings of Marx and Mead yield a conception of objectivity consistent with the idea of knowledge as an essentially social phenomenon. A demonstration that such a conception is indeed present in their writing would constitute an "anticipation" of the Critique and is the major concern of subsequent chapters.

As indicated, the present chapter is concerned, first, with a demonstration of the positivistic character of the Critique in respect to its presuppositions in regard to knowledge or objectivity. Following this, the argument briefly considers the historical background to positivism in order to demonstrate both that it is incompatible with the insight and that there are no definitive arguments demanding that it take precedence over the implications of the insight itself in respect to the issue of relativism. Third, the contradiction between positivism and the insight, and the consequences this has when one attempts to elaborate the insight within positivistic parameters, are demonstrated through further analysis of the perspectives of Durkheim and Mannheim. Together,

these considerations result in an appreciation of the basic conditions that must be fulfilled if the hypothesis, in respect to a Marx/Mead synthesis, is to have any relevance toward the resolution of the issues associated with the sociology of knowledge.

The Nature and Presuppositions of the Critique

As suggested above, it appears that it has been quite unnecessary to elaborate and argue the reasons why the parameters of the Critique should take such precedence over the insight informing the development of the sociology of knowledge. Equally, those who have attempted to elaborate the insight within the parameters of the Critique have themselves not directed a great deal of attention to a justification of their acceptance of those parameters, as necessary limitations on the implications of the insight. Indeed, most of the literature expresses the view that the basis on which the charge of relativism is levelled must be "self-evident", and, therefore, not in need of elaboration beyond the barest statement. It is essential to specify these statements and then to consider the particular conception of non-relative or objective thought that they imply.

The work of Arthur Child is particularly in-

structive. He has presented one of the most complete analyses of the insight and its various formulations and draws the ultimate conclusion that the sociology of knowledge is theoretically impossible. In his view, any attempt to explain the development of ideas, especially with regard to their validity or objectivity, in terms of "extrinsic" or existential factors, commits the genetic fallacy, and is therefore false. More specifically, he holds that the argument that ideas are fundamentally social and historical -- the central assumption of the discipline -- is quite ". . . scientifically undemonstrable and is also, therefore scientifically irrefutable".[1] This is to say that a scientific or empirical demonstration of the assumption as factual is impossible, precisely because such a demonstration would be self-contradictory. To establish the fact of the social relativity of thought, empirically, is to refute the resulting statement as itself a factual, non-relative statement. All that is possible in Child's view is the study of ideas "as if" they were socially rooted or determined -- assuming that some benefits would be involved in carrying out such analysis, and recognizing that, in doing so, one is not, thereby, saying anything about the ultimate truth or falsity of such ideas.[2]

Quite convincingly, within his own parameters,

Child demonstrates the repeated failure of several theorists to demonstrate the validity of the basic insight. Scheler's attempt to resolve the issue, through deduction of the truth of social determination from what he considers to be basic axioms, is shown to be fundamentally tautological.[3] At the opposite pole, Mannheim's inductive attempt to demonstrate social determination is shown to suffer from the presumption of the very assumption he is trying to demonstrate.[4] Having effectively disposed of the claims of these writers, Child concludes that the relationship between thought and the social context can only be considered in terms of the fact that different groups can be shown to adhere to, or utilize, specific ideas and categories rather than others. In particular, he suggests that the sociology of knowledge should concern itself primarily with "ideologically organized groups", as it is only in this area that one can readily and precisely identify those ideas peculiar to one group in distinction from others.[5]

What is of central interest here, however, is the kinds of statements that are presented to justify this severe restriction to the discipline. For Child, as for most proponents of the insight, the sociology of knowledge is understood as an empirical discipline, and in these terms it is concluded that:

> The problem of imputation is a problem not of fact [not of the social base and relationship conceptions] <u>but of knowledge of fact</u>. It is hence, only from the standpoint of knowledge of fact that we restrict the validity of imputation, by and large, to the ideologically organized group. . . . For otherwise we have not been able to find a defensible meaning, <u>with reference to knowledge of fact</u>, for the imputation [for example] of an entire ideological system to an entire social class.[6]

Child appeals here to whatever is precisely meant by "knowledge of fact" in order to discover an "acceptable" path between what he calls the "uncontrolled" imputation of economic interest theorists, for example, and the more "metaphysical" solutions of such writers as Scheler and Sorokin.[7] And he is quite prepared to admit that his position,

> . . . makes imputation somewhat less meaningful than it has usually appeared to thinkers who emphasize the social determination of thought. . . . It might be argued that imputation to ideologically organized groups is not at all what one means by imputation or that it does not accomplish what one wishes to accomplish through the practice of imputation. But [and he reiterates his argument and assumptions in regard to the theoretical contention] . . ., <u>the scientific issue is not the issue of what one does mean by imputation: it is the issue of what one can mean. And if one insists on meaning something disallowed by knowledge of fact then one's meaning is subjective and is, therefore, illegitimate</u>.[8]

As traditionally conceived, the basic insight has carried the implication that thought and its products are radically social and historical. For Child, this

meaning is absurd; one can only mean what knowledge of fact, through empirical analysis, allows one to mean. Thus, the sociology of knowledge is simply the elucidation of what is self-evident (as he himself admits).[9] It becomes the statement of what specific ideas are in fact held and expressed by specific groups, and especially those groups which are organized around some explicit ideology. Furthermore, it becomes but the beginning of a study of the empirically demonstrable impact of ideologically organized groups on the more amorphous categories of persons these groups attempt to influence. And indeed, this "retreat" from the traditional meaning of the insight appears to have been generally accepted. In terms of the criteria of what can be meant, or what knowledge of facts allows one to mean, the discipline becomes the study of propaganda, the media and its impact; in general, it becomes the study of a presumed functional correlation between specific ideas and specific aspects of social structure.[10]

The same basic point is made by John Plamenatz who also concludes that the belief that ". . . ideas and beliefs are 'relative' to the social situations or points of view of the people who have them . . . is untenable".[11] His argument notes, as was found in the previous chpater, that very few, if any writers within the discipline it-

self have adhered to the full implications of the insight. He suggests that the reasons for this concern the "necessity" that there exist at least some ideas free of social influence if rational discourse is to be at all possible. Specifically, he includes in this realm, ". . . ideas about scientific method, about the functions of hypotheses and theories . . .",[12] and, he implies, once again, that, without this exemption, the insight is fundamentally self-contradictory and unacceptable.

Another critic, Frank Hartung, is content to argue that, since it is self-contradictory to attempt an empirical validation of the insight, then that insight must necessarily be severely restricted. The very suggestion that the insight might compel a revision of the adherence to the empirical character of knowledge is simply a matter of asserting "too much",[13] or of committing the genetic fallacy.[14] Further discussion is simply not required once this apparently obvious fact is stated. Hartung then goes on to differentiate the "fruitful" from the "fallacious" in Mannheim's work, according to the criteria of that which one "may attempt to ascertain empirically" which helps one avoid the "burden" of Mannheim's "epistemological speculations".[15] Much more bluntly than Child, Hartung accuses the sociology of knowledge of claiming that "man is primarily irrational"[16] by virtue, apparently, of the

discipline's implication that even the canons of empirical science, themselves ideas, are socio-historically relative.

These, and other rejections of the insight are repeated in the statements of those who uncritically accept the Critique as "self-evident", yet persist in the attempt to construct a meaningful, if limited, sociology of knowledge. It is sufficient, for example, in Berger and Luckmann's view to state that the inclusion of,

> . . . epistemological questions concerning the validity of sociological knowledge in the sociology of knowledge is somewhat like trying to push a bus in which one is riding. . . . Far be it from us to brush aside such questions. All we contend here is that these questions are not themselves part of the empirical discipline of sociology. . . . We therefore exclude from the sociology of knowledge the epistemological and methodological problems that bothered both of its major originators.17

Having set aside such questions, the discipline can get on with its job of empirical investigation.[18] Berger leaves it to the philosopher to contemplate, within his proper domain, the implications of the findings of the sociology of knowledge for epistemology and methodology. Yet, there is a basic problem entailed in such a ready acceptance of the discipline as a strictly empirical study which, at the same time, precludes the inclusion of the very idea of empirical science within the realm of social penetration. Quite simply put, this very acceptance prejudges the outcome of the philosopher's contemplation in

regard to epistemology and methodology. It implies the presumption that empirical methodology will remain the accepted basis of objective thought, especially sociological thought.

Thus, in the guise of limiting the sociology of knowledge to a restricted sphere, Berger and Luckmann quite clearly subscribe to what Winch has called the "underlabour conception"[19] of philosophy, and, thereby, presume to actually limit its possible relevance. For, if the epistemologist were to take the insight of the sociology of knowledge seriously (as Scheler clearly did), it could well be the case that the nature of the discipline would be radically altered, precisely in respect to the purely empirical and limited character they wish to ascribe to it.

But the essential question, for the moment, involves what is implied in a restriction of the implications of the basic insight to the requirements of empirical science. Child most clearly expresses this restriction by rejecting what one wishes to mean by the insight, in favour of what one <u>can</u> mean on the basis of "empirical knowledge of fact". Kolakowski[20] has argued that this repeated demand for strict empirical verifiability, as the essence of understanding and knowledge, reflects the positivistic or naturalistic conception of objectivity; a conception which severely limits what amounts to "proper"

analysis, and what, in turn, may be counted as knowledge. Positivism is based on the assumption that valid ideas are limited to those which are manifested or obliged by sensory experience, those which are free of the intrusion of value judgements and normative elements. Such ideas are, furthermore, those which are obtained most precisely according to the experimental, controlled, observational methods most clearly apparent in the physical sciences.

> Defined in the most general terms, positivism is a collection of prohibitions concerning human knowledge, intended to confine the name of "knowledge" (or "science") to those operations that are observable in the evolution of modern science. [It is] . . . against all reflection that either cannot found its conclusions on empirical data or formulates its judgements in such a way that they can never be contradicted by empirical data.21

Adhering to such "rules", in relation to this conception of what constitutes valid or objective thought, Child and other critics are apparently correct and consistent in denying the validity of the insight, in terms of its traditionally intended meaning. However, in the absence of any detailed support for the priority of positivistic canons of thought, this clarification, of the Critique, as positivistic, simply points up the depth of the contradiction that exists between critics and proponents of the insight. Clearly, one cannot adhere to a notion of valid thought as only that thought which is

free of normative and evaluative elements, and, at the same time, to the idea that all thought contains an integral, social, historical dimension. However, this problem does not, in itself, lend support to the demand that the contradiction be resolved in the direction of the positivistic conception of validity. Nothing in the statement of the position (except perhaps its pervasive self-assuredness) adds up to a necessary argument in favour of positivistic presuppositions.

It is true, as has been noted, that writers in the sociology of knowledge have explicitly conceived their work in positivistic terms, and have thus tried to develop the insight in terms which ignore the contradiction. However, this in itself does not necessarily indicate anything more than the tremendous cultural influence that positivistic thought has had on our concerns in all areas, whether or not such influence involves the introduction of contradictions. The debate over the applicability of positivistic thought in sociology has a history as long as the discipline itself, and has never been satisfactorily resolved.[22] Thus, it remains at least a possibility that the specific debate between critics and proponents of the sociology of knowledge could be resolved, and in the direction of the full implications of the insight, if this involved the development of an alternate and consistent

conception of objectivity.

There are at least two further considerations which lend support to this possibility. First, it is not at all clear that the insight has insufficient "empirical" grounding even for its more extreme implications. Even positivists will grant that, historically, there have existed different world views in regard to both social and physical reality.[23] Their subsequent argument, that such differences are only significant in that they reflect "stages" in a cumulative evolution of thought, culminating in the "correct" thinking reflected in positivistic methodology, is a position currently under debate even within the physical sciences. What this suggests is that the rejection of the insight, because it is empirically undemonstrable and irrefutable, may be questionable, and that the real basis of concern is that the insight relativizes and calls into question even the "knowledge about knowledge" that positivism represents. In other words, it may be the case that considerable, if not conclusive "empirical" support for the insight can be brought forward, in which case positivism loses its claim to being the basis of the realization of a-temporal, non-evaluative belief. The positivist's rejection of the insight would, therefore, be more properly understood as a "necessary" rejection on non-empirical grounds -- that is, necessary,

precisely in terms of the anomaly that a fully elaborated sociology of knowledge would constitute in relation to the claims of the positivistic epistemology.

Second, it is important to remember that, even within the physical sciences, which have been the model for the elaboration of the positivistic viewpoint, it is no longer clear that this perspective is indeed fully reflective of what actually occurs within the scientific pursuit of knowledge. As John O'Neill notes in a recent article on this subject,

> . . . even in mathematics Gödel and Tarski have shown that it is not possible to develop a self-validating logic which relieves us of the choice of axioms and the assumption of responsibility for the particular grammar in which we frame a problem.24

At least one writer, Lavine, whose own stance is positivistic, has recognized these points and has taken both critics and proponents of the insight to task for what is, in her view, a somewhat facile acceptance of this conception of objectivity as itself outside of, and a denial of an integral social component within ideas in general.[25] Her work is important, at least insofar as it demonstrates that the methods of empirical science do indeed presume certain axioms in regard to the process of knowing which themselves have no a-temporal, empirically demonstrable basis.[26] Thus, she implies that the second

half of Child's statement, that the insight is "scientifically irrefutable", is just a relevant and important as the first half, that the insight is "scientifically undemonstrable". And not only does she emphasize the significance of the insight's irrefutability via empirical methods, she also notes that there is, in fact, considerable experiential evidence for the insight which can't be legitimately ignored.[27]

It is not necessary to pursue this consideration in any greater detail here. The essential point is that it is indeed debatable that a particular methodological stance must necessarily be accepted as "the" road to objective thought, quite apart from the further consideration that any a-historical, a-social conception of objectivity may ultimately be impossible. What is stressed by O'Neill and others, and what is important in the present context, is that positivism can not be self-validating; that its own rejection of the insight as empirically undemonstrable and irrefutable is perhaps equally applicable to itself.

The Contradiction in Historical Perspective

In terms of the preceeding points, the debate between proponents and critics of the sociology of knowledge is indeed, in contrast to Child's position, more clearly a conflict characterized, at root, by an acceptance

of quite incompatible presuppositions. The extent of this incompatibility becomes clearer through a brief consideration of the historical development of positivism. In turn, this consideration lends further support to the significance of the idea that the construction of an adequate conceptual framework for the discipline can only be accomplished through an elaboration of an alternate, non-positivistic conception of objectivity.

It has generally been accepted that sociological thought emerged as part of the "conservative" reaction to the thought of the Enlightenment, and, to what were perceived as the negative results of such thought. In one respect, this argument is quite meaningful; in contrast to the philosophes' emphasis on the individual and his potentialities, and on the institutional sphere as primarily negative and limiting, a basic element of sociological thought has been the interpretation of persons as fundamentally social beings. Although this assumption has been elaborated in various directions and with varying degrees of emphasis, the essential point is that it assumes a <u>positive</u>, integral and necessary relationship between persons and the institutional framework. In these terms, sociological thought contrasts greatly with the predominant, individualistic image of man and society of the preceding period.[28]

However, in a second respect, too often ignored, sociological thought does _not_ constitute a reaction against, but a continuation of, Enlightenment social thought. Methodologically, the predominant development has been in the direction of an elaboration of sociological thought within the framework of positivistic analysis. With hesitation during the nineteenth, but with commitment in the twentieth century, sociology has developed in the image of natural science and has generally been understood as the "science of society", as an empirical study of social "reality", according to the canons of positivistic analysis. In this sense, sociology often reflects a continuation of the Enlightenment respect for, and elaboration of, the methodology and methods of natural science, as then understood.[29]

The contention here is that sociology, at least in its predominant, positivistic or sociologistic expression, is essentially contradictory, precisely because it is both reaction against and perpetuation of Enlightenment thought in the respects noted. At least, this is the case insofar as positivistic methodology can be shown to reflect the individualistic conception of man and the social that is central to the Enlightenment. One way in which this contradiction can be phrased is to say that the image of man, implicit in and underlying the development of

positivistic methods, stands in stark contrast to the image of man as social being, which is an integral assumption within the sociological tradition.

This problem is expressed, perhaps most clearly, in the sociology of knowledge. To assume that persons are fundamentally social beings would seem to imply the basic insight of the discipline that the consciousness of persons, and thus their ideas, are integrally intersubjective or social in nature. In contrast, positivism constitutes a rejection of this conception of ideas, if only because it is rooted in the historical attempt to discover a method or procedure of thought which would free ideas from what were considered to be factors of distortion or bias. The so-called "faith" in Reason, so evident in seventeenth and eighteenth century thought, was a faith tempered with a respect for the "idols of the mind", among which were included the influence of traditional institutions. The very search for a method which would control for such influences presumes, both that knowing is an individual undertaking, and that a negative relationship exists between thought and social factors or processes.[30] Thus, a positivistically conceived sociology of knowledge is itself a contradiction in terms, and the conflict between the positivistic Critique and proponents of the discipline is indeed less a debate than a conflict of divergent

perspectives.

Though it is not his central concern, this thesis receives considerable and detailed support in the work of Stanley Taylor.[31] His criticism of the sociology of knowledge goes beyond that of writers such as Child and Hartung in that he subjects the presuppositions of both the discipline <u>and</u> the Critique (in regard to knowledge) to historical analysis. On the basis of this analysis, Taylor is led to skepticism in regard to the conclusion that the insight can only mean what "knowledge of fact" allows it to mean. Thus he gives more serious consideration the possibility of, and the specific character of, a sociology of knowledge.

Of central importance is his demonstration that the positivistic presuppositions underlying the Critique are indeed rooted in the classical and basically individualistic theory of knowledge.[32] Through analysis of the historical developments in this particular conception of objectivity, he shows, furthermore, that there are actually important parallels between this school of thought and the sociology of knowledge in its various forms. And of paramount interest in relation to this study, Taylor shows that these parallels involve the basic element of the Critique -- the charge of genetic fallacy and relativism. In his view, positivism represents but a particular

"solution" to this very issue. Furthermore, it is a solution which itself lacks the empirical support which the Critique demands of the sociology of knowledge.

According to Taylor, the classical, naturalistic theory of knowledge can be traced back to its earliest expression in Protagorean nominalism.[33] However, its predominance in Western thought was realized only after the degeneration of religious philosophies into competing ontologies towards the end of the feudal period.[34] These competing positions are viewed as variations in the response to the loss of a specific, and generally acknowledged, "sacred" or revealed basis in which to anchor understanding and agreement.[35] For the most part, and most significantly, they generally involved a reference to the individual subject and his perceptual abilities as, in some sense, the essential and secular ground for objectivity and certainty in thought.[36]

As Taylor notes, the immediate and very significant consequence of placing one's "faith" in the individual was to detach the subject, not simply from a sacred basis or justification for his ideas, but apparently from the social, institutional framework as well.[37] In all forms of individualistic epistemology, the social context is conceptualized as bearing a purely negative, biasing relationship of refraction to thought. Thus, the deter-

mination of valid thought demands that social influence be controlled and transcended.[38]

Clearly, individualistic epistemology constitutes an implicit rejection of the relevance or possibility of a radical sociology of knowledge. And, insofar as such an epistemological stance underpins positivistic methodology, which in turn informs the elements of the Critique, Taylor's argument supports the present interpretation of the differences between proponents and critics of the discipline as reflecting a basic contradiction.

But of further significance to the present study is the fact that Taylor characterizes the historical development of the classical theory of knowledge as itself a struggle with the issue of relativism, though this is often forgotten by its proponents.[39] Early forms of this theory stressed the purely perceptual, strictly inductive, empiricist character of knowing and reflected the nominalist premise that,

> . . . things alone are real, and that abstract ideas or universals are valid only insofar as they correctly express, as symbols, the particulars to which they refer.40

Stated in slightly different terms, the position amounts to an attempt to root all ideas in a supposedly "more real" or existential base through a validation of statements strictly in terms of an individual's sense perception.[41] As Taylor notes, this stance lies at the root of

attempts to develop a particular "rational" method through which perception of individuals might be rendered "pure".[42] The position demands, as well, that the social context must be resolved into individuals and their relationships and that this context can not be considered real or existential in itself.[43]

This early form of individualism, in its effort to state the nature of objective thought, failed to successfully deal with two problems.[44] First, in holding that "man is the measure of all things", in terms specifically of individual sense perception, the position is quite unable to account for the existence and character of non-sensory, non-individual elements in thought, the basic concepts or categories. These basic organizing ideas appear essential to thought and to agreement, yet they do not appear to be inductive generalizations from sense experience.[45] Second, without the inclusion of the categorical element, which is the basis of relating disparate sensations by and between persons, the position remains hopelessly relativistic. Truth is no more than what each individual claims it to be according to his specific temporal and spatial standpoint.

Of course this extreme subjectivism is not the ultimate form that the classical theory of knowledge has been given. As Taylor argues, the,

> . . . fruitless consequences of this . . . perceptual theory of knowledge . . . has led many thinkers to feel that, in the nature of the case, objective thought must be conceptual thought . . . and . . . the problem of knowledge becomes that of introducing various modes of connection (categories) by which a manifold sense (perception) can be reduced to systematic order.46

Various reformulations have been developed in response to both the problem of including the categorical element, and the issue of relativism. Specifically, the basis of objectivity has been transferred from the possibility of pure sense perception to an idea of perception mediated by a particular categorical framework. The history of attempts to deal with these problems passed from subjectivism to the utilitarian position and culminated in the position developed by Kant. However, while there has been considerable reformulation, Taylor demonstrates first, that the individualistic emphasis has remained consistent, and second, that the problem of relativism has never been demonstrably resolved.

Kant's "solution" to the issue of the existence and basis of the categorical element in thought involved, centrally, the delineation of what he considered the universal categories of Reason. For Kant, the achievement of objective knowledge was a matter of obtaining "necessary judgements", and he held that because perception alone could never yield such necessity, then the process of knowing

implied the operation of categories. Since these necessary categories were not arrived at through induction, he argued that they were simply ". . . innate to the understanding, that is, a priori".[47] Furthermore, Kant also argued that this transcendental element in thought was both a-historical and a-social; that it was an element shared by all men regardless of place and time.[48]

Thus, if one accepts his specific delineation of the twelve categories that appear to be operative in thought, then one has an apparently absolute basis on which to judge statements as objective and non-relative. "For Kant, objectivity is obtained when the judgement expressing a relationship between objects is in accordance with his categorical framework".[49] This basis of objectivity is still the individual cognitive act, but it is an act of the individual involving an "interaction" between sense perception and the trans-individual categorical framework. The latter is responsible for order in perception and, therefore, for intelligibility and communication. Thought is, therefore, a synthesis of subject and object; of observation and the Reason (categories) in which each individual mind participates.[50]

However, Taylor immediately develops several concerns in respect to this "solution". First, the specific categories delimited carry with them the individual-

istic assumption that the social context is fundamentally negative in relation to the possibility of objective thought. On the one hand, the categories specified by Kant are conceived in a-historical, a-social terms, and thus reflect no appreciation of socio-historical variation in categorical schemes.[51] On the other hand, this variant of the classical individualist theory of knowledge does not include the category of value. And as Taylor argues,

> . . . it is precisely this order of category -- Value -- that is embodied predominantly in institutions. Societies in which the conception of institutions is sacred find the validation of thought in institutional structure [eg., in the performance of ritual] and hence, largely in value. . . . No society has been able to demonstrate with certainty that values have any objective existence or validity other than as ideas in the mind. It follows that the objectivity that obtains in sacred society rests entirely upon agreement concerning values and their possible hierarchical arrangement.52

Of course there is the implicit assumption, in the classical theory, that the "objectivity" that obtained in former, sacred societies was not objectivity at all. However, in these terms, and from a position which takes the socio-historical variation of categorical schemes seriously, it can be argued that the Kantian framework constitutes but a specific, socio-historically emergent basis of validation.[53] It is a specific mode of knowing which is directed to and permits a comprehension of physical objects and relationships in detachment from

values (an impossibility in the sacred society where objects are understood in relation to values). Taylor then suggests that even Kant's conception of the grounds of objective thought appears to rest on a specific value, and stands in relation to a specific historical social form; the central (and even exclusive) valuation of the individual over society, as expressed in the contemporary contractual form of human relationships. "Individualism itself may be viewed as an institution".[54]

Not only does the Kantian conception of objectivity clearly exclude any but a negative influence of the social context on thought, it does not provide a necessary solution to the issue of relativism. Kant's categorical scheme appears to reflect the specific socio-historical context in which the idea of individualism has itself become institutionalized. If this is indeed the case, then specific delineations of the basic categories that order perception would be socio-historically relative. As Taylor argues,

> . . . beyond the question of what categories adequately perform this ordering function is that of discovering the source, ground or basis of the categories and accomplishing their derivation or deduction.[55]

Kant does not provide the requisite, non-relative ground or basis. He argues that the categories he enumerates are

deducible from a consideration of how individuals think, but, in the context of historical variation in thought, this deduction does not justify an acceptance of his particular categories as transhistorical.

Furthermore, Taylor notes that granting the categories an a priori, transcendental or ideal status, has a particular consequence. Even though the categories are considered to be "necessary" elements in empirical investigation, they themselves are not amenable to such investigation.[56] That is, any empirical investigation of the categories would have to presuppose the very categories under investigation, leaving one with a clearly circular argument. Kant himself did not, of course, intend that the categories be empirically validated. Nonetheless, it is interesting that the Critique, which is based in this conception of objectivity, cannot ultimately be empirically validated itself, though it has no hesitation in rejecting the insight of the sociology of knowledge, precisely for the reason that it cannot be empirically validated.

In summary, it is the classical theory of knowledge that underpins or is presumed by the Critique, in its reliance on positivist canons of analysis and objectivity. It is, itself, "knowledge" about the character and process

of intellectual phenomena.[57] Taylor's work demonstrates that, in terms of its historical development, this "knowledge about knowledge" or conception of objectivity, involves four important elements that must be noted in relation to the intention of this study. First, it is a theory of knowledge which, even in its most developed form, detaches the individual from the social milieu as a precondtion of his ability to achieve objectivity in thought. Second, it is an epistemological stance which itself has involved a continual attempt to deal with the problem of relativism in thought. Third, the culmination of this individualistic attempt to deal with relativism constitutes a fundamentally idealistic position. The theory accepts the necessity and existence of the categorical element in thought, but accords this element a transcendent, a-historical existence which, as an ideal entity, has itself no empirical, observational referent.[58] Fourth, the basic Kantian categories preclude the category of value; the category most intimately linked with the social aspect of our lives. The individualistic theory of knowledge also ignores the evidence of socio-historical variation in conceptions of objectivity; or does away with such variation in terms, implicitly, of error promoted by what is considered to be negative institutional influence.

It follows that since the Critique is rooted in

this classical theory of knowledge, its charge that the sociology of knowledge commits the genetic fallacy and lapses into relativism implies somewhat more than what is seen at first glance. While it can be argued that a relativistic stance is unacceptable, and that this problem must be overcome in arriving at a valid sociology of knowledge, the Critique demands more. In terms of the particular notion of objective knowledge presumed by the Critique, it demands, in addition, that the valid solution of this issue must be consistent with the canons of empirical science. Since this methodological position is, in turn, rooted in the classical theory of knowledge, the Critique amounts to the demand that the discipline proceed according to a particular historical solution to the problem of relativism; a solution based in individualistic philosophy which clearly contradicts the insight which gives the discipline meaning.

Furthermore, the categorical element within the classical theory is, itself, an a priori or ideal element, and thus a basic presupposition without empirical support. Indeed, this element contains the implicit presupposition that the relationship between persons and the social is negative. To paraphrase Child, this is an element which can neither be verified nor disproven empirically (i.e. by the methods built on and justified in terms of it as a

basis). Thus, for the Critique to argue the fallacy of the insight, in terms of its non-verifiable status and the supposedly concommitant problem of relativism, is fundamentally to argue one set of non-verifiable assumptions against another, contradictory set of assumptions.

Clearly, a sociology of knowledge consistent with basic insight simply cannot be given adequate expression within the traditional parameters of objectivity presumed by the Critique. An adequate elaboration of the insight therefore entails a consideration of the possibility of a different theory of knowledge; one consistent with the assumption of an integral, positive interrelationship between thought and social context, rather than one in which the insight is denied "categorically", before one begins, as it is by the Critique.

The Contradiction and Perspectives in the Sociology of Knowledge

Before concluding this chapter and proceeding to a consideration of the writings of Marx and Mead, it is instructive to reconsider briefly the work of Durkheim and Mannheim in light of the demonstrated contradiction between insight and Critique. These theorists, like others within the discipline, proceeded without any clear recognition or appreciation of this contradiction. Unlike others,

however, they did not ultimately accept the limitations of the Critique, and thus did not retreat into a functionalist, correlational analysis of given ideas and given socio-structural factors. Their work represents separate attempts to utilize positivistic method in the analysis of all types of thought, including the basic categories and concepts. In other words, they attempted to adhere to the demands of both insight and Critique.

Because of this effort, their work is easily shown to be relativistic and has been rejected on these grounds, as noted earlier.[59] However, it can be demonstrated that there are particular "developments" in the thought of both writers which reflect movements, both toward a recognition of the issue, and toward the expression of elements of an alternate conception of objectivity. The following considerations are intended as a clarification of the contradiction and its effects on any positivistic elaboration of the insight. The analysis is also instructive in pointing towards the character of the necessary alternate conception of objectivity.

In the Elementary Forms, Durkheim displays a minimal degree of awareness of the contradiction as it appears to exist within the classical theory of knowledge itself. Specifically, he is critical of the classical theory because though it is the root of a method which he accepts, it is a

method which demands a validation of ideas in empirical terms, and, it, in turn, has developed no such validation for the basic organizing concepts or categories in terms of which such validation is to take place. Durkheim, as Kant, rejects radical empiricism because of its ignorance of the categorical element in knowing. However, he also rejects a priorism or Kant's idealism for its lack of consistency as reflected in the exemption of the categorical element from the necessity of such validation.[60]

Insofar as Durkheim adheres to the positivistic method, however, he still basically agrees with the classical theory whereby,

> . . . knowledge is limited to the contents of time and space. That knowledge is of this kind is also the view of . . . (Kant) . . . of which positivism is but another expression.61

Following the demands of that method he quite consistently argues the necessity of an empirical validation of the categorical element. At the same time, and consistent with the presupposition of the sociology of knowledge, Durkheim argues that ideas, especially the basic concepts or categories, can be considered "social facts" and empirically determined or validated in relation to other social facts.[62] Of course the study of such "social" facts, according to a methodology which omits the category of value, and is fundamentally individualistic, immediately introduces a contradiction into Durkheim's own work.

Essentially, Durkheim maintains that social facts, including ideas as collective representations, can and must be treated as "things".[63] By virtue of the characteristics of social universality, externality and of coercion and constraint exercised on persons,[64] he argues the applicability of empirical, experimental procedure with regard to social phenomena. Durkheim thought that, in this way, he would be enabled to root concepts empirically, as social facts, in the context of their interaction with other existential social facts.

In these terms, however, he simply shifts the problem of relativism to another level. The traditional dilemma of individualistic nominalism becomes a social, cultural "nominalism". Universal concepts and categories are recognized as necessary to the mediation and organization of individual perceptions; but, by trying to achieve an empirical validation of the categories, and in relation to social factors, Durkheim simply raises the question of what mediates between the categorical frameworks that emerge within different socio-historical contexts. Furthermore, since he claims a universal validity for his own pronouncements with regard to the social-existential determination of the categories, the additional question is raised as to the grounds for the precedence of his own ideas over any other, culturally-based ideas.

On the one hand, this is again the problem of genetic fallacy and relativism; but it is the problem, raised in an acute form, precisely by the work of an analyst trying, fully and consistently, to follow the canons of empirical science without retreating from the basic insight.[65] On the other hand, since Durkheim's method operates according to the presuppositions of the classical theory, he is in the contradictory position of attempting to validate empirically precisely the categories presumed essential to his own validational procedures.

Though this is not the only problem in Durkheim's position, it is interesting to note that, in these terms, it appears that the Critique, when directed at his work, is in some sense a criticism of itself. The methodology, presumed as valid by the Critique, demands the empirical (extrinsic) validation of all ideas and gives no criteria for the exemption of the "a priori" categories from, such otherwise necessary, validation. Durkheim simply attempts to carry such demands to their logical conclusions, albeit in sociological terms. Thus, in noting the relativistic implications of the Durkheimian stance, the Critique is minimally displaying its own ideal, presuppositional roots.

Besides the issue of relativism, there are other problems in Durkheim's work which are related to this adherence to positivism. These must be considered before

investigating the response to these difficulties, implicit in the development of his perspective. For example, positivism demands that "social facts" be treated as "things"; as amenable to sensory perception; as existing strictly in time and space; in short, as physical, existential entities. Insofar as the categories were assumed to be social facts, Durkheim attempted to relate them to other social-existential facts. Space and Time, for example, were related, respectively, to the physical configuration of the clans of a tribe around the campfire, and to the temporal and observable sequence of ritual behaviours.[66]

This, however, as noted in the previous chapter, is to succumb to a dual error. First, Durkheim has actually seized upon physical facts that are indeed observable and treated them as social facts.[67] Implicitly (as noted by Child in the case of Scheler), this move constitutes an acceptance or nod to the idea that sociology, and specifically the sociology of knowledge, are theoretically impossible in empirical terms precisely through this reduction of social to physical facts -- another mode of existentiality altogether.[68] Second, and more important here, Durkheim then commits the radical empiricist error to which he clearly objects. He suggests that the categories utilized by a group, in the organization of their perception, are themselves empirical, inductive generalizations

from immediate perception of the physical -- in this case perception of physical configurations and sequences of and by individuals.[69] This is clearly a retrograde step in terms of Durkheim's initial agreement with the classical epistemology, and his explicit rejection of categories as inductive generalizations.

While there is never any total recognition of the association of such problems with the contradiction between the insight and the presuppositions of the classical theory of knowledge, Durkheim does appear, nonetheless, to move toward a particular solution. Insofar as this implicit solution is consistent with the insight, it represents the beginnings of a development of an alternate epistemological stance.

Briefly, Durkheim apparently gained some awareness that the problems he encountered could only be resolved by dropping the parameters of the Critique and its positivistic demands. Specifically, he seems to have recognized that the attempt to "treat social facts as things" was a fallacious orientation, an orientation necessitated by positivistic methodology, but <u>not</u> adequate to the character of the social milieu.[70] In this recognition, the development perceived in his writing actually parallels the broader historical movement within the classical theory of knowledge, stemming from its own struggle with nominalism

and relativism -- the movement from a materialist to idealist stance on the recognition of the a priori nature of the categorical element. Simply put, Taylor argues that Durkheim's studies reflect a movement towards a position in which <u>both</u> the social and the categorical are conceptualized as ideal, rather than sensory, existential phenomena.[71] Such a shift is intimated even in his early work, when he speaks of Society as a "moral entity", although the implications are submerged at this point in his demand that social facts be treated as things.[72] In contrast to the classical theory, this position reflects the premise that the social and the categorical are integrally connected and interdependent.

Despite being held back, then, by persistent interference from the positivistic presuppostion, Durkheim came close to a perspective in which the presumed reality, "sui generis", of society becomes a cultural, ideal reality; a conceptual system to which specific ideas are related in <u>logical</u> terms. Furthermore, institutions, or patterns of activity, become but objectifications of this conceptual realm, as well as the very process within which concepts emerge and change.

> For Durkheim [at least in terms of the development and logical extension of his thought] the categories are a part of a total conceptual system. They differ from other conepts of the system, sometimes in their greater generality, always in their higher degree of impersonality. In these concepts and categories the cognitive and evaluative elements interpenetrate, and it is the entire conceptual system as embodied in institutional structure that forms the validational basis for all experience. The categories have their origin, development and modification in the social process as this takes place with reference to the changing needs and experiences of a given society. Thus the categories are not fixed, either as to number or respective character.73

Taylor concludes, that if Durkheim had fully realized this tendency in his work, it would have meant a rejection of his initial positivist approach to the analysis of knowledge in relation to social factors.[74] Furthermore, it would, thereby, nave entailed a rejection of the classical theory of knowledge as an absolute, a-temporal, a-social epistemological stance. Within the development of this framework Durkheim,

> . . . would regard the Kantian categorical scheme as a special case only -- one that reflects the peculiar needs of man in Western culture.75

To recapitulate, Durkheim attempts, initially, to develop a conceptual framework for a "scientific" sociology of knowledge, but his intellectual honesty in conceptual and empirical analysis drove him to reject (if not totally) the very positivistic presuppositions with which he began. His very insistence on the central

sociological insight led him close to an outright rejection of the ontological demand implicit in the positivist method, that social facts be treated as things. Knowing is, indeed, rooted in social factors, but social facts become less physical than ideal or moral in conceptualization; the cultural becomes a "reality" different from, but ontologically on the same footing as, physical reality.

Similar conclusions follow from an analysis of developments in, and implications of, Mannheim's work that are usually overlooked by the critics. In this particular case the critics have been content to note the obvious lack of clarity in Mannheim's conception of social-existential bases; the lack of any precise theory of social determination; the failure of "relationism" to solve the problem of relativism; etc. These criticisms are somewhat superficial, however, and ignore essential aspects of Mannheim's work which, as in the case of Durkheim, may not have been clear to himself.

As Taylor notes, for example, Mannheim clearly accepts the presumed dualism between thought and things, which underlies scientific methodology, and the language of that dualism. He then extends this language to his consideration of the relationship between thought and the social as did Durkheim by treating the social context as existential in nature.[76] Mannheim also overlooks a contra-

diction between his desire for some specific methodological stance which would constitute an a-temporal validational base, and his fundamentally historicist theoretical background.[77]

Be that as it may, the critic generally misses an essential point, and, overall, Mannheim's work has been narrowly interpreted and perhaps misinterpreted. As in the case of Durkheim, the critics have ignored the extent to which Mannheim's attempt to relate ideas and the social realm ceases to be strictly an attempt to reduce the ideational realm to an existential realm. As Mannheim's framework develops, it is not only the case that the social base is unclearly defined in any existential, observational terms; but also, since,

> . . . the social situation . . . involves a perspective, . . . the penetration of the theoretic (knowledge) by the social process is not, as one would gather from a cursory reading . . . , a determination of thought by purely non-theoretic factors. The penetration is achieved only through the agency of a subject who, in affecting the penetration does so on the basis of values, etc., derived from a past, or existing social situation.78

In addition, the criticism, that Mannheim commits the genetic fallacy, overlooks his specific differentiation between "factual genesis" and "meaningful genesis" in relation to knowledge.[79] Ideas are indeed related to a social base, and genetically so in Mannheim's framework,

but the social is an "order of meaningful being in contrast to mere physical being".[80] Thus, if he had fully transcended his continual confusion of the social order with the physical-existential realm, he would have reached a position similar to that to which Durkheim's work tended, wherein; a) the social context gains a clearly ideal character -- is cultural rather than existential; and b) the attempt to relate thought to the social base becomes analogous to, if not the same as, the immanent and logical interpretation of ideas.

The essential point of this section is that both writers were driven towards the development of an alternate epistemological stance in contrast to that underlying the Critique and the methodology they shared with that Critique. Furthermore, this tendency results precisely from the attempt, on their part, to remain consistent, both with the demands of the Critique in terms of its presumed validational procedures, and with the demands of the insight motivating the social analysis of knowledge.

In most instances, authors retreat in the face of the Critique. Without empirical warrant, some writers exempt certain ideas about knowing (those presumed by the Critique) from social influence, and yet they proceed to presume some sort of social penetration into other ideas --

especially political and social ideas. Other writers are more consistent in their acceptance of the Critique, insofar as they argue the theoretical impossibility of the sociology of knowledge in terms of its initial, radical intentions, and simply carry out functional, descriptive study of the relationship between given ideas and given social-structural factors. In both approaches, however, the grounds on which the insight is partially or totally rejected are never spelled out. It is normally argued, as pointed out previously, that the epistemological implications of the insight are the province of the philosopher; such implications are better left to them so that the empirical sociology of knowledge, if it may still be called that, can get on with its task.

The virtue of Durkheim and Mannheim, at least in terms of the implicit developments in their work, and the logical extension of these developments by Taylor, lies in the fact that they did not rest content with such easy rejection of the insight. In contrast, they began to realize the fundamental contradiction between the presuppositions of the insight and those of the Critique; a contradiction which can not be mediated simply by reduction of one set of terms to the other. In their adherence to the insight, they were driven close to the elaboration of an alternative epistemological stance which would be consistent

with the experiences supporting the sense of the insight, and yet not necessarily exclusive of the experiences supporting the presuppositions of the classical theory of knowledge.

As Taylor argues, there is, indeed, a significant parallel between these developments and the historical development of the individualistic, classical theory. In the beginning,

> . . . each of the three major schools (considered) . . . contained a basic presuppostion and a corollary -- namely, that the existential alone is real and that the ideal has negligible ontological status. However, the effort to reduce to existential terms a manifest theoretical order as constituted by the fundamental categories of thought led to the dilemma that, despite the existential predicate, each explanatory formulation of the problem pointed unmistakedly to an an ideal reference . . . the "rationality" of individualism, the "stylistic structure" of Mannheim and the "society" of Durkheim.81

The fundamental difference between the specific "ideal reference" in the sociological, as opposed to individualist, position lies in the former's integral inclusion of the experience of the social element within being, in contrast to its exclusion as but a source of error and bias in the latter.

This is not to argue, however, that Taylor's logical extension of the thought of Durkheim or Mannheim is the alternative epistemological stance which is totally adequate

as the basis of a response to the Critique. One need only point to the persistence of a lack of any clearly worked out basis, or absolute, in terms of which objective statements might be realized and relativism overcome. What is implied, as a validational base, is the "social process", as both an objectification in action of a conceptual framework, and the very process out of which basic conceptual elements emerge; but this remains too vaguely developed and inadequate in relation to the charge of relativism.[82] On the other hand, the work of these writers does further clarify the contradiction between the presuppositions of the Critique, and those of the sociology of knowledge. It also indicates the necessity of an alternate conception of objectivity, if the insight is to be retained, and it points in the direction of a clarification of the notion of "social process" as essential to realization of such an alternative.

Summary and Implications

In the previous chapter, the Critique of the discipline was delineated, and its apparent strength was demonstrated through a review of various formulations of the basic insight. The present chapter has been primarily concerned with the contradiction between Critique and insight implied by that review, and, especially, with the

"self-evident" character of the Critique. It was noted that the literature contains little effort to justify why the position of the critics should necessarily take such precedence over the implications of the insight, or why the insight should be so severely limited as to deny its original meaning. Given the fact that even those writers who attempt to meet the demands of the Critique fail to transcend the charge of relativism, it became necessary to consider whether or not it would be at all possible to construct an adequate framework within these parameters.

This issue is important because it raises the possibility of at least two different approaches to the hypothesis that an adequate elaboration of the insight could be constructed on the basis of elements in the writings of Marx and Mead. If one can conclude that the position of the Critique must take precedence over the implications of the insight, then the analysis of Marx and Mead must concentrate on the possible discovery and elaboration of the elements of a clearly expressed, and severely limited, empirical sociology of knowledge. However, if the conclusion is that such precedence need not be granted, then it becomes relevant to interpret the hypothesis as suggesting the possibility of a conceptual frameowrk, and mode of analysis, of an entirely different order. In other words, before bowing to the claim of the critics, that the

discipline is impossible except in extremely limited form, it is essential to consider the adequacy of the basis of this claim.

Initially, it was demonstrated that the repeated claim that the meaning of the insight can only be what knowledge of fact allows it to mean, reflects the positivistic orientation to research and to what can count as knowledge. The adequacy of positivistic methodology, within the social sciences, has been a continual concern throughout the historical development of sociology, and the issue becomes most acute in respect to the sociology of knowledge. In this regard, positivism is itself "knowledge about knowledge", and thus it is not at all clear why it should be exempt from social penetration. Indeed, it was noted that at least some positivistic thinkers are themselves willing to accept that their methodological stance is necessarily rooted in assumptions which are not empicially demonstrable or refutable. This is to say that positivism cannot be self-validating, and this, in turn, has important implications for the acceptability of the criticisms of the sociology of knowledge. The central implication is, clearly, that a rejection of the meaning of the insight on the basis of its non-empirically demonstrable expression is an argument equally applicable to the basis of the Critique itself.

Taylor's discussion, of the historical development of the positivistic conception of objectivity within individualism, allows a more detailed appreciation of the non-factual, ideal or assumed basis at the root of the Critique -- in its most developed form, the presupposition of an a priori set of categories in terms of which objective thought is considered possible. However, he points out, not only that the Critique consists of empirically non-refutable elements, but that the specific categories enumerated take no account of socio-historical variation in categorical schemes, and that they do not include the category of value. Both of these factors are integral to the experience informing the articulation of the insight underlying the sociology of knowledge, and yet are absent from the basis of the Critique. This is not surprising, insofar as the whole development of the classical theory of knowledge is basically individualistic, and, therefore, presupposes the separation of the knowing subject and valid thought from any positive connection with the social process.

The essential point that emerges in this analysis is that there is indeed a very fundamental contradiction between insight and Critique; a contradiction for which there are no self-evident grounds which might fully and convincingly justify the standard resolution of the issue

in favour of the Critique, and in preference to the insight and its implications. The empirical validation of ideas, demanded by positivism, cannot be carried out with respect to either set of presuppositions, and thus, the debate between critics and proponents turns out to be a debate between incompatible conceptions of human consciousness and knowledge. What is apparently lacking, then, in the historical development of the sociology of knowledge, is the elaboration of the epistemological stance implied in, and demanded by, the insight.

The discussion of the development in the work of Durkheim and Mannheim was included because it points up the results of any persistent attempt to adhere, at the same time, to the contradictory demands of the Critique and the insight. Either such attempts are driven into a hopeless socio-cultural relativism, by virtue of adherence to the empiricist demands of the Critique, or the attempt forces one in the direction of a re-formulation of epistemological presuppositions and validational procedures in line with the implications of the basic insight. The latter direction is found in the frameworks of Durkheim and Mannheim, insofar as it is recognized that the social element ceases to have a strictly existential character in their work. In these terms, the relation of thought to the social context becomes analogous to the relation between

ideas and the more inclusive conceptual framework of which they are part. The epistemological stance implied suggests the necessity of greater conceptual elaboration of what is meant by the idea of "social process" in other than strictly existential, positivist terms.

In conclusion, the task of this paper can not be conceived simply as an attempt to develop an adequate response to the *immediately* apparent elements of the Critique and the meaning these elements have traditionally had in the debate. Clearly, in a construction of an adequate sociology of knowledge, it is *impossible* to meet the demands of the Critique, insofar as this entails the implicit acceptance of presuppositions which fundamentally deny the insight, and, thereby, necessitate abandoning the possibility of a sociology of knowledge as traditionally intended. It is certainly necessary to attain conceptual clarity with regard to the terms of the presumed relationship, and with regard to the character of the relationship itself. Furthermore, one can not rest content with the nihilistic implications of relativism. However, it is clear that these issues can only be dealt with in terms that are consistent with the insight, and this can not be done if one attempts to do so within parameters which prejudge the task as impossible.

Consideration of the Critique has indeed been essential, but not in the same manner as understood in the past. It can no longer be considered a set of specific, absolute criteria that must be met at all costs. To the contrary, it must be seen as an indication of a positivist, and thus invididualistic, bias that is found even within sociologies of knowledge; a bias that must be avoided, if there is to be any possibility of achieving a perspective consistent with the basic insight. In particular, this analysis of the Critique indicates the necessity, in any review of the writing of specific authors, of sensitizing oneself to aspects possibly overlooked by traditionally accepted interpretations -- interpretations and criticisms based in a non-compatible perspective. Beyond the incomplete, though suggestive, tendencies in the work of Durkheim and Mannheim, it is essential to consider the degree to which other elements of a non-contradictory conceptual framework can be found that are consistent with the insight, especially on basic ontological and epistemological levels.

It is in these terms, then, that the analysis of Marx and Mead must proceed. Analysis can not simply be directed to the extent to which these writers "anticipated" and responded to the immediate elements of the Critique, as is suggested by various writers. What must be determined,

is the degree to which both theorists "anticipated", and dealt with, the contradiction between the classical theory of knowledge; validational procedures rooted in that theory; and the implications of a social theory of knowledge.

The following chapter will consider Marx' writings as they bear on the sociology of knowledge. Specifically, to follow the preceding discussion, the analysis attempts to delineate the sociology of knowledge in Marx' work, in terms of his conception of intellectual phenomena; his conception of the social aspect of human life; and his conception of the relationship presumed to hold between these terms. Furthermore, the central question is posed as to whether or not Marx developed a conception of objectivity which resolves the problem of relativism, and yet is consistent with the basic assumption of the social character of thought.

Chapter five considers the same questions in relation to Mead's writing. Specific attention will be directed to those elements of his work that appear relevant to an investigation of the hypothesis that his "subjective" emphasis compliments the "structural", Marxian emphasis in relation to the basic issue of a valid sociology of knowledge.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]A. Child, "The Theoretical Possibility of the Sociology of Knowledge", 405.

[2]See E. Grunwald, "Systematic Analysis" and "The Sociology of Knowledge and Epistemology", in Curtis and Petras, pp. 187-243 passim.

[3]A. Child, "The Theoretical Possibility of the Sociology of Knowledge", 407-410.

[4]Ibid., pp. 410-411.

[5]A. Child, "The Problem of Imputation Resolved", Ethics, LIV (1943), 99.

[6]Ibid., p. 108, emphasis added.

[7]A. Child, "The Problem of Imputation in the Sociology of Knowledge".

[8]A. Child, The Problem of Imputation Resolved", 108-109, emphasis added.

[9]Ibid., p. 104.

[10]For example, this is clearly the case with Parsons as discussed in the previous chapter, but also of Merton, "Paradigm"; Znaniecki, The Social Role of the Man of Knowledge; F. Adler, "A Quantitative Study in the Sociology of Knowledge", American Sociological Review, XIX (1942); J. Willer, The Social Determination of Knowledge (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1971).

[11]J. Plamenatz, Ideology (Toronto: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1971), p. 70.

[12]Ibid., p. 61.

[13]F. Hartung, "Problems", 18.

[14]*Ibid.*, p. 27.

[15]*Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

[16]*Ibid.*, p. 32.

[17]Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, p. 14; curiously, they then say that "The Sociology of Knowledge must concern itself with *everything* that passes for 'knowledge' in Society" (pp. 13-15, emphasis added) -- surely this would include "Knowledge about Knowledge" and thus the "bus on which they are riding".

[18]Becker and Dahlke, "Scheler"; Merton,"Paradigm".

[19]P. Winch, *The Idea of a Social Science* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), pp. 3-7.

[20]L. Kowlakowski, *The Alienation of Reason* (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), esp. pp. 1-10. For other critical analyses of positivism in respect to social analysis, see H. Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), esp. chp. 5-7; F. Matson, *The Broken Image* (New York: Anchor Books, 1966); J. E. Hanson, "A Dialectical Critique of Empiricism", *Catalyst*, No. 3 (Summer 1967); A. Dawe, "The Role of Experience in the Construction of Sociological Theory", *Sociological Review*, XXI (1973); A. Dawe, "The Relevance of Values", in A. Sahay, ed., *Max Weber and Modern Sociology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971); T. Schroyer, *The Critique of Domination* (New York: G. Braziller, 1973), chp. 3.

[21]Kolakowski, *Alienation*, p. 9.

[22]See A. Giddens, ed., *Positivism and Sociology* (London: Heinemann, 1974), and J. O'Neill, ed., *Modes of Individualism and Collectivism* (London: Heinemann, 1973), pp. 3-26; Winch, *Idea of a Social Science*.

[23]For example, the founder of sociological positivism, Auguste Comte -- see "The Positive Philosophy"

in Thompson and Tunstall, Sociological Persepctives (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1971), pp. 18-32.

[24]O'Neill, Indiv. and Coll., p. 22, emphasis added.

[25]See in particular, T. Z. Lavine, "Naturalism and the Sociological Analysis of Knowledge" in Y. H. Krikorian, ed., Naturalism and the Human Spirit (New York: Columbia University Press, n.d.), pp. 183-209; also, "Reflections on the Genetic Fallacy", Social Research, XXIX (1962), 321-336; "Note to Naturalists on the Human Spirit" and "What is the Method of Naturalism?", The Journal of Philosophy, XL (February 1953); "Sociological Analysis of Cognitive Norms", Journal of Philosophy, XXXIX (1942); "Karl Mannheim and Contemporary Functionalism", Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, XXV (1965).

[26]Lavine, "Sociological Analysis of Cognitive Norms", 350. Lavine's argument is expressly, ". . . in behalf of an unrestricted sociological analysis of knowledge", which would thus include the very validating norms of positivistic science.

[27]Lavine, "Note to Naturalists on the Human Spirit", 258-259. There are severe problems with Lavine's thesis beyond this point in her argument, for she then proceeds to develop a justification for the need to study the very social-historical rootedness of positivistic science via the presumption and utilization of that very methodology. See M. Natanson, ed., Philosophy of the Social Sciences (New York: Random House, 1963), pp. 271-285. Nonetheless, the significant point for this study is that she points out, and emphasizes, the very lack of empirically demonstrable grounds in terms of which the insight can be rejected in favour of the canons of empirical science, themselves but presuppositions or rooted in presuppositions.

[28]See for example, R. A. Nisbet, Sociological Tradition, part 1; I. M. Zeitlin, Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968), parts 1 and 2; Gouldner, Coming Crisis, chp. 2; Alan Dawe, "The Two Sociologies" in K. Thompson and J. Tunstall, eds., Sociological Perspectives (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 542-554.

[29]Writers such as Comte, Durkheim, Parsons, etc., clearly emphasize the importance of the social context for the individual, yet, in each case, the orientation to analysis is positivistic in character -- it is held that there are no fundamental distinctions between the studies of physical and social reality. Indeed, the majority of modern textbooks begin by defining sociology as an empirical science of society, and express this idea in the language of observation and experiment.

[30]This emphasis, on the "search for a rational method" necessary to counteract the "negative influence" of various factors, including social factors, on Reason in search of truth, is admirably brought out by Stanley Taylor, _op. cit._, chp. 2 and by L. Kolakowski, _The Alienation of Reason_. Discussion of the forerunners of the discipline, with specific emphasis on Enlightenment thinkers, include, Remmling, _Towards the Sociology of Knowledge_, part 2; idem, _Road to Suspicison_, chps. 11-13; Stark, _loc. cit._; Peter Hamilton, _Knowledge and Social Structure_ (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), chp. 1, and Curtis and Petras, part 1, no. 1. It is interesting that the so-called "forerunners" of the discipline were writers whose primary concern lay in comprehending, _in order to remove_, the influence of social factors. Despite the fact that a consistent adherence to the sociological insight implies, to the contrary, a "positive" conception of the relationship, the influence of the forerunners remains as an influence of method on conceptual elaboration. Thus, for example, Hamilton argues that the problems of the sociology of knowledge simply amount to a ". . . need for a _scientific_ test of the concepts and theories that [sociologists of knowledge] employ: interests and value [social factors] may play a highly significant role in the choice of issues for scientific study, _but they must and can be separated out from actual methods of investigation and explanation_. . . .(T)he sociology of knowledge . . . ought to be involved in _the study of the extent to which the processes of knowledge production, validation, distribution and change are interpenetrated by social phenomena and work towards a precise determination of the effects of that interpenetration_" (pp. 147-148), emphasis added. In other words, he, for one, conceives the discipline as an attempt to understand and control the "negative" intrusion of social factors, and, thereby, contradicts the traditional sociological meaning of the insight.

[31]Taylor, Conceptions of Institutions and the Theory of Knowledge. See also, S. Taylor, "Social Factors and the Validation of Thought", Social Forces, XLI (October 1962).

[32]In other words, Taylor demonstrates and delineates the basic contradiction intrinsic to traditionally developed frameworks for the social analysis of knowledge -- the contradiction between a conception of thought and social factors as integrally and positively linked and an attempt to analyse this situation in terms of a methodology historically rooted in a conception of this relationship as purely negative.

[33]Taylor, Conceptions, pp. 38-39.

[34]Ibid., pp. 32-33, 53, 88-89.

[35]Ibid., pp. 31, 119.

[36]Ibid., pp. 32-33, 7-88, 119-120. Taylor argues that the classical theory of knowledge ". . . is distinguished by its antithetical separation of the free, rational individual from the external, restrictive institution. It is true that the effort is made, but rarely, to carry out the principle of individualism in a complete way. Only a few attempt the reduction to anarchism. . . . But generally speaking, the discussion of the self-sufficient individual is based upon the intellectual conviction that egoism is a universal fact of human life. . . . More often than not the literary expression of the time is infused with a high regard for mankind who, it is felt, requires only the independence, the intrepidity and the courage to oppose its rationality to slavish obedience, tyranny and hypocrisy in order to liberate itself from institutional bondage", p. 87.

[37]Ibid., pp. 32, 36.

[38]Ibid., pp. 36-37, 47, 53-54, 126.

[39] *Ibid.*; the central thesis of Taylor's work is that individualistic epistemologies and the insight of the sociology of knowledge are ultimately not incompatible (p. 14) and his argument is primarily based on demonstrating that the classical theory is itself but one, and indeed a partial, response to the persistent historical issue of relativism.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 124; Kolakowski, *Alienation*.

[42] Taylor, *ibid.*, pp. 16-17. It is Taylor's contention that the "faith" in Reason was not totally denied by the recognition of institutional bias. But, Reason alone was not enough; individualistic thinkers ". . . hastened to establish a mode of thought that would be detached from the distorting influence of social factors . . . ; while it was the philosopher's conception that bias and error are intrinsic to institutions, they, nevertheless, believed that it was possible to reach the reasoning process as such, and having accomplished this end, to find ways to eliminate, or control the virus of error, constituted, so to speak, by social existence" (p. 17).

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39, 96, 119.

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[48] "Kant does not regard his categories as resting upon an agreement, as having been built up in a social process, but as the conditions universally necessary for rational thought. If Kant has not taken from the past the conception of an absolute ontology, or truth, resting upon a stadium such as God, he has nonetheless made the forms according to which one judges just as absolute. . . . Kant goes so far as to say that in order to eliminate all elements of contingency from knowledge -- to render it

truly scientific -- the validating criteria must be a priori", ibid., p. 47.

[49] Ibid., p. 46.

[50] Cf. Zeitlin, Ideology, chp. 1.

[51] "To this the sociology of knowledge must take exception. It would hold that the validating framework is built up in the social process, and hence, the view of an absolute rationality is untenable. If, as the sociology of knowledge would hold, the categories have a history, this would mean that the objectivity given by the Kantian categorical scheme, like that given by the sacred society, has its basis in agreement. To say this is to indicate that knowledge validated on the basis of the Kantian criteria is perspectival knowledge, is knowledge from one point of view." Taylor, Conceptions, p. 47.

[52] Ibid., pp. 45-46.

[53] Ibid., pp. 47, 127-128.

[54] Ibid., pp. 48, 128. ". . . a leading characteristic of all forms of individualism was its repudiation of institutional structure as a validational base for either thought or conduct. Yet this institutional structure was but the product of an earlier stage of the social process, and expressed an earlier form of the conceptual system. Individualism in denying the reality of institutions did not recognize that the object of its denial was in fact an outworn categorical order. Moreover, individualism did not at first view itself as an institution, or as the matrix of a new institutional complex. In its assertion of the profound nature and finality of the individual as opposed to society . . . it failed to recognize that this, too, was a socially formulated 'perspective'" (p. 128).

[55] Ibid., p. 40.

[56] Ibid., pp. 46-47, 119-120.

[57]"Those who have believed most strongly in the possibility of valid knowledge have been fully conscious of the fact that naive experiences have to be referred to some standard before becoming a part of the world of knowledge. This standard is always conceptual . . . (and) . . . it becomes difficult to see in what way the existential can determine the validity of a judgement . . .", ibid., p. 99 (emphasis added).

[58]Ibid., p. 33.

[59]That is, the very attempt to validate the categories empirically denies their a priori character and renders them subject to historical variation -- yet they must be presumed as universal and a-historical in carrying out the analysis.

[60]Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, pp. 26-29, see also Taylor, Conceptions, chp. 3. Cf. Durkheim, "Is the empirical thesis the one adopted? Then it is necessary to deprive the categories of all their characteristic properties . . . universality and necessity. . . . (E)mpirical data present characteristics which are diametrically opposed to these, . . . [they are] . . . essentially individual and subjective". On the other hand, ". . . the a priorists have more respect for the facts . . . they leave (the categories) all their specific characteristics. . . . But for all that, it is necessary for them to give the mind a certain power of transcending experience and of adding to that which is given directly; and of this singular power they give neither explanation nor justification. For it is no explanation to say that it is inherent in the nature of the human intellect" (pp. 26-27).

[61]Taylor, Conceptions, p. 68.

[62]Durkheim, The Rules of the Sociological Method, chp. 5.

[63]Ibid., p. 14.

[64]Ibid., chp. 1.

[65] Taylor, "Social Factors and the Validation of Thought", 82.

[66] Durkheim, _The Elementary Forms of Religious Life_, pp. 21-25.

[67] Taylor, _Conceptions_, p. 66.

[68] _Ibid_. In other words, Durkheim ends up explaining "social facts" by reducing them to "physical facts", thus leaving nothing uniquely sociological as any more than the resultant of the other orders of existentiality.

[69] Durkheim, _The Elementary Forms of Religious Life_, pp. 25, 29.

[70] Taylor, _Conceptions_, pp. 67-71, 97, see also G. P. Stone, "On the Edge of Rapproachment: Was Durkheim Moving Toward the Perspective of Symbolic Interaction?", _Sociological Quarterly_, VIII (1967), 149-164.

[71] _Ibid_., pp. 71, 97. "The implication of Durkheim's analysis is that institutions are a _process_ by which a conceptual system is brought into the life experience of the individuals of a group so as to meet the continuing needs of existence. In this testing of the conceptual system by empirical reality _and_ the group's changing needs, new concepts are developed and categories modified. However, . . . for him it is social existence which is prior and the form of conceptual system follows and is dependent upon, that social existence. Yet the opposite view is implicit in Durkheim's idealism" (p. 71), emphasis added.

[72] See, for example, Durkheim, _The Division of Labour in Society_, especially the conclusion.

[73] Taylor, _Conceptions_, p. 71, emphasis added.

[74] _Ibid_., p. 91.

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 71.

[76] *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 21. This is another way of stating the problem noted earlier -- that sociologists and especially sociologists of knowledge, represent only a partial reaction to the thought of the Rationalists. Though not in regard to conceptions of institutions (as bearing a positive relation to men), they have tended uncritically to accept the Rationalist's search for a method which would permit universal, a-historical, valid knowledge free of bias. Thus, both Mannheim and Durkheim remain caught up in this Rationalist, positivistic tendency in regard to thought, despite their reversal of the negative, individualistic conception of institutions.

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[79] *Ibid.*

[80] *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80. That is, Mannheim, as Durkheim, comes close to recognition of the institutional order as a non-existential order -- the recognition remains fettered, however, by the retention of the positivistic presuppositions in regard to explanation, and their ontological demands in respect to the particular "object" of investigation.

[81] Taylor, *Conceptions*, p. 124.

[82] Taylor expressly says that ". . . the problem of the determination of the ultimate validity of a belief is not one that concerns this study", *ibid.*, p. 94. Indeed, he concludes with the insight that, "The relation between the forms of thought and institutions is that between a concept and *the process by which it is produced and expressed*" (p. 129), emphasis added. He does not go into any elaboration himself, nor do those he considers, as to the nature of this "social process", and he leaves the reader with the problem of the relativism implied in such a shifting basis of the conceptual framework which is the basis of validation. A contrary implication is present, however, and this involves the suggestion that the

process itself may be regarded as the "absolute" criteria of objective thought. This possibility becomes of central importance in the following analyses of Marx and Mead.

CHAPTER IV

MARX: ELEMENTS OF A SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

The insight, in which the development of sociologies of knowledge is based, is at least implicit in the writing of several theorists. However, it was Marx who provided the initial, explicit formulation and who first made the insight an integral part of the analysis of the persistence and change of historical structures of human action.[1] He argued, for example, that:

> It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness.[2]

The intention of this study is to demonstrate that certain of Marx' ideas, in conjunction with those of Mead, are of essential relevance to an adequate elaboration of the insight. However, it is not immediately clear why this hypothesis has any plausibility, for it is precisely in response to such statements that the Critique of the discipline can be considered an indirect, if not direct, attempt to demonstrate the inadequacy of Marx' thought.

Marx' elaboration of the insight, that ideas and the social context are integrally and necessarily, rather than negatively, connected is persistently rejected in very definite terms. The basic criticism, of course,

holds that to argue that "social being determines consciousness"; that the "economic substructure" or "real foundation" determines the "superstructure", including ideas, is to render human consciousness epiphenomenal or derivative, and, thus, to relativize all thought by committing the genetic fallacy. It is claimed that Marx' perspective is therefore fundamentally self-contradictory; if all thought is relative to a changing social base, then Marx' own statements in regard to the ideological nature of others' thought must themselves be socially rooted; and therefore are ideological, relative and "invalid". Many critics and proponents of the sociology of knowledge consider Marx' work as of little but historical and pre-paradigmatic interest.[3]

The issue is complicated by the fact that one can find considerable support for the Critique in Marx' own writing, as well as in the "Marxist" literature.[4] Even such sympathetic critics as Dupré[5] and Avineri[6] have argued that the deterministic, and thus relativistic, developments of Marx' thought by various "materialists" (to which the criticisms are indeed applicable), can be justified by, and shown to be logically consistent with, at least some aspects of Marx' own writing.[7]

However, these particular writers are clearly not willing to accept such difficulties as adequate grounds

on which to dismiss Marx' work as of no contemporary relevance to issues in sociology. Though there is an extensive literature supporting the Critique in respect to Marx' formulation of the insight, it is repeatedly suggested that there is more to his writing than the critics admit.[8] Furthermore, the analysis of the previous chapter raised two major considerations which afford some substance to this repeated suggestion.

First, it was demonstrated that the Critique is informed by positivistic presuppositions in regard to knowledge, and that it stands in contradiction to the implications of the insight that knowledge is essentially social. Thus, an adequate elaboration of the insight requires a concommitant development of a non-positivistic conception of objectivity consistent with the insight. Second, the Critique is prone to misinterpret, and thus overlook, important aspects of the elaborations taken to task, precisely because of its positivistic bias in regard to knowledge. In the instances of Durkheim and Mannheim, for example, this problem was reflected in the critics' failure to take into account various elements in their writing that pointed toward the development of a quite different conception of objectivity.

These reflections on the Critique, and on the problem of biased interpretation, suggest that Marx'

contemporary relevance inheres in elements and implications of his work that have previously been overlooked. In other words, it is quite conceivable that the rejection of Marx' ideas is based on an incorrect, positivistic interpretation of his writing, which deflects attention from the presence of non-positivistic elements or presuppositions. The discovery of a non-positivistic conception of knowledge that is, at the same time, consistent with the insight, would provide the necessary basis for the suggestion that Marx' writing is relevant to resolving the issues in the sociology of knowledge, despite the objections that have been raised by his critics.

That Marx' perspective is quite incorrectly interpreted as positivistic, is supported by two additional considerations. First, Marx is often criticized for the contradiction entailed by his call to active intervention and revolutionary activity on the one hand, and his development of a theory of strict historical determination on the other.[9] However, it is questionable that Marx could have completely overlooked such an obvious contradiction between the demand for an activist mode of life and a totally deterministic stance with respect to human thought and activity. Consideration must be given to the possibility that the contradiction is only, or is

partially, apparent, and that it, in fact, is primarily a product of the misinterpretation entailed by the categorization of his work as positivistic and deterministic.

Second, recent analyses of Marx' writing, based on the previously unpublished manuscripts, insist that the interpretation of his perspective as deterministic with respect to knowledge, is indeed fundamentally in error. While granting that certain inadequacies are present in the work, Avineri, Ollman and others argue that Marx' perspective, and thus his conception of the relation of thought and social context, can only be comprehended properly in relation to his attempt to achieve a synthesis between idealist and materialist philosophical perspectives. In other words, it is argued that "historical materialism", "dialectical materialism", "naturalism/humanism" -- call it what you will -- constitutes an alternative ontological and epistemological stance to that represented in the positivistic tradition in regard to social existence.[10] If this can be demonstrated, then it can be shown that the Critique incorrectly interprets Marx' statements on consciousness as a total relativization of thought. It can be shown that Marx' dialectical perspective, while asserting that thought is essentially social, does not maintain that

thought is simply a reflection or manifestation of an underlying, "more real", social-existential substratum.

The following analysis is, therefore, directed to those aspects of Marx' writing which are relevant to a comprehension of his sociology of knowledge, and thus to the hypothesis that his writing is indeed relevant to contemporary issues in the discipline. The study is, of course, focused on the manner in which he conceptualizes knowledge, the social context and the relationship implied by the insight. However, in light of the conclusions of the previous chapter, in respect to the contradiction between insight and Critique, the analysis directs particular attention to the ontological and epistemological basis of Marx' ideas. These presuppositions constitute the framework in which the concepts of knowledge and social context, and the relationship between these terms, acquire their precise meaning, as intended by Marx. And, as indicated, it is essential that these basic presuppositions are both non-positivistic and consistent with the idea of knowledge as an essentially social phenomenon, if Marx' ideas can be said to adequately "anticipate" the Critique.

The following section is, therefore, directed to Marx' basic presuppositions concerning the character of men, nature, and the relationship between these terms.

These concepts are subsumed under the more general idea of human life as praxis. It is demonstrated that this idea contains a conception of man as a basically social, reflexive, productive and historical or self-productive being in relation to the rest of nature. Within this conception of human life, consciousness, and thus knowledge, is conceptualized as a functional capacity; not in relation to "Society", but in relation to the interaction of men, their survival and the continual development of the species. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that Marx also views the social context as "functional" for man in the specific sense that social forms constitute established, or historically constructed, means to both individual and collective ends or values.

It is demonstrated, in the third section, that Marx views all knowledge as essentially bound up with the social context, and, therefore, as socially and historically variable. However, he does not view ideas as simply epiphenomenal or derivative, but rather as standing in a reciprocal, dialectical relationship with social form. Both knowledge and social form are conceived as two sides of the same coin, in terms of the basic idea of praxis. Furthermore, Marx makes provision for a basis of objective judgement, but this basis is not akin to the positivistic

conception. Rather, Marx develops the central notion of human life as praxis as the fundamental criteria in terms of which ideas are ultimately judged. Thus, it is demonstrated that Marx does provide a conception of objectivity consistent with the insight that knowledge is integrally social in nature.

The fourth section considers the concepts of alienation and reification. It is demonstrated that these ideas capture the problematic character of praxis in terms of man's relationship to his own social, intellectual and material products. Furthermore, it is shown that it is only in terms of this problematic, given Marx' conceptions of thought and social context, that a social analysis of ideas becomes relevant. On the level of praxis, men are conceived as constantly transforming both social form and ideas in relation to needs, nature and further potentialities. However, the idea of alienation indicates that this process of development can be distorted and "fettered" so that existing social form and ideas assume a degree of precedence over on-going praxis. It is in these terms that Marx expresses a sociology of knowledge, but one which is conceived as a <u>critical</u> analysis of the reification of ideas, within the broader problematic of alienation. As will be demonstrated, Marx <u>presumes</u> the integral, dialectical relationship between thought and social context within

praxis; the relationship itself is not his object of analysis, as is generally the case in other elaborations of the insight. On the contrary, Marx is concerned to investigate the distortion of human thought and its communication in relation to systems of alienation, and in respect to the criteria of praxis.

Two final sections complete the analysis. First, attention is directed to the limitations of Marx' ideas; primarily to his failure to elaborate clearly the relationship between praxis and alienation. Without this elaboration, Marx' ideas remain subject to a charge of inconsistency, and to the interpretation of his work as deterministic. Thus, the critical sociology of knowledge, implicit in his writing, remains incomplete. Second, several minimally developed ideas that are present in Marx' writing are presented as indicating a particular direction that might be taken in a further elaboration of the critical perspective. These ideas concern the "nature of human development"; the specific content or "circumstances" that are transmitted from generation to generation; and a distinction between two levels of consciousness. As will be shown in the following chapter, these ideas are central to Mead's perspective and thus are more fully developed in his writing. It is in terms of these ideas,

and the problem of the relationship between praxis and alienation, that the work of Marx and Mead are compatible and can ultimately be synthesized.

Reality and Praxis: The Presuppositions of the Marxian Sociology of Knowledge

According to several recent accounts, an adequate comprehension of the presuppositons underlying Marx' perspective requires recognition of his early disenchantment with both Hegelian and Young-Hegelian idealism, and the materialism of Feuerbach and the political economists.[11] Marx was quite aware of the tension, and apparent incompatibility, between these modes of thought: the former reducing reality to the historical realization of Spirit; the latter reducing reason or Spirit to the status of an epiphenomenal product of the existential, material world; the positivistic stance. This is exemplified in the Theses on Feuerbach where he argues that:

> The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism -- that of Feuerbach included -- is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object or of contemplation, but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively. Hence it happened that the active side, in contradistinction to materialism, was developed by idealism -- but only abstractly, since, of course, idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinct from thought objects, but he does not conceive

> human activity itself as objective activity. Hence, . . . he regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, . . . he does not grasp the significance of "revolutionary", or practical-critical, activity.12

To put this two-fold rejection in more contemporary sociological terms, Marx rejected an individualistic nominalism that conceptualized the social as but the sum of individual actions, as but a negative phenomenon in relation to the individual, and as amenable to change simply through the medium of a change of consciousness. On the other hand, he also rejected the reduction of individuals to prior social facts, or to a material reality sui-generis; that is, the reduction of the explanation of human thought and action to sociologism. In these terms, Marx' basic problem involved the attempt to think the significance of human sociality, or the clearly social character of human existence, without, at the same time, thinking "Society" or social determinism in any positivistic sense. Phrased somewhat differently, the issue for Marx concerned how one could accept the experience of the predictability of action, conformity or apparent social determinism, without, at the same time, denying the equally important historical experience of individuality, human freedom, responsibility and creativity.

To criticise both idealism and materialism is to attempt to place oneself outside both. This necessitates,

or at least implies, an entirely different position; a third standpoint in which such dual criticism is rooted.[13] The standpoint that Marx achieved, although the degree of achievement is debateable, is, in his own words, "materialist" and "scientific". But, it would be, and has been, a gross error to take the classical theory of knowledge as being his standpoint on grounds of his choice of words, and on the basis of an interpretation of these words within the positivistic framework.[14]

Perhaps the key to comprehension of Marx' perspective, of his dialectical approach at the level of basic presuppositions, is the central notion of praxis as reality-for-man. Essentially, this conception denies, and yet unites, both a priorism and empiricism, and does so in a different way from the position achieved by Kant. Reality, for man, is, in this view, neither the evolutionary unfolding of and participation in Reason; nor is it the realm of matter-in-motion, perceived by the senses and reflected in thought. Furthermore, reality is not the interpenetration of timeless, ahistorical categories inherent in Mind, with empirical, physical reality, although this idea approaches the idea of praxis. Rather, reality, in the human sense, for the human species, is the active, dialectical relationship between persons as social beings and physical nature: a relationship that is at once mental

and material, a unity of thought and action. Furthermore, praxis is an on-going, historical process, a "humanizing of nature and a naturalizing of man".[15] This idea of praxis and the critique of both idealism and materialism is captured in the following passage from the 1844 Manuscripts:

> The natural sciences have developed a tremendous activity and have assembled an ever-growing mass of data. But philosophy has remained alien to these sciences just as they have remained alien to philosophy. Their momentary rapprochement was only a fantastic illusion. [Such rapprochement is essential and involves recognition that]: Industry is the actual historical relationship of nature, and thus of natural science, to man. If industry is conceived as the exoteric manifestation of the essential human faculties, the human essence of nature and the natural essence of man can also be understood. Natural science will then abandon its abstract materialist, or rather idealist, orientation, and will become the basis of a human science. . . . Nature, as it develops through industry . . . is truly anthropological nature.16

Although the term used here is industry, rather than praxis, the essential idea is clear; that reality involves the relationship between men with their given faculties, and physical nature, which is the object of these faculties in respect to the fulfilment of need.[17] This fundamental premise of Marx' perspective and analysis can be discerned in greater detail in the German Ideology. Though Marx speaks analytically here of several "moments", or "aspects", or "elements" of reality, his overall emphasis is placed on the "whole" of praxis; on the idea that each

of these elements co-exists, interpenetrates with, and cannot be understood apart from the others and the whole at any point in time.

The first moment of praxis or human reality is,

> . . . that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to "make history". But life involves before all else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing. . . . The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself. And indeed this is a historical act, a fundamental condition of all history, which today, as thousands of years ago, must daily and hourly be fulfilled merely in order to sustain human life. Even when the sensuous world is reduced to a minimum, to a stick as with St. Bruno, it presupposes the action of producing the stick. Therefore, in any interpretation of history one has first of all to observe this fundamental fact in all its implications and to accord it its due importance.[18]

Earlier, in the same text, Marx made this point by arguing that:

> The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals. . . . Thus the writing of history must always set out from these natural bases and their modification in the course of history through the action of men. . . . Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce the means of their own subsistence. . . . By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their actual material life.[19]

In other words, before all else, one must acknowledge the fact of life itself, the needs of life, and the necessity of their fulfillment -- a fact which is fundamental and

transcends time. Furthermore, Marx is arguing that human life is different from that of other animals, not simply because men think or have consciousness, but because the fulfillment of human needs is accomplished only by the active intervention of men themselves. The implication of this is that our comprehension of reality cannot be divorced from our activity of transforming nature into means of subsistence. Reality is, therefore, reality-for-man, an interpenetration of nature and human activity.[20]

> The second point is that the satisfaction of the first need (the action of satisfying and the instrument of satisfaction which has been acquired) leads to new needs; and this production of new needs is [also] the first historical act.21

Here Marx is noting the necessity, in any analysis of the human situation, of recognizing that human life is more than the mere perpetuation of life; persons cannot be understood solely in terms of some given and static set of needs or instincts, and some process of adaptation. He is presupposing that the fulfillment of basic biological needs immediately, and "at the same moment", opens up other possibilities, if only in the mode or form in which life is maintained. This point becomes clearer in relation to the other aspects of praxis as reality-for-man:

> The third circumstance . . . is that men, who daily remake their own life, begin to make other men, to propagate their kind: the relation between man and woman, parents and children, the family. The production of life, both of one's own in labour and

> of fresh life in procreation, now appears as a double relationship: on the one hand as a natural, on the other as a social relationship. By social we understand the co-operation of several individuals. . . . It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, [form of praxis] is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a "productive force". . . . Thus it is quite obvious from the start that there exists a materialistic connection of men with one another which is determined by their needs and their mode of production, and which is as old as men themselves.22

Men are, therefore, recognized as naturally and necessarily social in essence. Men actively produce their means of subsistence in relation to their historically developing needs; but this is accomplished always on some social, interdependent basis, which is given different forms through time. Marx implies, therefore, that reality is not simply "there" for individuals, or inextricably bound up with _individual_ activity, but that this activity must be comprehended in terms of its social character. He implies, further, that this is the case despite appearances to the contrary; for example, despite the apparent competitive character of capitalist forms of praxis. This important point will be considered in more detail in the context of a discussion of alienation and reification.

Finally, to complete the whole of praxis, Marx argues that:

> Only now . . . do we find that man also possesses "consciousness"; but even so, not inherent, not "pure" consciousness. From the start the "spirit" is afflicted with the curse of being "burdened with matter", which here makes its appearance in the form of agitated layers of sound, in short language. Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical consciousness that exists also for other men, and for that reason alone it really exists for me as well; language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men.[23]

Consciousness is, then, for Marx, but one interdependent element or moment in human being and becoming, in reality for man, or in praxis. It is, therefore, neither the prime nor leading presupposition in understanding human existence as for the idealists; nor is it but a "reflection" of matter as for the positivists. Rather, consciousness is a functional[24] element in the maintenance of life and in the development of potentialities; in the fulfillment of present needs and the creation of new possibilities. Furthermore, as but an element in praxis, consciousness is necessarily bound up with the human sociality that is also involved in man's relation to nature.[25] In sum, reality is a process of interaction between conscious, social beings actively fulfilling and thereby creating potentialities, and physical nature or the environment necessary to this fulfillment.

This description of praxis as reality-for-man is clearly an attempt to delineate an absolute ground for the development of a conceptual framework amenable to the study

of human activity and its social-historical forms. Marx' perspective, as he indicates,

> . . . is not without presuppositions, but it begins with the real presuppositions and does not abandon them for a moment. Its premises are men, not in some imaginary condition of fulfillment or stability, but in their actual, empirically observable process of development under determinate conditions. As soon as this active life-process is delineated, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists (themselves still abstract), or an illusory activity of illusory subjects as it is with the idealists.26

Praxis constitutes a "phenomenological" description of reality-for-man, presumed to be stripped of ideological presuppositons. For Marx, praxis is the essential basis, the substratum that underlies, and is always present in, and in spite of, the more superficial and historically contingent or relative concerns of individuals and groups.[27]

In simplified terms, Marx asks that one grant the initial importance of the fact that individuals must be in a position to live before all else, and that, unlike other animals, though still a part of nature themselves, individuals survive as a species only by producing their means of subsistence. He argues that this production results in new possibilities and, therefore, in history; that it is, also, a social process necessarily involving self-consciousness. Consciousness, as a functional moment in the whole, facilitates interaction and need fulfillment, and is necessary for the recognition of the potentialities

that result. Marx also argues that praxis is inextricably bound up with the specific results of that process: theories, modes or forms of interaction (institutions), material products. This particular aspect of praxis will be developed in the following sections.

The totality of these interdependent elements, or praxis, is nowhere given any specific content beyond this, nor any specific or timeless form. This absolute ground, or characterization of reality-for-man, is described precisely as a <u>process</u>, an active, intentional development in which each stage of need fulfillment engenders new potentialities to be realized. With this idea Marx thereby includes change as a fundamental presupposition, change as essential to praxis and, therefore, as an essential fact of reality-for-man.

> The same men who establish relations in conformity with their material power of production, also produce principles, laws, and categories in conformity with their social relations. Thus, these ideas and categories are no more eternal than the relations which they express. They are historical and transient products. There is a continuous movement of growth of the productive forces, of destruction of social relations, or formation of ideas; nothing is immutable but the abstract movement -- mors immortalis.28

Thus, praxis, while itself a changeless, irreducible absolute, is essentially understood as a historical project which results in specific forms and specific contents which

are contingent and constantly changing as new needs or potentialities are appreciated and pursued.

> The conditions under which individuals have intercourse with each other . . . are conditions appertaining to their individuality, in no way external to them; conditions under which these definite individuals, living under definite relationships, can alone produce their material life . . . are thus the conditions of their self-activity or are produced by this self-activity. . . . These various conditions, which appear first as conditions of self-activity, later as fetters upon it, form in the whole evolution of history a coherent series of forms of intercourse, the coherence of which consists of this: in the place of an earlier form of intercourse, which has become a fetter, a new one is put, corresponding to the more developed productive forces and, hence, to the advanced mode of the self-activity of individuals -- a form which in turn becomes a fetter and is then replaced by another.29

It should be noted at this point, that while constant change is indeed presupposed and seen as an essential aspect of the perpetuation and development of the human species, the word "fetter" in the passage suggests that this is not a "mechanistic" or "inevitable" process. This suggests a specific problematic associated with praxis which will be discussed below in relation to the concept of alienation.

It should be emphasized as well that this description of praxis obviously characterizes the individual and society in a highly specific manner. Basically, Marx comprehends the individual as an active, intentional and social being. In fact he makes no ontological distinction between

the individual and society, and, therefore, he develops no "artificial" or abstract idea of union in terms of either a sociologism or a political-legal union of individuals.[30] What distinguishes men from animals is, to repeat, the production of their own means of subsistence which is seen as a necessarily social process, intrinsic to which is the emergence of individual consciousness. Marx argues therefore that:

> It is above all necessary to avoid postulating "society" once again as an abstraction confronting the individual. The individual is the social being. The manifestation of his life -- even when it does not appear directly in the form of a communal manifestation -- is, therefore, a manifestation and affirmation of social life. Individual human life and species-life are not different things, even though the mode of existence of individual life is necessarily either a more specific or a more general mode of species life. . . .31

For, as noted earlier:

> By the social is meant the co-operation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner or to what end.32

Thus, in Marx' view, praxis entails the idea that individual action and thought are to be comprehended as social, but without an hypostatization of society; that is, without conferring ontological status on the social content as an entity. If nothing more, this elaboration of praxis, the fundamental presupposition of Marx' perspective, should introduce questions as to the adequacy of

interpretations of that perspective as a socio-economic or historical determinism in relation to human thought and activity. However, these questions can only be clarified through an analysis of the implications of the idea of praxis for Marx' epistemology or for his conception of thought and objectivity.

Praxis and Consciousness: The Marxian Epistemology

The Critique, directed to Marx' writing, basically accuses him of reducing all thought to the level of a manifestation or product of a "social-existential" sub-stratum which is other and more real than ideas. Marx' perspective is rejected in the strongest terms because his position apparently relativizes all thought -- including that developed by himself, though claimed as objective.

However, it was argued in the previous chapter that a writer's position would not be self-contradictory if it recognized the necessity, and included the development of an alternative to the positivistic conception of objective thought; and if this was, at the same time, consistent with the basic insight of the sociology of knowledge. In terms of the fundamental idea of praxis, it is no longer clear that Marx shares the positivistic stance of his critics

which is often used to interpret his work in this regard. To argue that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, their social being determines their consciousness", is obviously to hold that human thought is tied to, and cannot be independent of, the social dimension. However, the "substratum" or reality to which consciousness is tied is that of praxis, and praxis clearly includes rather more and other than the term "social-existential base", which the critics apply so freely.[33] Furthermore, the relationship between thought and praxis is not adequately comprehended in terms of the idea of determination understood positivistically.[34]

Material reality, for Marx, is that of living individuals whose life is praxis -- an active, social and conscious relation with physical nature. Consciousness does not determine this life, but neither can this life be reduced to prior existential factors known in themselves. Consciousness is but a part, an aspect of the whole of praxis. This life, this social being, "determines" consciousness; that is, it is the context, the whole, in terms of which consciousness makes sense as a process and product. Equally, the whole depends on the parts, as Marx continuously points out with respect to consciousness:

> Nature constructs no machines. . . . They are products of human industry, natural materials transformed into instruments. . . . They are

> instruments of the human brain created by the human hand; they are the materialized power of knowledge.35

Avineri has argued that:

> The identification of human consciousness with the practical process of reality as shaped by man is Marx's epistemological and historisophical achievement. To Marx reality is always human reality not in the sense that man exists with nature, but in the sense that man shapes nature. This act also shapes man and his relation to other human beings; it is a total process, implying a constant interaction between subject and object. . . . Classical Materialism, on the other hand, never considered that human activity had any such philosophical significance.36

If reality-for-man, or praxis, is the relationship between men in the acts of need satisfaction and nature as the object of such satisfaction, then clearly, human cognition must be understood as intimately bound up with needs and therefore with praxis and the forms it is given. To clarify the specific manner in which Marx includes the practical activity of need fulfillment in the process of knowing, it is helpful to consider Kolakowski's contrast of Marx' perspective with that of later marxists and with that of the pragmatic school.[37]

For Engels, the truth of ideas was an empirical matter of determining their correspondence with an independent reality. Human activity was understood as analogous with experimentation; that is, as a method of verification: ". . . success proves the truth of our

knowledge, failure forces us to reject or modify it". This clearly positivist version of Marx' concern with practice not only misses his point, but, as indicated earlier, is often mistaken for Marx' own perspective by the Critique.[38]

The pragmatist, on the other hand, gives practice a more central role; practice ceases to be a method of verification and becomes the creator of truth in itself; in pragmatism, as opposed to positivism,

> . . . man's practical activity has been elevated to the rank of an epistemological category, so that its functions are not limited to verification of . . . correspondence . . . but are broadened to encompass the defining of the very concepts of truth, falseness, and nonsense . . . the truth of a judgement is defined as a practical function of the usefulness of its acceptance or rejection.[39]

Kolalowski goes on to suggest that this pragmatic position implies that,

> . . . cognition is a form of biological reaction that permits the best possible <u>adaptation</u> of individual organisms to their environment.[40]

In contrast, Marx' epistemology stands between these poles in regard to the relevance of practical activity and needs. Against idealism, Marx held to the distinction between consciousness and its objects. Physical reality, nature, is ontologically independent of thought,

action and need; indeed, man himself is recognized as fundamentally a part of nature:

> Man is directly a natural being. As a natural being and as a living natural being he is on the one hand furnished with natural powers of life -- he is an active natural being. These forces exist in him as tendencies and abilities -- as impulses. On the other hand, as a natural, corporeal, sensuous objective being he is a suffering [experiencing], conditioned and limited creature, like animals and plants. That is to say, the objects of his impulses exist outside him, as objects independent of him; yet these are objects of his need. . . .41

But, to hold that nature exists independently of consciousness does not require definition of consciousness as reflection. As argued earlier, the only reality one can know is reality-for-man, and this implies that consciousness must be understood as an active process. It must be understood as one of man's "natural powers" and as integrally part of reality-for-man. Thus, against "abstract materialism", Marx argues that while human consciousness does not create objects, it does establish,

> . . ."thinghood" . . . an abstract thing, a thing created by abstraction and not a real thing . . . [which] is totally lacking in independence, in being, vis a vis self-consciousness; it is a mere construct established by self-consciousness.42

This establishment of "thinghood", this act of knowing,[43] functions within praxis, within reality-for-man, in relation to needs, and implies that objects are always

objects-for-man; that is, sensuous objects; as well as objects of sense. Therefore, any materialist discussion of ". . . nature . . . taken abstractly and rigidly separated from man, is nothing for man".[44]

As with Kant, Marx is, therefore, arguing that sense-experience is alone insufficient as a basis for the phenomenon of human consciousness. The infinity of stimuli from the natural substratum are, if you like, but data; data, which, in turn, are rendered "knowledge" in terms of a conceptual and ultimately categorical selection and organization. To use the phrase "reality-for-man", is an attempt to capture this mediated character of knowing. Unlike Kant, however, Marx refused to define, or give content to, the basic categories; he refused to see them as a-temporal and inherent in mind, and demanded that one avoid the reification of what, for him, were historically and culturally variable bases of cognitive organization of stimuli (sense experience).

In fact, Marx defines the categorical element in terms precisely of "sensuous need", the fulfillment and development of which is praxis. This is to argue that the categories, as forms involved in the organization of perception and in reflection, emerge as but functional elements within the dialectic of persons actively pursuing need fulfillment against the "opposition" of physical nature.[45]

The categories are, therefore, understood as changing historical emergents within praxis.

It must be recalled at once, however, that praxis is integrally a social process; thus, the needs, in terms of which our sensuous activity interacts with sense activity, include social as well as biological needs. Furthermore, specific categories and concepts are human products, and thus are social in a dual sense: some (e.g. the category of value), are specifically rooted in social need;[46] others are products of human social activity.

In summary, Marx is arguing that human "knowing" is but a moment within, but necessary to, the practical process of shaping reality; a process that allows fulfillment of need and the production of new need or possibility. It is an active process that is limited by human need on the one hand, and by the "obduracy" of physical nature on the other. Therefore, he holds to the argument that:

> Science [knowing] is only genuine science when it proceeds from sense experience, in <u>the two forms</u> of sense perception and sensuous need. . . .[47]

While the use of the word "genuine" implies the possibility of "false science", this problematic, as will be discussed in the next section, is not the same as that which concerns positivism or idealism. In Marx' perspective, the problem is not that of achieving a correspondence between ideas and an independent reality, nor is it

the issue of constructing reality in conformity with an evolution of "pure spirit". Rather, at the root level of praxis, "men set themselves only such problems as they can solve",[48] and the specific products of consciousness, as a capacity within, and functional to, praxis, constantly change with the fulfillment of need and the concommitant emergence of potentiality. Marx' epistemological stance can be considered neither positivist nor idealist; and therefore his ideas on the relationship between consciousness and the social cannot be properly interpreted in these terms.

Thus, Marx' conception of knowledge, of the social context and of the relationship between these terms, does, indeed, emerge in a rather different form from that traditionally assumed by the positivistic Critique. If man is defined as ultimately a being of praxis, as an active, intentional, conscious and social being, then a _specific_ form and content of consciousness, and a specific form of co-operation or social form, are _co-emergents_ from or, "products" of, praxis in relation to a specific level of need. And just as Marx makes no ontological distinction between persons and "society", so the unity of praxis demands that no distinction be made between the process and products of consciousness, and the process and product

of social interaction, of co-operation.[49] As argued earlier, the social context, institutions or modes of interaction, are specific forms given to the basic co-operative nature of persons. Thus, they are, in a sense, solutions, in terms of organization; solutions to basic needs which must be considered meaning-full phenomena that are inextricably bound up with the conscious element of praxis and its products. In these terms, knowledge is clearly not an ideal phenomenon rooted in the social context as an existential phenomenon; rather: "Thought and being are indeed distinct but they also form a unity".[50]

Thus, the interpretation of Marx' position, by the Critique, as positivistic and mechanistic, or as even a narrow economism, is quite mistaken. The presentation of his ideas about the social context and knowledge, in a deterministic, relativistic manner, stands in immediate contradiction to his intention in regard to idealism and materialism, and to important aspects of his writing. Rejecting the possibility of such contradiction, this analysis concludes that Marx' work proceeds on the basis of fundamentally different presuppositions than those underlying the Critique. These different presuppositions form a basis which grants practical activity and human need philosophical significance.

Thus, it must be concluded that Marx' writing does not, with any consistency, imply a sociology of knowledge that would consist of the empirical study of the relations of ideas to social-existential factors. On the contrary, while for Marx there is a problematic to be dealt with in regard to knowledge and the social context, it is not a problematic whose meaning is captured in positivistic terms. At the root level of praxis as reality-for-man, there is fundamentally none but an analytical distinction between the ideal and the social. As Avineri suggests, the proposition that social being determines consciousness is fundamentally tautological, at least when interpreted from a positivistic perspective, ignoring the essential presuppositions of Marx' writing.[51]

Clearly, the interpretation developed to this point is quite general, if suggestive, in relation to the sociology of knowledge. The intention has been to explicate the presuppositions of Marx' work which suggests a more consistent framework than was ever fully elaborated, in detail, by Marx himself. Indeed, the very lack of full conceptual development, in addition to the fact that many works were not published until long after Marx' death, contributes to the ease with which his work can be interpreted positivistically.[52] Such misinterpretation severely

distorts understanding of the Marxian sociology of knowledge, especially in regard to the central concept of alienation, in terms of which the social analysis of ideas acquires its character and meaning. The following section will consider this concept in relation to Marx' presuppositions as presented above. Only then can the Marxian sociology of knowledge and the issues associated with it be adequately delineated.

Alienation and the Social Analysis of Ideas

Traditionally, the sociology of knowledge has been positivistically oriented to empirical analysis of the relationship between specific ideas, the perspectives or conceptual frameworks in which these ideas are implicated, and some social-existential base to which they can supposedly be imputed. At the most general level, such positivistic study is concerned ultimately to determine propositions or laws describing and explaining how ideas and social factors are related.

In contrast, this particular problem clearly disappears as an empirical issue in Marx' framework. In terms of his basic ontological and epistemological presuppositions, ideas and the social context constitute an integral unity in praxis. Marx, in other words, _presumes_ the existence of

a relationship and, further, presumes that this relationship is dialectical in character. That which is an empirical question from the positivistic perspective becomes, within the dialectical perspective, a conceptual question _prior to_ any sort of empirical analysis.

If the unity of praxis implies the integral unity of consciousness and the social, what then is the problematic and how is this problematic to be analysed? In other words, within Marx' perspective, what specific problematic is a social analysis of knowledge concerned with, and what must be the specific character of such analysis? Clearly, the problematic is not that of the nature of the relationship itself, for this is presumed, but, this does not mean that a sociology of knowledge of a particular genre is absent from Marx' writing.

Essentially, the answers to these questions involve comprehension of Marx' concern with "false science", or with the common problematic expressed in slightly different aspects by such terms as false consciousness, fetishization, reification, deification -- in general the problematic of alienation:

> This crystallization of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power over us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations, . . . is one of the chief factors in historical development up to the present.[53]

Though continuously present in the texts referred to so far in the analysis, the concept has been studiously avoided to this point in order to clarify the presuppositional base from which Marx writes, and in terms of which the concept acquires its meaning. This phenomenon, which concerns an apparent reversal in the basic process of practical objectification or need fulfillment and production, must now be elaborated in order to clarify the specific character of the Marxian sociology of knowledge.

It must be noted that the nature of the problematic denoted by these terms has been considerably abused in the literature, since Marx' first conceptualization. In most studies, alienation has acquired a meaning quite the opposite of the meaning intended by Marx. Once again, this is a result, and one of the best examples of, a positivistic interpretation and use of his work.[54] For Marx, alienation was precisely that concept which captured the problematic character of man's social-natural existence. Alienation describes and explains the apparent lack of correspondence, not between belief, on the one hand, and an independent reality on the other; but between the historical _forms_ of being and the fundamental and dynamic praxical character of authentic human existence.

In _function_, the concept is little different from

Durkheim's idea of anomie or Weber's concept of rationalization. However, the concept of alienation is rooted in Marx' own attempt to transcend the contradiction between the individual and "society".[55] To perhaps oversimplify, Marx argued, for example, that capitalism was a particular, historically specific mode or form of praxis. It was a system of social relationships, ideas and techniques through which men produced their means of subsistence, but a system or order which had become a "system of alienation".[56] It was a historical situation in which men fetishized their products and reified the ideas objectified in these products; whether they be material goods, forms of social relationship, philosophical systems, religions, etc.[57] More simply, capitalism was a system in which certain needs were (or had been) fulfilled, but in which new needs or potentialities were ignored. The system was, therefore, self-contradictory in that the human social element, which was its basis, was ultimately lost sight of, as concretely evidenced in hardening class distinctions and exploitation, persistent or growing poverty, the business cycle, etc.

Unlike Durkheim, Marx did not comprehend the situation as anomic or normless; in fact, capitalism was indeed a system which had rather clear-cut norms.[58] If, for Durkheim, the negative, unjust character of nineteenth century society lay in a lack of consistent social con-

straint by Society over men, for Marx the negative arose precisely from "too much" constraint of a particular kind. This particular constraint, captured in the idea of alienation, involved the apparent denial of the basic reality and process of praxis.

Centrally, alienation for Marx denotes an historical situation, or social form, in terms of which specific interaction, thought and production seem to deny, rather than fulfill or develop, the human species. To refer to a previous section: as beings of praxis, men produce their means of subsistence; that is, they must actively appropriate and modify nature to fulfill their needs, and this to a degree evidenced by no other species. Such production is always a social production which is mediated and augmented by consciousness, and which results not only in the fulfillment of present need, but, in the creation of new needs or potentials. However, the history of the human species, in regard to its self-production through the realization of potentialities, has not been an automatic or smooth process. Rather, the process has been continuously distorted and fettered by alienation; by situations in which specific forms given praxis (specific modes of thought developed, specific structures given social interaction, specific material products relevant to existing needs) are not transcended, thus hampering the

realization of potentialities.

Marx argues for example, that under capitalism in the mid-nineteenth century:

> The worker becomes poorer the more wealth he produces and the more his production increases in power and extent. The worker becomes an even cheaper commodity the more goods he creates. The devaluation of the human world increases in direct relation with the increase in the value of the world of things.59

Though this statement refers, specifically, to the actual results of capitalist production, or to the specific character of alienated being at this time for the mass of men,[60] it also captures the general, historical character of the problematic. At this general level the "economic substructure" or level of praxis seems to result in its own denial. In other words, the worker, man himself as producer of the means of subsistence and therefore himself, becomes devalued and poorer, rather than richer, in human value, within particular forms of praxis. This occurs despite the fact that the realm of "products", which includes not only material goods, but also institutions, ideas and values, continues to become richer, in the sense of possibilities to be realized. The existing form of praxis is no longer but a means to the fulfillment of needs which must be transformed in any realization of potentialities. Rather, the existing form of praxis, a specific structure,

becomes identified as praxis, and identified with the nature of the species, thereby denying in some manner the dynamic character of reality-for-man.[61]

> This fact implies that the object produced by labour [by praxis], its product [the historical form given praxis], now stands opposed to it [to praxis] as an alien being, as a power independent of the producer. It is just the same as in religion. The more of himself man attributes to God the less he has left in himself. The worker puts his life into the object, and his life [under the circumstances of alienation] then belongs no longer to himself but to the object. . . . The life <u>which he has given to the object</u> sets itself against him as an alien, hostile force.[62]

Of course men, as beings of praxis, must by definition "objectify" themselves, or create objects ranging from material products to ideas and forms of interaction, in order to survive and develop as a species. This is no more than a restatement of "man is the producer of the means of his own subsistence". But this objectification, that is necessary to life and development, tends to be alienated from us; tends to develop into a situation in which we literally forget the character of objects (even objects of nature in terms of how they are comprehended) as human, social constructions; as contingent and changeable; and as powerless, save through the medium of human action.[63]

As Marx maintains, throughout his work, it is precisely the goal of his conceptual and empirical analyses,

including the analysis of ideas in relation to social form, to comprehend this apparent contradiction between alienation and praxis, and to explain it as a prologue to its transcendence.[64] The clearest and most detailed development of this problematic, on a conceptual level, is presented in the Manuscripts. Here Marx outlines four basic and interdependent aspects of alienation which parallel the aspects of praxis.

First and centrally, men become alienated from the process of production itself, which Marx also calls the alienation of men from themselves, from their species-nature as producers of the means of subsistence:

> This is the relationship of the worker to his own activity as something alien and not belonging to him . . . as an activity which is directed against himself, independent of him and not belonging to him.65

To be thus alienated from the process of production or from one's self is to be in a situation wherein,

> . . . labour is external to the worker, i.e., it does not belong to his essential being; . . . in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself. . . . He is at home when he is not working, and when he is working he is not at home. His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labour. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it.66

In other words, in terms of the idea of praxis, it is man's fundamental nature to work; that is, to produce the means of subsistence and to be self-developing. Thus, one is alienated from one's basic nature insofar as one works, not to fulfill this nature, but simply works as a means to the fulfillment of other needs -- the essential need or end becomes but a means to survival. Such a condition most clearly holds in capitalist society wherein the majority of men do not control, but sell, their labour-power to others who control and direct the process of production.

A second aspect of the problematic involves the estrangement of the specific products or objectifications of the productive process. And it is an aspect of alienation quite inseparable from the first for,

> . . . the product is . . . but the summary of the activity of production. . . . In the estrangement of the object is merely summarized the estrangement, the alienation, in the activity of labour itself.67

In praxis, objectifications, or objects and forms produced, are understood as a fulfillment of needs on the one hand, and on the other, as making possible the appearance and realization of new needs; they are but contingent means in this dual sense. Furthermore, they are expressions of man, expressions of his essential powers. However, in a condition of alienation, the relationship is apparently the

reverse:

> The alienation of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him.68

In other words, to be alienated in this sense is to be "subject to", instead of being a subject in control of the objects produced by one's labour. What a man produces, in praxis, is his "capital"; is that which he creates to fulfill his needs, and which he "re-invests", as it were, in his own further development. In alienated production, the product no longer belongs to the worker, it is no longer an expression of himself or in his control:

> It is no longer the labourer that employs the means of production but the means of production that employs the labourer. Instead of being consumed by him as material elements of this productive activity, they consume him as the ferment necessary to their own life-process.69

This condition is most fully developed under capitalism, wherein the worker himself becomes an object, and no longer a subject; that is, wherein individuals themselves become but "factors" in production.

It should be noted that the "objects" referred to are not simply material objects, or what we normally think of as commodities produced by men. Recalling that reality in praxis is always reality-for-man, it is significant that

Marx includes, in this aspect of alienation, man's very comprehension of natural objects; this alienation,

> . . . is at the same time [an alienation of] the relationship to the sensuous external world, to natural objects. . . .70

This becomes clearer in relation to a third, interdependent aspect of alienation, the alienation of man's very species-being or self-conscious being, which is also an essential aspect of praxis.

Within praxis, consciousness is a functional moment in need fulfillment, in interaction, and is essential to the awareness of potentialities or new needs. However, with alienation this relation appears to be reversed:

> Consciousness, which man has from his species, is transformed . . . so that species-life becomes only a means for him. Thus alienated labour turns the species-life of man, and also nature as his mental species-property, into an alien being and into a means for his individual existence.71

Once again, the idea is expressed, that under alienation, the fundamental, dynamic nature of human life as praxis is apparently denied. Consciousness specifically, in this instance, ceases to be an advantage over other animals and instead becomes a disadvantage.[72] Ideas become reified; they are no longer understood as expressing contingent and fluid meanings within praxis, and instead, are reduced to reflections of the existing form of praxis. Thought

ceases to be concerned with the possible, or with development, and instead is rendered "but a means for existence":

> For labour, life activity, productive life now appear to man only as a means for the satisfaction of a need, the need to maintain physical existence. Productive life is, however, species-life. It is life creating life. In the type of life activity resides the whole character of a species, its species character; and, free, conscious activity is the species-character of human beings. Life appears only as a means of life.73

Finally, whereas the reality of praxis involves the essential sociality of man, alienation involves the apparent destruction of the social character of human life:

> Every self-alienation of man, from himself and from nature, appears in the relation which he postulates between other men and himself and nature. Thus religious self-alienation is necessarily exemplified in the relation between laity and priest. . . .74

This aspect of alienation is expressed in the a-social or a-co-operative, class/exploitation relationships between men within the system of capitalism. It involves relations of competition and domination rather than co-operation; and it involves a division of labour in which men identify each other in terms of what they have and what they do; that is, relationships in which men become objects and means for one another, rather than a completion of each other's social nature.[75]

Together, these interdependent aspects of alienation directly parallel and are, in a particular sense, the opposite of the reality presumed by Marx; the reality of praxis as man's essential and dynamic nature. To repeat: the description of what an alienated existence entails is a description of the problematic of human social existence that Marx is concerned to understand and transcend. In general, it may be argued that his studies amount to: a) an attempt to expose the alienated character of especially the capitalist system; a description of the discrepancy between existing forms of life and praxis; and b) an attempt to account for the historical emergence of such a situation, but, precisely as a part in, and preview to, its intentional negation.

Summary and Implications for a Sociology of Knowledge

Within this general orientation, the analysis of ideas in relation to the social can only be one particular, though essential, aspect of the overall concern of dialectical social analysis. Furthermore, the specific character of a social analysis of ideas within this perspective can only be a <u>critique</u> of "knowledge"; that is, an attempt to

expose the reified or alienated aspects of consciousness as themselves an aspect of the overall "system of alienation", and in relation to a criteria rooted in the conception of human life as praxis.

To elaborate, it was argued, in part one, that the assumed nature of human life for Marx is that of praxis. This idea presents man as an essentially social being who must intentionally and consciously modify nature in order to fulfill needs. Praxis is, however, a dynamic process in which the fulfillment of present needs constantly opens up new possibilities whose realization requires the transformation and transcendence of these products, including the forms of social relationship and specific ideas that are, or have been, adequate in the present. Man's specific species-being, or self-conscious being, is considered an essential moment in relation to fulfillment of present need, and in relation to the recognition and realization of possibility. In other words, consciousness is an interdependent and essential aspect of praxis and it, therefore, forms an integral unity with social being.

However, men can be falsely conscious; to be alienated involves, along with other aspects, the reification or crystallization of a specific content of consciousness. When this occurs, consciousness, as indeed the form of activity, no longer contributes to the dynamic process of

praxis; rather, it becomes a limitation or fetter on the realization of possibilities. Men then act for the most part in terms of crystallized definitions or intellectual formulae about their world, their relationships and themselves; the dynamic aspect of knowing within praxis, appears to be negated.

Thus, it is concluded that, for Marx, a social analysis of knowledge is primarily an attempt to point out the reified character of ideas in relation to praxis. It is a critical analysis of existing ideas that are generally, and uncritically, accepted as true in every-day life.[76] Marx presumes that ideas are dynamic (and thus contingent) at the level of praxis. Thus, his specific question concerns why ideas do not always and readily change in relation to the problematics face by men. The answer to this question involves the problematic of alienation, and entails the critical investigation of existing ideas. Specifically, such critical investigation of what is taken to be knowledge must involve the demonstration of: a) its reified character; b) its role within the total system of alienation; and c) its reciprocal "determination" or reinforcement by other factors within this totality.

In other words, given that the essence of human life and reality is praxis, and thus that the activity of

the analyst himself can only be meaningful as a part of praxis, then the sociological study of "knowledge" becomes a critique rooted in, and validated in relation to, the actuality of praxis. The implication is, of course, that such analysis is but partial -- it must be supplemented by, and is interdependent with, the critical analysis of other social forms, and both, for Marx, must entail practical activity. In general:

> It is the task of history, . . . once the other-world of truth has vanished, to establish the truth of this world. The immediate task of philosophy; which is in the service of history [praxis], is to unmask human self-alienation in its secular form now that it has been unmasked in its sacred form. Thus the criticism of heaven is transformed into the criticism of earth, the criticism of religion into the critcism of law, and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics.77

This "programme" is clearly different from that of the sociology of knowledge, or, for that matter, of sociology in general, when positivistically conceived. A positivistic sociology of knowledge attempts to construct empirically verifiable, universal and a-historical "knowledge" in the form of general laws which are presumed to govern the hypothesized relationship between ideas and social-existential factors. It thus cannot help but imply the self-contradiction of relativism as discussed earlier. Marx, in contrast, does accept the premise of an integral, and in fact, necessary relationship between ideas and

social relationships, but he presumes the nature of this relationship as a dialectical, interpenetrating unity within praxis.

Thus the object of analysis for the positivistic sociologist of knowledge disappears in the Marxian perspective. Instead, the problematic of alienation is introduced in terms of which the concern of the analyst, himself a being of praxis, shifts to the apparent dysjunction that develops within the presumed dynamic unity. From this point of view, what is "discovered" as law, and considered knowledge by the positivist, becomes but the description of existing relations within alienation, and indeed, becomes a part of the very reification of existing consciousness that it is essential to transcend.[78]

The main conclusion to be drawn from the analysis is, therefore, that Marx' work does contain the elements of a sociology of knowledge in which there is no contradiction between his epistemological stance and the insight that knowledge and the social context are integrally and positively interpenetrating. However, the type of analysis that is implied has a character quite divergent from the mode of analysis demanded by the positivistic perspective. The Marxian perspective does not view knowledge as something existing separate from activity, or something which is to be validated according to particular intellectual canons of

objectivity. Rather, consciousness, and its content, is understood as an interpenetrating and functional moment of praxis which is, in fact, constantly validated in relation to the developing process of practical activity itself. The task of a sociology of knowledge does not end with the description of how specific ideas and perspectives are related to social divisions within praxis. In contrast, it constitutes a critical evaluation of such ideas to discover the extent to which they are reified; and thus the extent to which they constitute a limitation on the dynamic character of praxis within the intention of transcending such limitations.

This is not to say that the Marxian perspective in this regard is complete or fully developed. Specific questions remain, as was suggested earlier, and these must be considered before proceeding with the analysis of Mead.

Limitations Within the Marxian Framework

It was noted earlier that even Marx' most sympathetic critics agree that his position is not as unambiguous as is perhaps suggested above, and that there are grounds within his own work to support a positivistic interpretation of his perspective. This study is not so much concerned with

this question per se, as it intends to draw out of the framework those elements which appear fruitful in the development of an adequate sociology of knowledge according to the parameters laid out in the first chapters. However, there is a specific formulation of this ambiguity in Marx' work which bears on the adequacy and completeness of the critical orientation which has been derived so far. Centrally, this concerns the absence of a clear elaboration of the relationship between praxis as reality, and alienation as an apparent denial of this reality. The issue can best be explicated by way of a brief review of the major elements so far considered.

In the first place, Marx has characterized the authentic existence and essence of man in terms of the idea of praxis. The natural and authentic problematic of human life is, therefore, social man's interaction with and humanizing of nature; his historical transformation of nature (and therefore of himself as a part of nature) which is both a sustainment of life and its constant development. This situation is, _in itself_, not theoretically problematic for Marx; rather, it is the essence of historical being. Man is, basically, a problem-solver in this sense. Furthermore, consciousness is assumed to be an integral part of this process, as is its constant change,

as "tested" continuously in relation to human need, to nature as the object of need satisfaction, and to potentiality.

What *is* problematic concerns man's propensity for alienation, his propensity for losing sight of his essence and for submerging himself in, and subjugating himself to, the momentary and historically contingent product of praxis, or the form that praxis is given. Within this problematic of alienation, the reification of consciousness is an integral component, and the specific subject matter of a social analysis of knowledge. Social analysis, in general, is therefore understood as valid when it is an effort to comprehend and to change or transcend this alienated existence; when it is an integral part of praxis itself. Marx' work amounts to such a study in regard to his analysis of capitalism as a "system of alienation".

However, Marx tends to *state* the position on alienation, and then moves directly to specific critiques. He fails to conceptualize, with any clarity, the process of alienation itself.[79] Without such clarification, it would appear that there is a basic contradiction, or, at least, an incompleteness in the critical perspective. On the one hand, Marx presumes the nature of human reality as on on-going, continuous process of change in respect

to dialectically related material products, social forms, ideas and values. On the other hand, this process is apparently not continuous; the problematic of alienation intervenes. But why does this occur? Why, as Marx himself asks, "do men alienate themselves"? What is the connection between praxis and alienation that would explain the latter, and to what degree does alienation deny praxis? If praxis is a continuous process in which "men set themselves only such problems as they can solve", then what is the basis, in praxis itself, for the emergence of this problematic?

Insofar as these questions are not answered in Marx' own work, it could be argued that the concept of alienation, as a problematic specific to human life, is simply an ad hoc or residual category, tacked on to, yet logically inconsistent with, the theory of praxis. Alienation could be considered an idea which is inconsistent with the "utopian" flavour of the idea of continuous development, yet nonetheless an idea which is necessary in order to account for the historical experience of discontinuity and tension in human history. The idea of praxis presumes the integral unity of thought and the social aspects of human life, as well as the more general assumption of the unity of individual and society contained in the notion of man as a social being. Alienation, on the other hand, concerns

the historical experience of the apparent absence of this unity; for example, the recurrent tension between the individual, his thought and the demands of social form. The logical link between such seemingly disparate conceptions of situations is essential to any adequate critical theory, yet it is not clearly developed within Marx' own writing.[80]

This issue is compounded insofar as Marx himself is not consistent in regard to the efficacy and necessity of critical analysis, and, therefore, is not consistent in regard to the centrality of the presuppositions captured in the notion of praxis. On the one hand, he remains within the presuppositions elaborated in the previous sections, insofar as he demands critical reflection both on the form of production that has been developed at any point in time, and on the ideas supporting that form, as a prelude to and essential element of negation. On the other hand, however, passages can be found in his work which involve or imply a suggestion that action must necessarily be predicated on "material" or mechanistic developments in situations.[81] In other words, he tends to reduce the dialectical character of praxis to its "material" side, and, thereby, to de-emphasize the importance of the understanding and intentional activity which are integral elements of praxis.

In relation to a social-critical analysis of ideas, this problem involves an apparent reduction of consciousness to epiphenomenal status; from a mechanistic point of view, consciousness ceases to have any integral role in change: change in ideas simply follows from or is determined by changes in "material factors". It follows immediately that a concern with the critical analysis of reified ideas within alienation is rendered meaningless, or at least inessential. This, in turn, raises the question as to how seriously one should take the idea of praxis and the presuppositions it entails.

It is precisely these aspects of Marx' work which allow, and support, the traditional positivistic interpretation of his stance, and thus its reduction to some form of economic or historical determinism. And in regard to the specific question of the explanation of alienation, this interpretation is reflected in the idea that alienation is "caused by" material factors, and is, therefore, only overcome as these factors themselves change, according to historical, impersonal laws of economic development.[82] As an answer to the question of the existence of alienation, this formulation is inadequate, if only because it implicitly rejects the presupposed nature of human life as praxis. Such a causal interpretation of the phenomenon does not demonstrate any consistency with or integral

connection between the notions of praxis and alienation which at the same time does not deny the basic character of praxis.

Some writers have argued that this problem would have been resolved, if Marx had developed a conceptualization of the basis on which men who are alienated, yet have a "need to rebel" against inauthenticity despite the denial of praxis supposedly entailed by alienation. On the assumption that it is this particular question that is not answered in Marx' work, various answers are proposed, and these range from Marcuse's use of Freud's notion of repression, to Engel's and Lenin's use of material forces in a positivistic sense.[83]

The common element in these efforts involves the acceptance of the idea, supposedly consistent with Marx' thought, that alienation can conceivably be a "total" phenomenon, and thus a total denial of praxis. But clearly, it is contradictory to hold that alienation could develop to a point wherein praxis itself, the very nature of human being, could be totally negated; to the point wherein "inauthenticity" replaces "authenticity". In terms of the moment, in praxis, of self-consciousness, this is to raise the question as to whether or not consciousness can be totally reified and inadequate. If this were a possibility,

the supposed inauthentic becomes the authentic, and the question of realizing one's alienated condition becomes impossible, except perhaps in mechanistic terms, and this implies the necessity of a theoretical appeal to factors outside of praxis.

If consciousness, in particular, can be totally reified or negated at the fundamental level of praxis, then the essential, though not sufficient, role it has in the dynamics of praxis, in rendering sub- and super-structure contradictory, is lost. Marx would, thus, have contradicted the presuppositions of his work, as many critics claim he does, and thus it would have to be agreed that his "youthful" solution to the man/society duality is superfluous to, and inconsistent with, his "mature" mechanistic doctrine.[84] Specifically, his concern with producing a recognition of alienation (and <u>thereby</u> of the need to rebel) through analysis, and his own attempts to organize opposition to capitalism, are superfluous to the mechanistically conceived, inevitable clash of forces and relations of production.

The alternative to this view, that a situation of alienation implies a total dysjunction in, or denial of praxis, is the view that alienation, as the problematic, must be understood as a condition <u>co-existing with</u> but never totally negating praxis. This possibility requires

elaboration, but at least remains consistent with Marx' basic presuppositions as to the nature of reality-for-man. It also reflects the continual usage of the term "appearance" in the discussion of the aspects of alienation,[85] a characterization which is supported by numerous passages which imply the persistence of the moments of praxis, despite such appearances to the contrary:

> Social activity and social mind by no means exist only in the _form_ of activity or mind which is directly communal. _Nevertheless_, communal activity and mind, i.e., activity and mind which express and confirm themselves directly in a real association with other men, occur everywhere this direct expression of sociability arises from the content of activity or corresponds to the nature of mind.
>
> Even when I carry out scientific work, etc., an activity which I can seldom conduct in direct association with other men, I perform a social, because human, act.[86]

Furthermore, in any consideration of the character and basis of change, or transcendence of alienation, it must be kept in mind that this is conceptualized by Marx as involving the development of contradictions between ". . . the three moments; the forms of production; the state of society _and_ consciousness".[87] In other words, the transcendence, or negation of alienation, is precisely a matter of praxis itself; and praxis can only be comprehended in terms of each of its elements and in terms of their reciprocal relationships. The forces of production do not develop independently of human consciousness, and

the relations of production, as a particular form or state, are themselves a productive force.[88]

Thus, in this possible formulation, while the products or objectifications of praxis may be problematic, their alienation or "loss" can not totally negate any of interrelated moments of praxis itself -- the products become "fetters" to be comprehended and removed, not the "authentic" reality. In terms of Marx' idea of praxis, the "need to rebel", or the need to change, is itself an integral and presumed part of the basic human reality. Therefore, the central question, that is not adequately answered in Marx' own work, is not a question of the location of a "need to rebel", but is a question of how men come to realize the discrepancy between the on-going level of praxis and the level of products that have been and are continuously alienated; for example, the discrepancy between consciousness integral to on-going praxis and reified ideas.

Stated in this form, however, a prior question is implied -- the precise question that Marx himself posed but did not fully or adequately answer:

> How does it happen . . . that man alienates his labour, his essential being? How is this alienation founded in the nature of human development?[89]

The usual answer given this question involves some reference to "Society" or to various economic forces which supposedly alienate man. However, this type of response falls prey, as indicated above, to the deterministic and positivistic interpretation of Marx' work. Such a formulation reintroduces the contradiction with the presuppositions of Marx' position, by granting the concept of society an ontological status and a power which it cannot have independently of the activity of men.

Clearly, Marx himself does not ask only or simply what alienates man, but, rather, why man alienates himself as a being of praxis. For example, he argues that,

> . . . although private propery [a social factor] appears to be the basis and cause of alienated labour, it is rather a consequence of the latter; just as the gods are fundamentally not the cause but the product of confusions of human reason. At a later stage however, there is a reciprocal influence.90

This comment does not of course explain or describe why human labour or praxis is alienated in the first place; however, it does suggest the inadequacy of the more standard answers. And, though the necessary elaboration of the relationship between praxis and alienation as a limitation is not readily apparent in Marx' writing, at least it is suggested that this has something to do with "the nature of human development".[91] This idea will be pursued in the following section.

In summary, the argument to this point has explicated the basic presuppositions of Marx' position. Second, it has demonstrated that the position demands that appropriate social analysis is critical analysis, referred to and rooted in the reality of praxis. For example, since, at the level of praxis, there is an integral unity between consciousness and social being, the analysis of what is taken to be knowledge in relation to the social context can only be a critique of consciousness in terms of its adequacy or inadequacy in relation to praxis. Such analysis follows not only from Marx' presuppositions, but from his conception of the essential problematic of human existence which is captured in the term alienation.

But, as indicated, it is precisely at this point that the incomplete and unclear aspects of Marx' work most clearly emerge and render it susceptible to the positivistic critique. Marx posits praxis, he posits alienation, and then his work shifts immediately to a critique of capitalism as a system of alienation. Too many questions about the nature of the problematic, and about its persistent occurrence, are left unanswered in relation to the dynamic, on-going character of praxis. This results in a tendency to concentrate on the apparently deterministic, "reciprocal influence" of alienated products, with insufficient emphasis on the process itself; the emphasis is on certain factors

important in the maintenance of alienation, and foremost among these are the alienated products themselves. As a result, too little attention is paid, for example, to the conscious element in these products, and this results in the inconsistent denigration of the integral and necessary role of consciousness in praxis. In turn, this gives the analysis a mechanistic tone; a tone which emerges, for Marx himself, as a hesitancy in regard to the possibility of intentional efforts in change.

Clearly, if one is to hold that critique is the essence of social analysis (because such study is of contingent products in terms of their relevance to the producers), and that the critical study of what is taken to be knowledge is legitimate and essential (as Marx obviously did in terms of his constant critique of the ideas of the political economists), then one must have a clear conceptualization of the process of alienation which is the basis of the meaningfulness of the approach.

Further Elements of a Theory of Praxis and Alienation

In the following chapters the hypothesis that elements of Mead's work are compatible with these elements of Marx' writing will be developed, especially in relation to this particular issue of the lack of clarity in con-

ceptualization of the relationship between praxis and alienation. Before proceeding however, a final section of the present chapter will briefly explore elements in Marx' own writing which seem to point toward an elaboration of the relationship which constitutes at least a possible beginning point in the resolution of the issue.

As indicated in the previous section, a mechanistic response to the question of the character of the relationship between alienation and praxis is the response predominant in the marxist literature. This positivistic response finds considerable support in Marx' own writing, despite the contradiction that is thereby introduced. To argue that the "superstructure", and more basically, that specific forms of the relations of production alienate man is: a) to ignore the early presupposition of the equal, dialectical importance of the cultural aspect of being and, therefore, b) to accord to what are essentially human social products an ontological status they cannot have, if the idea of praxis is to remain relevant and central.

To remain consistent with the idea of praxis as reality-for-man, Marx' work demands a conceptualization of how men alienate their labour, and only then, of how this alienated labour has a reciprocal, limiting influence on praxis as a whole. What appear to be suggestive beginnings

of such a conceptualization are both implicitly and explicitly present in Marx' writing. These include the notion of "levels" of consciousness; Marx' concern with the overall character of the "nature of human development"; and the specific issue, within this process, of the character, content and circumstances of cultural transmission from one generation to the next. It must be emphasized, once again, that these ideas are not fully developed and are incompletely related to one another within the texts.

The first idea, that of "levels of consciousness", is implicit in Marx' work, and must be derived from other, more explicit considerations. Essentially, this point involves the suggestion that human alienation can not be fully comprehended apart from a consideration of the integral role of reified consciousness. Previously, it was argued that alienation cannot be conceived of as constituting a total denial of praxis, if one is to remain consistent with the conception of reality that Marx develops. Instead it is essential to comprehend alienation as a condition somehow co-existent with praxis as an on-going process -- a factor of limitation rather than of total denial. Now, in terms of self-consciousness as an essential aspect of praxis, this consideration implies the

necessity of assuming at least two levels of thought, which could be labelled the practical, a level integral to on-going praxis, and the abstract, a level in some sense divorced from praxis, or at least potentially reified.

To elaborate the point by comparison, Marx clearly argued vis a vis the social moment of praxis that, appearances to the contrary, all human activity remains social, meaning fundamentally co-operative.[92] Thus, even capitalist production depends on, and expresses, sociality, though in an alienated fashion involving superstructural competition, exploitation, and an ideology rooted in a conception of men as basically competitive and ego-centric. Similarly, insofar as consciousness is a concommitant and necessary moment of praxis, the same argument must be applicable to it as well. Thus, the conclusion follows that a consistent development of Marx' position (in regard to the issue of relationship between praxis and alienation) requires conceptualization of two levels of consciousness -- the process itself and specific ideas as "practical consciousness"; and the process and specific ideas at a purely theoretical, abstract and reified level.[93]

This idea involves a corollary: that just as all products of praxis must, by definition, contain an essential element of consciousness, or must be considered meaningful phenomena, so, too, must the alienation of these

products involve reified, unchanging ideas as an essential component. This consideration is often ignored, or, at least, not given sufficient emphasis in the analysis of alienation. Certainly, Marx himself inadequately developed the significance of the reification of ideas in relation to the alienation of human products. However, if physically existent objects of nature, or more precisely, of transformed nature, are always objects-for-man,[94] then their alienation must involve a reification of their meaning.[95] This is more clearly the case with institutions understood as human products or as specific forms of man's sociality. Institutions do not become or remain alienated from men, nor acquire a determinative status, apart from an element of reification.[96]

This first point, implicit in Marx' writing, suggests that any complete, non-positivistic elaboration of the concept of alienation, and of the relationship between alienation and praxis, requires that more detailed attention be given to the importance of the reification of ideas. The central implication appears to be that a "system of alienation" and its persistence are to be explained, at least in part, in terms of the reified conceptual structures of the persons involved.

For example, Marx argues that at the level of praxis:

> History is nothing but the succession of the separate generations, each of which exploits the materials, the capital funds, the productive forces handed down to it by all preceeding generations, and thus, on the one hand, continues the traditional activity in completely changed circumstances and, on the other hand, modifies the old circumstances with a completely changed activity.97

Nonetheless, he is aware of, and makes the point that, alienation and, specifically, the problem of the reification of ideas, intervenes in the historical process:

> This [historical succession of generations in praxis] can be speculatively distorted so that later history is made the goal of earlier history. . . . Thereby history receives its own special aims and becomes a "person ranking with other persons" . . . , while what is designated by the words "destiny", "goal", "germ", "idea" of earlier history is nothing more than an abstraction from later history, from the active influence which earlier history exercises on later history.98

A second, suggestive element in Marx' writing involves two related ideas that appear to be connected to his claim that the phenomenon of alienation, including the aspect of reification, is "founded in the nature of human development". The first of these involves consideration of the nature of the process of cultural transmission from generation to generation. The second concerns what are both historical products of praxis and the very circumstances within which transmission takes place -- the most notable and important product and condition being the division of labour.

In terms of transmission, Marx argues that on the one hand:

> As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.99

This is no more than a restatement that man is a being of praxis, but, on the other hand, Marx remarks that,

> . . . in it [history] at each stage there is found a material result: a sum of productive forces, a historically created relation of individuals to nature and to one another, which is handed down to each generation from its predecessor; a mass of productive forces, capital funds and conditions, which, on the one hand, is indeed modified by the new generation, but also on the other prescribes for it its conditions of life and gives it a definite development, a special character. It shows that circumstances make men just as much as men make circumstances.100

Furthermore, at the level of the biographical development of each individual:

> In a sort of way, it is with man as with commodities. Since he comes into the world neither with a looking glass in his hand, nor as a Fichtian philosopher, to whom "I am I" is sufficient, man first sees and recognizes himself in other men. Peter only establishes his own identity as a man by first comparing himself with Paul as a being of like kind. And thereby Paul, just as he stands in his pauline personality, becomes to Peter the type of the genus homo.101

One the one hand, Marx is arguing that persons are identical with "what they produce" and "how they

produce"; which is to say that they are identical with their praxis. But, on the other hand, Marx emphasizes that specific individuals are born into an already existent, on-going form of praxis such that "circumstances make men just as much as they make new circumstances". Clearly, there is the implication that what persons "are" or "become", through development within a specific form of praxis, is a potential, if not an actual barrier to, or fetter on, the ability to change circumstances and change activity. Indeed, as Marx notes in the previously quoted passages, an "earlier" situation may distort the present, and this distortion may conceivably take place, at least partially, through the process of cultural transmission from generation to generation. However, it must immediately be emphasized that this point is not developed by Marx. Such elaboration would appear to require a more detailed conceptualization of the process of "transmission", of the process of learning or of socialization, than he presents.[102]

As suggested, this concern with cultural transmission is not discussed independently of a consideration of the impact of specific alienated products; as an important example, the division of labour. For Marx, this aspect of productive relations, and especially the division between mental and physical labour, has been consistently important

throughout history, and increasingly so under capitalism.[103] Its importance on one level appears to lie primarily in the fact that it constitutes an alienation of sociality, an estrangement of groups and individuals from immediate interaction with one another; and, this in turn constitutes a fetter on praxis. Thus, a situation emerges in which the worker, who is concretely engaged in specialized, and thus limited, activity, is directed, taught and controlled by another, who is effectively remote from that concrete productive activity:

> The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it.[104]

This passage is pregnant with implications in regard to an apparent relationship between the issue of cultural transmission in itself, and the fact that such transmission takes place within a previously differentiated, structured social situation. Not only is there a general problem for each generation of transcending the existing products of praxis which they are handed "ready-made", which they did not produce, and which are all-pervasive; but, also, there is the problem of transcending the so-called "material" supports for such objectifications,

as exemplified in the division of labour, both horizontal and vertical. For example, one idea transmitted concerns the presumed importance and efficacy of the division of labour itself, though it is also an aspect of the alienation of individuals from one another. Thus, the "internalization" of this belief about the division of labour, contributes to the perpetuation of that aspect of alienation. However, in addition, it is clearly implied that precisely because of the social division of labour, most individuals cease to have much control over the ideas they learn and to which they adhere. Thus, the division of labour, in its vertical dimension especially, concretely diminishes the possibility of there being any effective critical reflexion on particular ideas by those not in control of the "means of mental production".

To summarize, it would appear that while Marx did not, himself, fully elaborate an answer to the question as to why men alienate themselves as beings of praxis, his writing at least implies that an answer involves consideration of the factors reviewed here. The phenomenon appears to involve the issue of reified, unchanging consciousness which, in turn, is related to suggested difficulties involved in the nature of the process of cultural transmission. In addition, attention is directed

to the existing products of historical praxis which are transmitted, and to the direct and indirect effects they have, in terms of the transmission process itself. It must be emphasized, once again, that these elements in Marx' writing are not elaborated in any detail -- indeed they admit of several possible interpretations. Nonetheless, they are important concerns, as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters. It is sufficient for the moment to draw attention to the fact that it is precisely in the area of cultural transmission that Mead's writing is obviously significant.

One further point of clarification should be mentioned, before concluding this discussion. Throughout this chapter, it has at least been implied that men themselves are responsible for their own alienation, or for the limitations or problematic aspects of the essentially on-going historical character of their being in praxis. This view may be considered rather naive or perhaps an idealistic position which fails to take cognizance of Marx' continual emphasis on such elements as "inevitability" or "exploitation". However, in adhering to this view, it is not necessary to consider that it is all men (or man in general) who actively alienate themselves. Nor is it necessary to posit a primordial, unalienated condition to which men must return through transcendence of alienation.

Marx rejected the latter position[105] and understood historical development precisely as a continuous movement away from a non-human, "natural", animal condition; a movement in which men "humanize nature" and "naturalize themselves"; or in which they progressively realize their on-going potentialities.[106] Furthermore, one essential aspect of this process, the expansion of the productive forces, has, in the Marxian view, always been controlled, and, in the past, necessarily so, by only a segment of a population.

This would suggest that it is possible to maintain, at one and the same time, that men both are and are not responsible for their own alienation. It is only necessary to recognize that, in each historical period, it has only been some men, some particular group or class, that have been primarily responsible, both for the development of the productive forces, social organization, etc., and for the maintenance of the crystallization of such developments which they control and from which they receive the greatest benefit.

If one is discover "why men alienate their labour", it would appear essential, in terms of this point, to investigate the concrete historical situation and activity of dominant groups through time. Such analysis is minimal in Marx' work, though he is quite aware of the alienation

of the ruling class itself and succeeds in describing it in poetic terms.[107] Furthermore, the theoretical basis for such analysis is, as already indicated, not fully elaborated, though it apparently involves a central concern with the process of cultural transmission.

Thus, one need not argue that, because alienation is humanly produced, the "proletariate" has created the system of alienation which characterizes their lives. However, this does not deny the relevance of a second postulate, that the proletariate is partially responsible (in terms at least of reification) for the maintenance of that system, insofar as they have the capacity to become aware of their false-consciousness, and insofar as the realization of the potentialities inherent in the capitalist mode of praxis is fettered by the alienation which that form epitomizes.

Summary

This chapter has analyzed Marx' writing in an effort to determine the relevance of the hypothesis that his work contains elements essential to the construction of an adequate sociology of knowledge. In terms of the contradiction between the basic insight of the discipline and the positivistic mode of analysis and criteria of objectivity,

a central question in the analysis concerned the extent to which Marx elaborated an epistemological stance consistent with the insight that knowledge and social factors constitute an integral unity.

Such an epistemological stance, fundamentally rooted in the conception of praxis as reality-for-man, was indeed found. It entailed the presupposition of an integral, dialectical unity between thought and forms of interaction, and, further, the presupposition that human consciousness changes historically as it is continuously utilized at the level of praxis. In other words, Marx understands consciousness as a functional moment within praxis which contributes to the fulfillment of both physical and social need in the present, and which is essential to the awareness of potentiality and change.

Unlike more positivistic perspectives in the sociology of knowledge, Marx' sociology is not oriented to a discovery of a-historical laws, presumed to govern the relationship; the character of the relationship is for him a conceptual, not an empirical question. What emerges as the object of analysis, within the Marxian perspective, concerns the problematic of alienation, and, within that general problematic, the issue of the reification or crystallization of consciousness. The character of such analysis is that of critique -- critical analysis of

existing ideas in order to determine the extent of reification, and its role in the persistence of "systems of alienation", as a prelude to, and part in, change. In this perspective, the validity of ideas is no longer a matter of their empirical "fit" with, or reflection of, a reality that can somehow be known independently of thought and need. Rather, validity is a matter of judgement in relation to praxis as criteria, or in relation to the fulfillment and development of human need in general.

However, while Marx does develop a philosophy of human life and thought which demands a critical sociology of knowledge, his work contains an apparent contradiction. Praxis, as the reality of human life, is presented as a continuous, on-going process which is yet limited by this problematic of alienation. Marx does not develop the necessary conceptual elaboration of the relationship between praxis and alienation, and, in fact, often writes in mechanistic terms about the problematic; in terms which contradict his basic presuppositions, and which suggest that alienation can be, or is, a total denial of praxis.

If this contradiction, within critical theory, is to be avoided, an elaboration of the relationship of alienation, understood as contingent limitation, and praxis, must be developed. Marx himself states the crucial question as to why it is that men, as beings of praxis,

alienate themselves, and he immediately suggests that the answer lies in a clarification of the "nature of human development". However, beyond some suggestive points, the necessary elaboration is missing from his work.

In the next two chapters, attention is directed first to the writing of Mead, and, second, directly to the second hypothesis of the study; the hypothesis that the necessary elaboration of an adequate sociology of knowledge can be constructed on the basis of complementarities between the perspectives of Marx and Mead. Given the preceeding analysis, this hypothesis can be clarified, and more specific questions can be directed to Mead's work. First, to what extent does Mead's perspective also demand a critical sociology of knowledge? Second, to what extent can elements of Mead's work be utilized as a contribution to an adequate conceptual elaboration of the relationship between the concepts of praxis and alienation in the Marxian framework?

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1]"It is from Marx that the sociology of knowledge derived its root proposition -- that man's consciousness is determined by his social being. To be sure there has been much debate as to just what kind of determination Marx had in mind. . . . Be this as it may, the sociology of knowledge inherited from Marx not only the sharpest formulation of its central problem but also some of its key concepts, among which should be mentioned particularly the concepts of 'ideology' (ideas serving as weapons for social interests) and 'false consciousness' (thought that is alienated from the real social being of the thinker)." Berger and Luckmann, pp. 5-6.

[2]K. Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (Moscow: Progress, 1970), pp. 20-21.

[3]See, for example, Peter Hamilton, Knowledge and Social Structure, introduction. These criticisms are not always made together by the same author of course. Often Marx is indeed interpreted as attempting a "scientific" sociology of knowledge and is criticised simply for his failure, for his infusion, into empirical analysis, of value judgement. But it is argued as well that he failed to exempt "scientific method" from social penetration; "On the basis of his theory of the division of labour, Marx begins to suspect that inevitably man's total outlook as distinguished from its details must be distorted. At this point the particular conception of ideology merges with the total conception of ideology and Marx discredits the total structure of man's consciousness, considering him no longer capable of thinking correctly." G. Remmling, Road to Suspicion, p. 162. Remmling is arguing that Marx totally discredits reason, for, while he goes on to note that Marx had a conception of the basis of truth, this requires the metaphysical acceptance of Marxism itself as truth. This not only misses Marx' point, as will be brought out below, it is an argument that can be used against Remmling himself in terms of his own acceptance of quantitative method as the answer to relativism and to the "abyss of commercialized nihilism", p. 48.

[4]For example: "In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The totality of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society -- the real foundation on which legal and political superstructures arise and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness." Contribution, pp. 20-21, "Consciousness is therefore from the very beginning a social product and remains so as long as men exist at all." The German Ideology (Moscow: Progress, 1968), p. 42. ". . . dominant ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant relationships grasped as ideas . . .", ibid., p. 61. "My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, buts its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i.e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea', he even translated into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea'. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected in the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." Capital I (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), p. 19. As to the apparent relativism of Marx' position, he argues that, "The same men who establish social relations in conformity with their material power of production also produce principles, laws and categories in conformity with their social relations. Thus, these categories are no more eternal than the relations which they express. They are historical and transient products." The Poverty of Philosophy (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 109-110.

[5]L. Dupré, The Philosophical Foundations of Marxism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966), see especially chapter 8 for a summary of his argument.

[6]S. Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1969), epilogue.

[7]"Marx career reveals throughout an implicit tension between his conviction that the revolution is immanent and his disinclination to be implicated in a coup that would try violently to usher in the millenium. . . . Marx disregarded the possibilities open to his own theory; and therein lies his major intellectual blunder." Ibid., p. 58, see also p. 251 and Schroyer, Critique of Dom., pp. 92-97.

[8]See chapter I, note 13.

[9]Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought; Dupré, Phil. Fdns.

[10]Cf., "Marx is neither materialist ('matter is fundamental to consciousness) nor an idealist (consciousness is fundamental to matter). He adheres to a position in which nature is basic to mind, but man's activities mediate the natural processes and create a unity that is in neither the subject nor the object. The subject-object schema of materialism and idealism is transcended in a radicalization which conceives the humanization of nature and the naturalization of man as proceeding via the synthetic 'fire' of human labour which constitutes an objective world that man can comprehend reflexively, thereby recognizing new human potentialities." Schroyer, Critique of Dom., p. 76. See also, J. Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971); Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought; Dupré, Phil. Fdns.; McClellan, The Thought of Karl Marx: An Introduction (London: Macmillan, 1971); idem, Marx Before Marxism (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1970); G. Petrovic, Marx in the Mid-Twentieth Century (New York: Anchor Books, 1967); L. Kolakowski, Toward a Marxist Humanism: Essays on the Left Today (New York: Grove Press, 1969); B. Ollman, Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1973).

[11]In particular, see McLellan, Marx Before Marxism; Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought; Dupré, Phil. Fdns.; J. O'Malley, ed., Karl Marx: Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1970), intro. Like these other writers who Marx criticizes, Marx was writing in response to the problematic character of social life in post-revolutionary Europe. He, however, could accept neither materialist nor idealist "solutions" and used others' work as a foil against which to develop his own ideas. It is often overlooked that much of his writing is indeed a criticism of the ideas of others -- especially the idealists (Hegel and the Young-Hegelians) and the "abstract" materialists such as Feuerbach and the political

economists. This is clearly the case, for example, in the early writings where the descriptions of social conditions are taken directly from the political economists. An essential part of Marx' critical approach involves the demonstration that it is precisely the attempt by these writers to follow materialist canons of "objectivity" that inhibits their ability to see the meaning for persons of the descriptions they themselves give of conditions.

[12]T. B. Bottomore, ed., Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 67-69. Emphasis added.

[13]Pursuing the conclusion of chapter three, the intention here is to elaborate this "other" position in terms of which Marx develops his critical stance.

[14]"It is, in practice, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the misty creations of religion than, conversely, to infer from the actual relations of life at any period the corresponding 'spiritualized' forms of these relations. But the latter method is the only materialistic, and therefore the only scientific one. The inadequacy of the abstract materialism of natural science, which leaves out of consideration the historical process, is at once evident from the abstract and ideological conceptions of its spokesmen, whenever they venture beyond the bounds of their own specialism." Capital I, p. 372, ft. 3. Even in this passage however, it is already clear that what he means by these terms must include reference to "practice" and "human relationships" which he implies natural science (so often the model for social science) does not include.

[15]T. B. Bottomore, ed., Karl Marx: Early Writings (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 157.

[16]Ibid., pp. 163-164, emphasis added; see also, The German Ideology, pp. 57-61.

[17]Ibid., pp. 159-161, 164, 207-208.

[18]German Ideology, p. 39, emphasis added.

[19] Ibid., p. 31, emphasis added.

[20] "Man is the direct object of natural science, because directly perceptible nature is for man directly human sense experience. . . . But nature is the direct object of the science of man. The first object for man -- man himself -- is nature, sense experience. . . . The social reality of nature and human natural science, or the natural science of man, are identical expressions." Early Writings, p. 164.

[21] German Ideology, p. 40, emphasis added.

[22] Ibid., pp. 40-41; see also, Early Writings, p. 157, emphasis added.

[23] Ibid., p. 42, emphasis added.

[24] Marx argues that the elements of praxis or ". . . aspects of social activity are not of course to be taken as . . . different stages, but just as aspects or, . . . 'moments', which have existed simultaneously since the dawn of history and the first men, and which still assert themselves in history today." Ibid., pp. 40-41. Each of these elements is an essential functional aspect of and for the whole of species-life which Marx summarizes in the term praxis. It must be emphasized that they are not understood as functional for "Society"; rather, the social is itself but a functional aspect of human life.

[25] If Marx seems often to deprecate the importance of consciousness and human reason, it is because his writing in this context is a critique of the German idealists and "abstract materialists" and the overemphasis placed on ideas in interpreting human history. The argument here demands that these aspects, including consciousness, be interpreted as concommitant and interpenetrating; none being given priority.

[26] Ibid., p. 38.

[27] The same type of argument is present in the Manuscripts where Marx asks his "questioner" to consider the implications of not considering man as a self-creative being as the starting point of analysis; Early Writings, pp. 165-166; see also Capital I, pp. 183-184. This type of approach parallels Natanson's argument against the validity of nihilism in Philosophy of the Social Sciences, pp. 21-23, and is reflected in Camus' argument against suicide in The Myth of Sisyphus (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), pp. 3-4.

[28] Poverty of Philosophy, pp. 109-110. The fact that Marx presumes change as fundamental to reality-for-man can not be emphasized too strongly. Because of this, Marx does not construct any theory of change -- change itself is not problematic to him; rather, the absence of change, especially in social form and ideas which direct activity, becomes the essential factor which requires explanation. Cf., Alan Dawe, "The Two Sociologists".

[29] German Ideology, pp. 89-90.

[30] One essential element of praxis is that man is a social being -- the individual exists through others and they through him. Thus Marx assumes that there is no essential opposition between the demands of the individual and the demands, minimally, of living in harmony with others -- the problem for Marx is not that of order. His effort is not spent contemplating the perfect State which, as an institution, would balance the individual and common good without infringing on either. Nor is he concerned with the second option -- that of considering the manner in which "Society" constrains the individual. If Marx is concerned with order at all, it is a concern directed at the "order", the "Society" that exists, how it comes to be, and, how it is maintained at all given the presupposition of constant change, and given the negative character of any specific "order", for social man that has lasted beyond its historical usefulness.

[31] Early Writings, p. 158, emphasis added.

[32] German Ideology, p. 41, emphasis added.

[33]See, for example, Merton, "A Pardigm for the Sociology of Knowledge"; Child, "The Problem of Imputation".

[34]See Ollman, Alienation, chapter 1.

[35]From the Grundrisse as translated by Bottomore in Selected Writings, p. 91. Cf., ". . . man is not merely a natural being; he is a human natural being. He is a being for himself, and, therefore, a species-being; and as such he has to express and authenticate himself in being as well as in thought. . . . And as everything natural must have its origin so man has his process of genesis, history, which is for him, however, a conscious process and thus one which is consciously self-transcending", Early Writings, p. 208 (emphasis added), and, "The animal is one with its life activity. It does not distinguish the activity from itself. It is its activity. But man makes his life activity itself an object of his will and consciousness. He has a conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he is completely identified. Conscious life activity distinguishes man from the life activity of animals. . . . Only for this reason is his activity free activity." Ibid., p. 127, see also ibid., p. 52.

[36]Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought, p. 71.

[37]Kolakowski, Toward a Marxist Humanism, chapter 2.

[38]In these terms it must be mentioned that the Critique of the sociology of knowledge hardly misses the mark insofar as it is directed at the "Marxist" interpretation of Marx -- i.e., insofar as it is directed at a positivistic gloss on Marx' insights. Continually, in the criticisms of the sociology of knowledge, as well as in direct criticisms of Marx' ideas, references are made not to Marx but to Engels and Lenin. A classic in this regard is L. Feuer, "Alienation: The Career of a Concept", New Politics, II (1962), 116-134.

[39]Kolakowski, Toward a Marxist Humanism, p. 40.

[40] Ibid., p. 41.

[41] The quotation is from the "third manuscript" of 1844 as translated by R. C. Tucker in his The Marx-Engels Reader (New York: Norton, 1972), p. 93, emphasis added. The definition of "suffering" as "experiencing" is included in the translation of the same section used by Bottomore, Early Writings, p. 208.

[42] Early Writings, p. 206.

[43] "The way in which consciousness is, and in which something is for it, is knowing. Knowing is its only act. Thus something comes to exist for consciousness so far as it knows this something. Knowing is its only objective relation." Ibid., p. 209.

[44] Ibid., p. 217.

[45] See especially, Kolakowski, Marxist Humanism; Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought, chapter 4; Petrovic, Marx in Mid-Twentieth Century, part 3, section 2.

[46] Taylor, Conceptions, argued against Kant that his categories did not include that of value -- however, with such inclusion he accepts the "ideal" nature of the categorical framework and thus tends to reify this aspect of consciousness. Recognizing this as a problem, as ignoring the historical element, Marx tried to ground the categories in praxis -- including the category of value. This resulted in the understanding of values in terms of needs -- specifically the needs revolving around the social character of praxis. Thus Marx was able to dissolve the fact/value distinction not by arguing naively that objects contain value in themselves, but by arguing that objects, facts, are always human facts, objects-for-man; "sensuous objects".

[47] Early Writings, p. 164, emphasis added.

[48] A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, p. 21.

[49]To this extent, but without considering the issue of alienation, this conclusion parallels Taylor's -- that the ". . . relation between the forms of thought and institutions is that between a concept and the process by which it is produced and expressed. . . . Thus there is a logical nexus between forms of thought and institutions. . . ." Conceptions of Institutions and the Theory of Knowledge, p. 129.

[50]Early Writings, p. 158.

[51]Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought, p. 76.

[52]Most of the argument above is based on what were originally unpublished works. However, there has been considerable analysis done that demonstrates the lack of fundamental difference between these works and later studies. See Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought; Kolakowski, Marxist Humanism; Dupré, Phil. Fdns.; McClellan, The Thought of Karl Marx.

[53]Selected Writings, p. 97.

[54]See, for example, the article by J. Horton, "The Dehumanization of Anomie and Alienation", in Curtis and Petras, p. 586. An educative example of the positivistic use of the term is R. Blauner's Alienation and Freedom (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), or M. Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation", American Sociological Review, XXIV (1959), 783-791.

[55]Durkheim conceived of the social as a "reality sui generis", an entity and a force necessary for civilized, normative, individual, yet co-operative existence. Anomie refers to a problematic for individuals and groups of a lack of clarity in norms which results from the normal evolutionary change of "Society" from mechanical to organic forms, i.e., from a transition period in which contradictory norms from each form co-exist. The "solution" to this problematic lies in the evolutionary emergence of a single, organic order. Durkheim's emphasis thus tends toward a reification of the social. On the other hand, Weber's emphasis is clearly on the individual. For him, the social, in its various forms, is a rational product of individuals,

which, through the medium of a means-end reversal, becomes a force in itself, i.e., a rational system which negates or denies the rationality of its base -- individual, rational persons. The "solution" in terms of this conceptualization clearly demonstrates Weber's "existentialist" bias for it involves a central role for the charismatic individual who overturns traditionally accepted beliefs and develops another belief base, which in turn, is objectified in social forms. Weber's position is closer to that of Marx, but his view does not incorporate a fully positive conception of social man nor any clearly developed conception of human life as ongoing praxis.

[56] Early Writings, p. 121.

[57] In other words, reality is always human reality or reality-for-man. Thus, a condition of alienation is a situation in which all the various elements of reality, from physical products to social forms to ideas, are estranged from men or treated as somehow having a life of their own. Marx uses various terms to refer to this situation, the most general being that of alienation. The terms reification and false-consciousness refer to the crystallization and estrangement of ideas in particular; that of fetishization, to the treatment of physical products as of value in themselves. Each term, however, refers to the same phenomenon; albeit, particular aspects of the general condition as discussed below.

[58] Marx clearly speaks of the "laws" of capitalism, of definite patterns that do exist and can be discerned. On the other hand, he calls capitalism "anarchistic". The two statements are, however, not contradictory when it is realized that they refer to different angles of vision on the contradictory, alienated character of this mode of production.

[59] Early Writings, p. 121.

[60] Alienation is not specific to capitalism in Marx' view though it is most thoroughly developed in that system: "What requires explanation is not the unity of living and active human beings with . . . nature, and therefore their appropriation of nature; nor is this the result of a historical process. What we must explain is the separation . . . a separation which is only fully

completed in the relation between wage-labour and capital." Quoted in Ollman, Alienation, p. 133, from Pre-Capitalistic Economic Formations.

[61]Thus Marx criticizes political economy which ". . . conceives the material process of private property, as this occurs in reality, in general and abstract formulas which then serve it as laws". Precisely because, "It does not comprehend these laws". Early Writings, p. 102. Thus, ". . . political economy has merely formulated the laws of alienated labour", ibid., p. 132; i.e., political economy has merely grasped the regularities in a system of alienation and mistakenly passed these off as natural laws governing behaviour. In Marx' view, it is important to understand these regularities; but only as a prelude to changing them in respect to their negative aspects -- aspects which the political economists themselves are aware of. "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways; the point is to change it." Selected Writings, p. 205. The same point is made in all of Marx' writing, cf., N. Geras, "Essence and Appearance: Aspects of Fetishism in Marx's Capital", New Left Review, LXV (1971), 69-86.

[62]Early Writings, pp. 122-123, emphasis added.

[63]Cf., Ollman, Alienation, p. 132.

[64]Even in Capital, Marx argues, "Political Economy has indeed analysed, however incompletely, value and its magnitude, and has discovered what lies beneath these forms. But it has never once asked the question why labour is represented by the value of its product and labour-time by the magnitude of that value. These formulae, which bear stamped upon them in unmistakeable letters, that they belong to a state of society, in which the process of production has the mastery over man, instead of being controlled by him, such formulae appear to the bourgeois intellect to be as much a self-evident necessity imposed by Nature as productive labour itself". Capital I, pp. 80-81.

[65]Early Writings, p. 126.

[66]K. Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1961), p. 72, emphasis added.

[67]Ibid., p. 72.

[68]Ibid., p. 70.

[69]Capital I, p. 310.

[70]Early Writings, pp. 125-26.

[71]Ibid., p. 129.

[72]"The practical construction of an objective world, the manipulation of inorganic nature, is the confirmation of man as a conscious species-being, i.e., a being who treats the species as his own being or himself as a species-being. . . . While, therefore, alienated labour takes away his species-life, his real objectivity as a species-being, and changes his advantage over animals into a disadvantage insofar as his organic body, nature, is taken from him. . . ." Ibid., pp. 127-128.

[73]Ibid., p. 127; cf., Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man, section 2, "One-Dimensional Thought"; Kolakowski, The Alienation of Reason; G. Grant, "The University Curriculum", in Technology and Empire (Toronto: Anansi, 1969).

[74]Ibid., p. 130. Marx continues, ". . . through alienated labour the worker creates the relation of another man, who does not work and is outside the work process, to this labour. The relation of the worker to work also produces the relation of the capitalist . . . to work", p. 131.

[75]"Society, as it appears to the economist, is civil Society, in which each individual is a totality of needs and only exists for another person, as the other exists for him, in so far as each becomes a means for the other." Ibid., p. 181.

[76]Once again it is important to recognize that Marx' work is, at once, a critique of "material conditions", and a critique of the interpretations of these conditions by others; interpretations that have the effect of contributing to the maintenance of the situation insofar as they are believed.

[77]Cf. "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right", in Early Writings, p. 44.

[78]". . . political economy has merely formulated the laws of alienated labour." Thus, various "solutions" to negative social conditions that are put forward by the political economists on the basis of these "laws" are not solutions at all. For example, an ". . . enforced increase in wages . . . would be nothing more than a better remuneration of slaves, and would not restore, either to the worker or to the work, their human significance and worth. Even the equality of incomes which Proudhon demands would only change the relation of the present-day worker to his work into a relation of all men to work. Society would then be conceived as an abstract capitalist." Early Writings, p. 132, cf., the discussion of "vulgar communism", ibid., pp. 152-155.

[79]See Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought, "Epilogue: The Eschatology of the Present", and Schroyer, Critique, pp. 92-100.

[80]The same criticism is directed at Mead but concerns precisely the opposite "error". The "I" concept in Mead's work is said to be a residual, ad hoc addition (as will be developed later), an addition necessary to account for creativity, freedom and responsibility of specifically human life in an otherwise reductive, deterministic theoretical framework. Without developing the link between alienation and praxis, or without explaining how men alienate themselves despite their praxical being, Marx could be accused of introducing the idea of alienation to account for the "reductive", "deterministic" and limiting elements of human existence in an otherwise idealistic theory of human life. The failure to develop this connection clearly is a major problem of the Marxian sociology of knowledge.

[81]See, for example, German Ideology, pp. 46-47.

[82]Typical of such interpretations see Merton, "Paradigm"; Hamilton, Knowledge and Soc. Structure.

[83]Schroyer, Critique, pp. 92-97.

[84]See, for example, L. Althusser, For Marx (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), chapter 2, "On the Young Marx".

[85]For example, "The individual is the social being. The manifestation of his life -- even when it does not appear directly in the form of a communal manifestation, accomplished in association with other men -- is, therefore, a manifestation and affirmation of social life." Early Writings, p. 158. ". . . productive life [praxis], now appear(s) to man only as a means for the satisfaction of a need. . . . Productive life is, however, species life. It is life creating life", ibid., p. 127. "It can be seen that the history of industry and industry as it objectively exists is an open book of the human faculties. . . . Everyday material industry . . . shows us, in the form of sensuous useful objects, in an alienated form, the essential human faculties transformed into objects", ibid., p. 163. ". . . the whole of what is called world history is nothing but the creation of man by human labour, and the emergence of nature for man", ibid., p. 166. This is not to imply that alienation is not "real" in its consequences; only that it is not presented as a total denial of praxis -- alienation is a "distortion" and not a total negation.

[86]Ibid., pp. 157-158, emphasis added.

[87]German Ideology, p. 44.

[88]". . . a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a 'productive force'", ibid., p. 41.

[89]Early Writings, p. 133.

[90]Ibid., p. 131, emphasis added.

[91]"We have already done much to solve the problem in so far as we have transformed the question concerning the origin of private property into a question about the relation between alienated labour and the process of development of mankind. For in speaking of private property one believes oneself to be dealing with something external to mankind. But in speaking of labour one deals directly with mankind itself. This formulation of the problem already contains its solution", ibid., p. 133. It should be noted that here again one finds the emphasis on alienation as only an "apparent" denial of praxis -- private property, as a mode of alienation, has historically emerged out of "human development", out of praxis itself.

[92]". . . the division of labour implies the contradiction between the interest of the separate individual or the individual family and the communal interest of all individuals who have intercourse with one another. And, indeed, this communal interest does not exist merely in the imagination, as the 'general interest', but first of all in reality, as the mutual interdependence of the individuals among whom labour is divided." German Ideology, p. 44, emphasis added.

[93]Any explicit development of this point is absent in Marx' writing but a similar distinction is clearly presented by Mead, and promises a potential contribution of the latter to the critical stance.

[94]See above, pp. 164-166.

[95]Cf. Avineri, Soc. and Pol. Thought, p. 76: ". . . 'productive forces' are not objective facts external to human consciousness. They represent the organization of human consciousness and human activity. . . . Consequently, the distinction between 'material base' and 'superstructure' is not a distinction between 'matter' and 'spirit' . . . but between conscious human activity . . . and human consciousness. . . ."

[96]Cf. Selected Writings, pp. 218-220.

[97] *German Ideology*, p. 60.

[98] *Ibid*., emphasis added.

[99] *Ibid*., p. 12.

[100] *Ibid*., pp. 50-51, emphasis added.

[101] *Capital I*, p. 52, emphasis added.

[102] If men first "see and recognize themselves in others", then it follows that this recognition must itself be alienated insofar as the others referred to occupy and constitute a "system of alienation". Thus it would appear to be important to pursue a consideration that Marx deals with hardly at all -- that of socialization or the process through which men come to recognize themselves.

[103] See, for example, *German Ideology*, p. 43.

[104] *Ibid*., p. 61.

[105] *Selected Writings*, pp. 248-249.

[106] See, for example, *Early Writings*, p. 157, and the argument of the *German Ideology*, pp. 42-43, 57.

[107] *Early Writings*, pp. 189-194; see also, *Selected Writings*, p. 231.

CHAPTER V

G. H. MEAD AND THE PERSPECTIVE OF "SOCIAL BEHAVIOURISM"

In the introduction, it was indicated that numerous writers have suggested that the ideas of Marx and Mead are compatible in some respects; and that this compatibility is of potential importance to the solution of issues raised by the insight of the sociology of knowledge. It has been specifically hypothesized that Mead's "social-psychological" concepts and emphasis can be combined with Marx's structural concepts and emphasis. The resulting synthesis would constitute an adequate sociological perspective which would effectively articulate micro and macro levels of analysis.[1] In relation to the sociology of knowledge, this hypothesis suggests that Mead's ideas are relevant, in particular, to an elaboration of the relationship between thought and social context which would effectively meet the demands of the critics.

However, there are a number of considerations with regard to Mead's relevance that must be stated much more carefully and precisely than has been the case. First, the analysis of the Critique demonstrated its positivistic

character. Furthermore, it was shown that a solution to the issue of relativism could not be achieved through a positivistic approach, precisely because the insight and the Critique adhere to contradictory conceptions of knowledge. It was argued that, contrary to the conclusion of the critics, the sociology of knowledge is indeed possible, but only in relation to a conception of objectivity consistent with the insight. Thus, if Mead's ideas are to have any relevance at all, they must be compatible with a conception of objectivity which reflects a social theory of knowledge.

Second, the results of the preceeding analysis of particular aspects of Marx' writing implies additional and more specific constraints in respect to the possible relevance of Mead's ideas. It was shown that Marx' work anticipates the Critique precisely in terms of a conception of objectivity that is consistent with his dialectical elaboration of the insight. Furthermore, it was shown that the resulting sociology of knowledge has the specific character of a critique of ideas in relation to a more general critical orientation to the study of social form or structure. Thus, if the relevance of Mead's ideas is to be demonstrated,they must be compatible with this critical orientation, and with the related concepts of man, social context and thought that are expressed in Marx'

writing.[2]

The analysis of Marx' work also demonstrated, that the critical sociology of knowledge is by no means developed in a complete or fully consistent manner. In particular, the relationship between praxis and alienation, the very basis of critical analysis, is vaguely developed, and is susceptible to varying interpretation, including that of positivism. In more specific terms, it is therefore argued that the hypothesized relevance of Mead's ideas must involve the effective elaboration of this relationship, and thus a clarification of the very rationale for a critical sociology of knowledge. It was indicated that Marx' writing suggests the importance of the "nature of human development" in relation to a complete comprehension of alienation. Since Mead is centrally concerned with the process of human learning and development, the process of socialization, it is apparent that his ideas might be of value.

To summarize, the proposed relevance of Mead's writing to the sociology of knowledge, and in relation to Marx' ideas, presupposes a demonstration of: a) compatibility with a non-positivistic conception of objectivity consistent with the insight; b) compatibility of these ideas with Marx' conceptions of man, social context and thought; in general, with the conception of human reality

as praxis, and with a conception cf thought as a functional moment within praxis; and c) relevance to an adequate elaboration of the relationship between praxis and human alienation and reification.

That Mead's writings meet these requirements is certainly debateable.[3] Both critics and proponents of his "symbolic-interactionist" perspective have tended to interpret Mead's ideas in clearly positivistic terms; in terms which reduce man and thought to the status of derivations of a prior, "more real" social reality.[4] Indeed, as in the case of Marx, aspects of Mead's writing are amenable to positivistic interpretation, especially when not considered within the broader context of his ideas and their development.[5] Furthermore, the very hypothesis, in respect to a possible synthesis of Marx and Mead, is itself often phrased in positivistic terms. Mead's work is usually viewed as useful because it supposedly provides a conceptualization of the "mechanics" through which social factors determine thought; not because it provides an elaboration of the relationship between praxis and alienation, an elaboration which involves a contrary, non-positivistic conception of knowledge.

Accepting the positivistic interpretation, it can be argued that Mead presents an "oversocialized conception of man".[6] This is to argue that Mead's perspective is

sociologistic, that it disregards non-social, determining factors on the one hand, and that, on the other, it devalues reason and excludes the human experience of freedom, volition, responsibility and creativity. Thus, Mead's writing can be accused of the self-contradiction of relativism because it ties knowledge to the social context.

To complicate matters, both Mead and subsequent "interactionists" are attacked from precisely the opposite direction, but for similar reasons. Various critical theorists, who trace their ideas to Marx, picture Mead's perspective as idealistic rather than deterministic; they argue that Mead simply fails to appreciate the socio-structural constraints on human activity and reflexion.[7] In particular, these critics focus attention on Mead's conception of social change. They argue that Mead ignores the conflictual, intentional and active side of change in favour of an overriding emphasis on change as evolutionary, continuous and largely unproblematic.[8] In other words, Mead's writing is categorized as idealistic because it predicts a "better" future unfolding "automatically", without conflict or necessary, intentional human intervention.

In light of these criticisms, it is certainly not immediately apparent that the hypothesis of compatibility is meaningful, or that Mead's conception of human develop-

ment is relevant to the issue of the relationship between alienation and praxis. Furthermore, the problem is yet more difficult than in the instance of Marx. In respect to Marx' writing, the problem of various interpretations was rooted primarily in a lack of clarity, or in Marx' failure to fully develop key ideas such as alienation. In contrast, Mead's writing contains positivistic elements which definitely contradict the critical, non-positivistic thrust of his overall perspective. Nonetheless, as the following analysis will show, the hypothesis of compatibility is demonstrable, as is the importance of the Marx/Mead synthesis in respect to issues in the sociology of knowledge.

Due to the severity of these problems associated with Mead's writing, this chapter proceeds according to a somewhat different sequence of considerations than was the case in the previous chapter.[9] The first task involves a presentation of the more familiar elements of Mead's perspective; specifically, his theory of mind and self as arising through internalization and his conception of the social context in which this internalization takes place. As will be demonstrated, it is this idea which is essential to an adequate sociology of knowledge, but only in relation to a complete elaboration of the relationship between praxis and alienation within the critical orienta-

tion.[10] It will be shown that Mead's conceptions of man, social context and thought are not dissimilar to those of Marx; however, this judgement can only be demonstrated after the various criticisms have been dealt with, and after the concept is elaborated in relation to the broader context of Mead's writing.

The second section presents the criticisms of Mead's ideas in greater detail. It is shown that, while these criticisms result, in part, from an inadequate positivistic interpretation of Mead's ideas,[11] the criticisms are not unwarranted, for they reflect definite elements present within the writing itself. Centrally, both the accusation of sociologism and that of idealism are related to the manner in which Mead initially attempted to account for the active, intentional, creative aspect of human life, through the postulation of the "I" aspect of self. In respect to the criticism of sociologism, it is pointed out that the "I" concept is totally "fictitious", presuppositional and non-verifiable. It is but an "ad hoc" construction, which, though required by Mead's stance, if it is not to be totally sociologistic, is, nonetheless, neither consistent with the emphasis on self as arising strictly through internalization, nor grounded in any well-defined basis of its own.[12] In respect to the contrary charge of idealism, it is argued that without an adequate

elaboration of the "I" aspect of self, then the essential role of man in social change and development is depreciated, and thus the idea of praxis is not central to Mead's perspective.[13] It is shown that these criticisms are indeed warranted in terms of Mead's conception of change as a predictable, relatively unproblematic process of evolution, and in respect to the rather passive role in change accorded to man.

It is necessary, therefore, to carry the analysis further in order to demonstrate that the above criticisms do not reflect negatively on the whole of Mead's work. The third section considers the implications of two further elements of Mead's thought. First, it is demonstrated that the "I" is but an incomplete statement of Mead's concept of emergence in nature. Furthermore, it is shown that the idea of emergence is integral to the overall social theory of man and thought, and that it more adequately incorporates the experience of intentionality, responsibility and creativity; thus bringing Mead's theory closer to the idea of human life as praxis. Second, Mead's epistemological stance is considered and is shown to have important implications in relation to social change and man's role in change. On the one hand, Mead's theory of knowledge and conception of objectivity is shown to parallel the dialectical conception of Marx. On the other, it is

demonstrated that his conception of thought, in relation to the social context, contradicts his earlier tendency to liken social change to a predictable, smooth, evolutionary process. Finally, it is argued that Mead's conception of predictable evolutionary change is quite gratuitous to his overall theory, and that it can be deleted without effect on the basic elements of his perspective that are relevant to both Marxian ideas and the sociology of knowledge.[14]

The next section argues that Mead's perspective, like that of Marx, implies a critical sociology of knowledge. However, it also points out that, despite this basic compatibility, a further problem is immediately apparent and must be dealt with. Mead makes no reference to a problematic in human existence which would constitute a rationale for critical analysis. Unlike Marx, who captured this problematic aspect of praxis in the concepts of alienation and reification, Mead demonstrates no clear appreciation of the development of contradictions between praxis and the historical products of human activity. Whereas Marx' ideas are inadequate in respect to the relationship between praxis and alienation, Mead's ideas are more fundamentally inadequate by virtue of the very absence of any problematic whatsoever.

Nonetheless, in other respects, Mead's writing does contain conceptions of man, thought and social context which appear to closely parallel those of Marx. Of central importance, Marx and Mead develop similar conceptions of objectivity. It is left to Chapter six to demonstrate explicitly the hypothesized compatibility, and to synthesize the positions of the two theorists in the construction of a critical sociology of knowledge.

Mind, Self and Social Process:
The Social Theory of Man

Mead's posthumously published lectures, Mind, Self and Society, along with selected articles,[15] are the most well known to sociologists and the most immediate source of ideas that have been considered relevant to the development of sociology. However, while it is fair to say that little of the remaining work is of the same immediate importance, this writing is also the most susceptible to misinterpretation if not read in the context of the total corpus of Mead's work. Almost all of Mead's ideas are present in MSS, at least implicitly, but they are only fully, and less ambiguously developed in his other writings.[16]

Mind, Self and Society begins with a particular question: how can one comprehend specifically human life

"behaviouristically", and yet, at the same time, not deny the existence and essential importance of mind, of reflexivity, of human self-consciousness?[17] Mead is extremely critical of Watsonian behaviourism which, in his opinion, reduces the specifically human to the level of conditioned reactions in terms of biological and physiological mechanisms.[18] On the other hand, Mead is equally critical of the idealist perspective which would place mind and self totally outside and apart from behaviour, and yet offer no explanation for these phenomena.[19] Mead, like Marx, intended to develop a synthesis of deterministic and idealistic perspectives.

To be more specific, Mead holds that man, like all other species, is himself a part of nature, a part of an assumed "world that is there".[20] However, the totality of quantitative distinctions which differentiate him from other living organisms constitutes an essential qualitative difference which must not be lost sight of in the theoretical comprehension of human thought and activity.[21] All organisms, as parts of nature, depend on nature and have a particular, selective relationship[22] with the environment; indeed, some other organisms are recognized as having a conscious relationship with nature.[23] The human species, in contrast, is qualitatively different insofar as man's relationship to nature is a _self_-conscious,

reflexive relationship.

For men, in Mead's view, the human environment is not simply an environment specific to the physical characteristics and biological needs of the species; it is, as well, an environment which includes man's own responses to it.[24] That is to say, men are the only beings that can be "objects for themselves",[25] that are self-conscious beings who thereby become capable of reflexion. Other animals react to stimuli; men can, in addition, react to themselves as stimuli. This emergent fact in nature, as Mead terms it,[26] is understood as the basis of the ability to inhibit overt and immediate reaction to stimuli, to think or act implicitly, or in mind, before responding overtly and intentionally to the environment. In Mead's view, men thereby acquire a control over their own activity and over their environment; a control which is denied to other species.[27]

Clearly, Mead wishes to develop a perspective on human activity which recognizes that the human species is, like other beings, a part of nature, and yet is qualitatively distinct from other beings in acquiring a self-conscious and controlling relationship to nature. However, despite this intention of avoiding the pitfalls of both positivistic reductionism and idealism, it is the opinion of his critics that the resulting perspective is not

successful. Mead is accused by some of developing a sociologistic stance, and by others of constructing a basically idealist image of man and society.[28]

These criticisms can best be understood after first delineating the concepts to which they are directed; the concepts of man, thought, the social and their development that Mead outlines in MSS. The critics' concerns can then be clearly elaborated and utilized to identify specific elements of the perspective which are basically problematic, or require further elaboration. These problems can, in turn, be pursued through consideration of the broader context of Mead's thought, as developed in his other works.

As indicated, Mead began with the assumption that the human species was qualitatively distinct from other beings. Men are self-conscious beings; they have selves and minds which are emergent characteristics that are based in the quantitative differences between themselves and other living species. This emergence of mind and self is understood both as an historical event, in the initial evolution of the species, and as an event which must repeat itself in the biography of each individual.[29] Self and mind are, then, absent at birth; both have a development which presupposes the prior presence of particular factors.[30]

First, mind and self are rooted in the biological

evolution of a highly complex central nervous system, which, in terms of its complexity, is potentially a "mechanism of implicit response".[31] The human animal also has greater physical complexity than other species; Mead emphasizes the importance of the hand for example, as mediating our experiences with the "world that is there".[32] In addition, he points to the importance of the evolved physical ability to emit and distinguish between a tremendous variation in "vocal gesture".[33]

Second, Mead holds that, by nature, the human animal is a "herd" or social animal like others -- a factor which does not necessarily involve greater quantitative development than is the case with other species; except that it involves the appearance of a more complex gestural communication.[34] One essential factor that is noted even involves less development than is the case with other animals. This concerns the "early" birth of the human infant, the consequent lack of "instinctual patterning" at birth and the long period of dependency on adults.[35] Mead argues that the child is born with relatively undefined "impulses", as opposed to the highly specific instincts of other animals. This fact, associated with dependency and social context, leaves a broad scope for the "shaping" of behaviour within human existence.[36]

However, it is the unique combination[37] of these

factors in the evolutionary history of the species that results in the emergent capacity, or at least the potential for self-consciousness, and, therefore, for minded behaviour or minded and reflexive activity. It is important to phrase it in this manner because for Mead, and as implied by Marx, this capacity not only emerged in the past; it is a capacity that each person, in each generation, must realize for himself -- mind and self cannot be presupposed historically nor in the biography of any particular individual.

The emergence or realization of this potential depends on the organism occupying "two or more systems at once": in the broadest sense, the emergence of reflexivity depends on the "sociality" of the human organism.[38] Specifically, the emergence of mind and self depends on the interaction of the "biologic" being (with the above characteristics) with "others" in an organized or patterned social environment that is characterized by symbolic communication or interaction. Mead argues that it is in this "observable" interaction that the potentialities of the organism are realized through a process of internalization, a process which, if broadly understood, can be called "taking the role of the other".[39]

The essential moment in this process (and the initial moment in the appearance of mind and self) comes

with the ability to "stimulate one's self as others stimulate one". To use a simplistic example: the newborn infant, "driven" by undefined impulses, yet helpless, emits rather undifferentiated cries. The adult responds intentionally to the cry in terms of existing cultural patterns, and, in time, establishes specific patterns of response to these "biologic" gestures of the child[40] -- the presentation of the bottle, changing, cuddling, etc. In each case, these patterns are meaningful for the adult and established primarily by the adult.[41] However, at some point in the relationship, the child ceases to be passive in regard to these patterns and begins to cry intentionally <u>for</u> different responses from the adult -- a mother is quickly aware of the differences in the crying that then develop. What Mead suggests "happens", is that at some point the child becomes imaginatively aware of the meaning of his cry; his own cry, as a gesture which he himself can hear, comes to "stand for" the response of the adult that has become habitual. At the same time, the response comes to "mean" the biologic discomfort or impulse of which the cry is initially an integral part.

What is required for this "internalization" to occur, involves the combination of factors discussed above: the social aspect, the relational pattern established by the adult, and the biological and physical

characteristics outlined, especially the organic complexity allowing such implicit response. Mead also emphasizes the necessity, for the appearance and functioning of mind, of a "problematic situation" -- a break in the habitual pattern established by the adult. He argues that the internalization of what is there externally, of the response of the other to one's gesture as its meaning, occurs when the pattern does not occur normally.[42] At such a point, what is not completed factually, is completed, or potentially completed, imaginatively.

> Here in the field of behaviour we reach a situation in which the individual may affect iself as it affects other individuals, and may therefore respond to this stimulation as it would respond to the stimulation of other individuals; in other words, a situation arises in which the individual may become an object in its own field of behaviour.43

To summarize, the child automatically cries as an outcome of undifferentiated and un-defined impulses. This piece of behaviour initially implies only a "biologic" self which cries -- the cry must be seen as part and parcel of the organism and of the organic response. The adult establishes patterned responses to these "gestures", and through some instance of a break in the routine established, the child is able, given its potentialities, to "complete" the pattern in "imagination". This is, at the same time, the development of "awareness" of the cry,

awareness of self in this minimal respect, and an ability to respond (at least in imagination at this stage) to itself as an object. The "meaning" of the gesture is clearly external and prior (established by the adult and inherent in the form of the response relationship), and only subsequently becomes internalized.[44] Furthermore, this internalization not only defines the cry as a gesture (renders the gesture significant),[45] it defines the impulse which set free the gesture in the first instance; what one is "doing", what one "is", and the possibility of awareness of either, emerge concurrently through this internalization of the social patterns into which one is born.[46] From this point on, the child is capable, albeit minimally, of gesturing intentionally, of crying for something (the completion of the act established by the parent), and has the primitive rudiments of mind and self. From this point on, the child is qualitatively different from other animal species in terms of how he relates to the "world that is there".

Put somewhat differently, Mead suggests that once internalization begins, the child is enabled to take an "attitude"[47] towards his situation (which now includes himself) and begins, thereby, to be self-consciously "attentive"[48] to stimuli in the environment -- he can begin

to "act" and is not simply reacting to stimuli in terms of some well defined instinctual or drive structure "there" at birth. That is, one can act (gesture significantly or meaningfully) "in order to" elicit a response that one desires from another. Mead argues that a "conversation of gestures" also occurs between other animals, but that these gestures remain strictly stimuli which call out an instinctual reaction from the other, and which are themselves emitted strictly on an instinctually patterned and reactive basis.[49]

The central point of his argument is that mind is not conceptualized as an entity, but as an emergent and functional ability or process; an ability to "indicate those things in the environment which answer to responses so that control of responses is possible".[50] Through mind, through the internalization and organization of responses as attitudes, the individual is able to be attentive to particular characteristics of his situation in terms of possible responses which, for the moment, are carried out "imaginatively" -- the attitude stands for the completed act; it is an idea.[51] Thought or reflexion (human intelligence)[52] is defined, in these terms, as an "internalized conversation of gestures".[53] It is a process through which the individual is enabled to choose between

alternative responses (in terms of attitudes), in a problematic situation, those particular responses that hypothetically will achieve the end or need desired. The so-called trial-and-error behaviour of animals can, therefore, take place implicitly or in mind; one can respond with a degree of choice to one's situation.[54] One can, through attitudes, indicate to oneself (be attentive to) those elements (stimuli) in a situation which answer to certain responses that one wants to make before actually responding.[55]

Clearly, the self, in the term self-consciousness, emerges concommitantly with mind. As indicated, the response of the other defines not only the gesture, but also, and at the same time, the being, the self, which emits the gesture. Mead defines the self as that object which is, or can be, an object for itself, that object which becomes a part of its own environment.[56] He argues that knowing one's self, as a specific object among objects, is only possible by internalizing the responses of others to this object; thereby coming to know what we are as others know us and as they express this knowing in their responses to us. Just as the meaning of things and others is "there" as an objective, prior relationship between gesture and response, so the meaning of one's self is equally "there" prior to signification, prior to

mindedness.

Thus far the chapter has outlined the social process of internalization, the emergence of attitudes "within" the individual, and the implications that this process has for comprehension of meaning, thought and the character of human action as intentional. Clearly, Mead is not arguing that mind and self emerge as a whole or all in a piece, but that these human qualities have a development, a growth, which implies some notion of constant change through interaction. Specifically, he breaks this development down into two basic stages, but it is clearer, for the sake of exposition, to break these stages down into four.[57]

The first stage was implied in the example of the infant -- the internalization, through breaks in patterns of relationship, of specific meanings (responses) as the meaning of the child's own gestures and impulses. At this rudimentary level, the child's self and mind and his world, are constituted by specific meanings on a rather simplistic level; specific cries, as significant symbols, stand for specific responses demanded. This stage merges into what Mead termed the "play stage", a stage during which meanings are organized into specific others, objects or "roles". At this stage the child can "play at" being another to himself -- words like mother, brother, pink rabbit, etc.,

are understood as meaning or standing for the whole complex of responses that can be called out from, or orignate with, or be expected of, those specific others or objects.[58]

The "game stage" refers basically to further internalization of attitudes and their further organization along broader situational lines. Words such as family or team or game are symbols understood as meaning the whole complex of responses others make in relation to one another and to one's self. Through internalization, the child has built up, within himself, and in a structured manner, the attitudes of all others with whom he is directly implicated.[59] This stage spills over into a fourth stage which Mead designates as the "generalized other" -- an internalization and organization of attitudes of the larger social circles or communities in which one is implicated. At this stage of the broadest development of self and mind, the individual knows himself, or is an object to himself, in relation to his class, political party, national group, religious affiliation, particular language, and so forth.[60]

Mead does not suggest that there is any necessary end point to this process for any particular individual. What one is, what one thinks and how one acts, can constantly change, develop and vary depending on the social

situations one is in, and, therefore, on the responses of others to one's actions in these situations. The self and mind do not emerge and then become static; they retain their tie to the responses of others in different situations.[61]

As is generally recognized, the social situation or on-going social process within which mind and self emerge and change, is not understood by Mead as a reality "sui-generis". Society is not conceptualized as an "object in itself" which can be studied in formal terms, separate from the interaction of persons.[62] Rather, Mead comprehends man as, biologically, a social being, and this sociality as essential to the emergence of mind and self. The survival of the individual and the species depends on the success of social acts, on the fulfillment of needs in co-operation with others.[63] Indeed, Mead argues that institutions or specific forms of interaction depend on the organization of attitudes for their existence, their continuity _and_ their change.[64] It is the social, interactional _process_ that is important to Mead, and specific forms of this process are understood as realized solutions to species' problems which require social action for their fulfillment.[65]

Furthermore, Mead attempts to deny this social context any totally determinative character through an explicit differentiation of the self into two separate aspects or dimensions. Though the self is not present at birth and depends for its emergence on the process of internalization, it ". . . does not consist simply in the bare organization of social attitudes".[66] Rather, the self has two analytically distinct parts, the "I" and the "me":

> The "I" is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the "me" is the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes. The attitudes of the others constitute the organized "me", and then one reacts toward that as an "I".[67]

Mead introduces this distinction in terms of its ". . . significance . . . from the point of view of conduct itself",[68] and then implies that this significance basically refers to the fact that ". . . we are never fully aware of what we are . . ."; and that we often ". . . surprize ourselves by our own action";[69] that ". . . this response of the "I" is something more or less uncertain".[70] Men reflect or think about their situation in terms of internalized attitudes or the "me" of the self. This alone, of course, implies that what one is and what one can decide to do is rooted in and limited by the <u>given</u> meanings one has internalized from the social situations one has experienced, or been a part of. How-

ever, the further significance of the "I" aspect is that it accounts for ". . . the sense of freedom, of initiative . . ."[71] that man experiences.

In these terms, the freedom of mind is conceptualized as involving the fact that men do not act precisely as they or others think they will act, given reflexion and action strictly in terms of the "me".

> The self is essentially a social process going on with these two distinguishable phases. <u>If it did not have these two phases there could not be conscious responsibility, and there could be nothing novel in experience</u>.[72]

Mead also argues that the "I" is always consciously present to an individual himself only as a part of the "me", as an "historical figure".[73] In other words, since the "I" is the more or less unpredicted actual response of one's self to a situation, it is always known to one's self, as to others, after the fact; ". . . I cannot turn around quick enough to catch myself".[74] In this sense, novelty, freedom, initiative, and even responsibility are unpredictable and uncontrolled aspects of life even to the person performing a particular act that can be so labelled. Nonetheless, with this distinction between the "I" and the "me", along with the conceptualization of society as process rather than entity, Mead at least attempts to capture the notion that persons are, or can be, more or less, more and other than the on-going social situation

which lies at the basis of self and mind.

Qualitative or Quantitative Difference: The Criticisms of Social Behaviourism

It was suggested earlier that Mead's work contains both contradictory elements and elements which are perhaps gratuitous to his theory; and, that the criticisms of his position are rooted in these aspects of his perspective. In this section, Mead's conception of man, thought and the social will be elaborated further through a discussion of these criticisms. This will allow the identification of specific problems, which may then be dealt with in relation to the broader context of his writing.

The two predominant criticisms appear quite divergent: that Mead presents an "oversocialized", determinist position, and that he is an idealist especially in his conception of the nature of social factors and of social change. These criticisms are, however, not totally divergent and are rooted in consideration of the same factors.

It was noted that Mead intended to develop a perspective which captured the qualitative differences between man and other species; a perspective which was neither idealist nor determinist, but which recognized that man

was both a part of nature and yet capable of a reflexive and controlling relationship to his environment. However, the degree to which his position can be accepted as non-deterministic, or non-reductionistic, is apparently the degree to which the conception of the self, as involving an "I" aspect, is convincing.

The "me" aspect of the self is admittedly, and clearly presented as, a reflection of the on-going social situation. Mead's justification for introducing the "I" aspect, at least in MSS, is precisely that, without it, the theory could not account for human creativity, responsibility, freedom, intentionality; the qualities which transcend the determinant base. But it is this type of justification that is unacceptable to some critics. In their view, the "I" is a fictitious element; it is a "residual" category, introduced to account for those experiences for which the "me" cannot account.[75] The "I" appears to have no basis in the socialization process itself, which, as Mead argues, is the very basis for the development of self.[76]

Furthermore, the "I" is almost identical to the notion of chance. It exists as the unintended and unexpected actual action as over against that which is demanded by the "me". It is only known after the fact, in memory, when it has become a part of the "me". It is

not at all clear how such a concept captures the notions especially of intentionality and responsibility as they have been traditionally understood, and which are involved in man's qualitatively different being.[77]

If the concept of the self as both "I" and "me" cannot be maintained, at least in this form, then Mead's perspective does indeed fail to achieve its intended goal. Self and mind, and thus the individual, become reducible to the prior social process. Thought may remain essential to human activity, but, only as something quantitatively and not qualitatively different from the consciousness of other animal species.[78]

A second and related concern involves the conceptualization of social change as presented in MSS; the notion of change as a specific and determinative evolutionary process. Mead argues that man is basically a creature of non-reflexive habit in the absence of any problematics within the social process, and in relation to nature.[79] Social action, based on internalized attitudes, does not require reflexive thought, except in those instances of unexpected response from others or from objects. Thought, or the internalized conversation of gestures, comes into play when the habitual response or action one wishes to carry out is inhibited by contrary stimuli present in a situation, or by failure to achieve

the result expected.[80] Under such conditions, reflexion may lead to another response than that habitually expected in that situation, and thus to change in the typical pattern of response. Furthermore, the unpredictability of the "I" aspect of the self may involve novel elements, and therefore, as well, contribute to change in the typical response, insofar as these new response patterns are internalized by others.[81] As Mead maintains, the social is a process and not an entity.

However, Mead places definite limitations on just what change can occur, and with what success. He does not argue, idealistically, that it is open to men to construct freely whatever socially patterned response he choses in relation to desired goals. To the contrary, he is quite aware that, as a being dependent on an natural environment, or "world that is there", the construction of response patterns is limited, if broadly, by the "patience of nature".[82]

This limitation is, in itself, not necessarily reductionistic, as will be shown. However, Mead goes further: he argues that the form of social life, or the sum of typical response patterns or of institutions, changes within the limits of a specific evolutionary process.[83] The role of the individual in such change is

thereby limited, both to the "unexpected" contribution of the "I", as discussed above, and to those novel elements which are eventually accepted by others -- his social audience[84] -- within the further limitation of "social progress". For example, Mead argues that,

> . . . it is their possession of minds or powers of thinking which enable individuals to turn back critically, as it were, upon the organized structure of the society to which they belong . . . and to reorganize and reconstruct or modify that social structure to a greater or lessor extent as the exigencies of social evolution from time to time require.85

The role of mind is, of course, already delineated in terms of the unexpected, novel contribution of the "I". But, in addition, the novel contributions must conform to the "requirements" of a social evolution to which Mead attributes a specific content and form in the future:

> Ultimately and fundamentally societies develop in complexity of organization only by means of the progressive achievement of greater and greater degrees of functional, behaviouristic differentiation . . . or . . . mere specializations of socially functional individual behaviour.
>
> The human social ideal -- the ideal or ultimate goal of human social progress -- is the attainment of a universal human society in which all human individuals would possess a perfected social intelligence.86

Thus, the reduction to social process that Mead is charged with, while not precisely a sociologistic reduction to "Society" as such, is a reduction, nonetheless,

to the demands of an evolutionary process in nature which is reflected in social form. Furthermore, within the discussion of this process, Mead clearly reduces the future of individuality to an equivalence with the differentiated social function performed by each individual. He suggests that there is, in each of us ". . . a demand . . . to realize one's self in some sort of superiority over those about us",[87] but, this impulse[88] is only "genuine" and "legitimate"[89] when, in the course of evolution, it becomes (as it is becoming in his view) formalized as an expression of specialization of interdependent function in the community.[90]

In general, Mead discusses social evolution as a process which has a predictable direction and outcome, at least in terms of functional differentiation and socially functional, individual behaviour. Mead himself argues that this outcome or future follows precisely from ". . . the basis of the [social behaviourist] theory of the self that we have been discussing. . . ."[91] This would appear to reinforce the opinion that the human capacity for reflexion not only emerges out of the on-going social process, but that it is totally subsumed by that process and its predictable future.

The contrary charge, that Mead's position is idealist, is concerned with precisely the same points,

though from a slight different angle. Most specifically, it is argued that the perspective represents a rather naive appreciation of social structure and of human history; that the perspective has no adequate appreciation of the conflictual nature of human social development.[92]

Mead does, of course, speak of conflict, but it is conflict in terms of unexpected responses from objects and others in relation to the initial attitudes internalized.[93] Such conflict constitutes a problematic for persons which calls forth reflection, reformulation of attitudes and modification of response such that the conflict is removed and action can proceed.[94] Of central importance are those conflicts that arise between persons and groups, especially those resulting from the meeting of persons whose internalized conceptual frameworks differ significantly.

Mead argues that, in such social situations, the immediate reaction of each group concerns a desire for the preservation of self -- not in the physical sense necessarily, but in the sense of a desire to impose one's own content of mind, and, therefore, one's own expectations, on the other.[95] Whereas, in the past, such conflicts may have led to the annhilation or subjugation of one group by another,[96] under the impress of social evolution, such conflict is supposedly resolved, both by the gradual

functionalization of differences, and, within this, by the reorganization of the selves involved in the conflict.[97] In other words, Mead argues that, in light of his theory of self, conflict is automatically resolved through an eventual and reciprocal internalization of responses of others in the conflictual situation.

> The reflexive character of self-consciousness enables the individual to contemplate himself as a whole; his ability to take the social attitudes of other individuals and also of the generalized other toward himself within the given organized society of which he is a member, makes possible his bringing himself, as an objective whole, within his own experiential purview; and thus he can consciously integrate and unify the various aspects of his self, to form a single consistent and coherent and organized personality. Moreover, by the same means, he can undertake and effect intelligent reconstruction of self or personality in terms of its relations to the given social order whenever the exigencies of adaptation [e.g., social conflicts] to his social environment demand such reconstructions.98

Such reformulation of selves, in relation to social conflicts, is more likely under the conditions of functional interdependence which, in Mead's view, apparently constitute an inevitable historical realization.

One example of such conflicts that Mead alludes to are those,

> . . . involving interactions between capital and labour, that is, those in which some of the individuals are acting in their socially functional capacity as members of the capitalist class, which is one economic aspect of modern social organization; whereas the other individuals

> are acting in their socially functional capacity as members of the labouring class, which is another (and in social interests directly opposed) aspect of that organization.99

In his view, this conflict is gradually overcome through the reorganization of selves, a process which is supported by the growing functional interdependence between these classes. In other words, what is required, and what supposedly does occur precisely because of the nature of the development of self and mind of individuals, is the emergence of a common set of attitudes. It is Mead's understanding that the modern labour movement is achieving this; it has broken down caste barriers, has ". . . brought the situation actually involved before the community . . .", and has enabled others ". . . to enter into the attitude of the labourer in his function".[100]

Mead nods to the fact that there ". . . is not this development of communication so that individuals can put themselves into the attitudes of those whom they affect . . ." to any complete extent.[101] He also notes that existing institutions, or internalized response patterns can be "oppressive, stereotyped and ultra-conservative".[102] However, he fails to elaborate these "insights", and leaves the impression that it is quite simply a matter of time before the general process of social evolution, and, within it, the nature of self

development and change, will culminate in the "ideal society"; the universal society of a common global consciousness and functional interdependence.[103]

In general, these criticisms all point toward the idea that, while Mead attempts to find a place in his theory for the human characteristics and capacities of self and mind, he does not succeed in doing so in any manner which captures the qualitative distinctions between men and other organisms. Though human life is understood as involving reflexive intelligence, such intelligence is apparently only a more elaborate tool to achieve adaptation, both to the physical and to the social environment; environments which change according to evolutionary laws, and, therefore, which have predictable and determined futures.

Basic Presuppositions: An Alternate Image of Social Man

If the criticisms discussed above can be maintained in respect to essential aspects of the theory, then the hypothesis that the Meadian and Marxian frameworks are compatible is, in any major sense, refuted. A position which reduces man and limits the expression of his capacities to reflections of a prior, on-going and determining evolutionary social process, is not compatible

with a perspective rooted in the ideas of praxis and alienation.

Of more immediate importance in this chapter, however, is the fact that, if the criticisms hold, then a fundamental contradiction is introduced into Mead's own work. The adequacy of the criticisms would imply that he himself lost sight of the fundamental, emergent character of men, that he accused others of denying, illegitimately. Mead objects to any total reduction of man to psychological and biological processes, but, while he sets out to avoid such reductionism, he himself apparently concludes with a reduction of man to a predictable social evolutionary process. It is important to determine why this is the case, and, further, if it is a necessary and consistent part of his perspective.

In MSS, Mead seems to anticipate his critics. The continual emphasis on the social as process and not as a set of absolute determinants, and the division of the self into conservative "me" and creative "I" aspects, suggests an attempt to deny any total sociologism. The inadequacy of both these ideas has been considered; on the one hand, the "I" is not clearly integral to his theory of the social basis of self and mind, and, as well, it reflects the existence of chance more than the existence

of what could properly be called freedom, responsibility, creativity, etc. On the other hand, the social process, while itself dependent on a common attitudinal content of minds for its specific form, is, in turn, characterized as reflective of a specific evolutionary movement of predictable structural outcome.

However, a consideration of the broader context of Mead's writing suggests at least two further, basic and essential considerations that must be taken into account before adequate appraisal of the criticisms of his perspective can be undertaken. First, the "I"/"me" distinction, as presented in MSS, is not the sole manner in which Mead attempts to account for the qualitative differences between men and other species. In that work, but only elaborated in his other writing, Mead develops the concept of emergence, and especially the emergence of self and mind, as a fact of nature. Second, and related to this idea, Mead develops an epistemological position which implies that all human thought, including science, is indeed quite distinct from its positivistic or idealist conceptualizations. It is, in this context, that Mead clarifies his synthesis of these positions with much less ambiguity. In contrast with this work, the contradiction in MSS can be more clearly delineated and its basis uncovered.

The notion of emergence contains the presupposition that a whole or compound is always greater than the sum of its constituent elements; that a particular emergent whole has unique characteristics which are not inherent in its prexistent parts, and that the relationship of whole to part is reciprocal, or is a relationship of interdependence.[104]

> When things get together, there arises something that was not there before, and that character is something that cannot be stated in terms of the elements which go to make up the combination. . . . In any compound, say water, if we take the elements hydrogen and oxygen separately, we cannot get the character that belongs to the compound in them. There is something that has happened, fluidity and the capacity for satisfying thirst. . . . When combinations arise, we are in a new world, but that new world has not any mechanical causal relationship to the world out of which it arose.[105]

Not just physical compounds, however, but life itself is considered by Mead as an emergent reality in nature. The quality of being alive, or of having "a tendency to the self-maintaining",[106] can not be understood fully in terms of the non-living elements which are its basis (the questions of the biologist are necessarily different from those of the physicist).[107] Furthermore, in Mead's view, the emergence of life confers on the world a whole new set of characteristics that are only potentially there prior to this emergence; for example, physical objects become food only in the presence of the

digestive system of living organisms.[108] Thus, part and emergent whole, the physio-chemcial and the living, form and environment, constitute an interdependent unity.

The notion of the "I" appears to be a rudimentary and inadequate reference to the emergence in nature of human reflexive self-consciousness out of the interaction of the living animal form and physical nature, and the interaction of these living forms themselves. Self-conscious or reflexive intelligence is, indeed, rooted in certain basic elements; physio-chemical elements such as the complex central nervous system, the complexity of the hand, the animal consciousness of men, man's existence as a herd animal and gestural communication. But, self-consciousness is also an emergent reality in itself, which cannot be fully comprehended by analytical reduction to the characteristics of these elements; it is something more and other than its components.[109] The most essential emergent characteristic that renders the human animal qualitatively different from other species is that his own being becomes a part of his environment; that he becomes an object to himself and, therefore, a subject, both aware of, and in self-conscious control of, his responses.[110]

One essential element in the emergence of self and mind is, of course, the internalization of meanings, the

internalization of the responses of others, and of things eventually, as the meanings of one's gestures and, in turn, of one's self. This element is that which is initially labelled the "me" of the self, the <u>content</u> of attitudes, in terms of which the <u>capacity</u> to be reflexive and to reason before acting emerges. But, in terms of the idea of emergence, this capacity to reflect is not understood as reducible to a given content, and is, therefore, not reducible to the on-going social process. The social process is but one element out of which a complete self and mind arise. Thus, Mead is arguing that while the capacity for reflexive intelligence depends upon the internalization process, it is more and other than that process.

As Miller argues, one of Mead's major tasks,

> . . . is to show how it is possible for individuals to create or give rise to new ways of acting, to new ideas, new perspectives, and indeed to new universals. To some readers, no doubt, Mead's social behaviourism suggests that his theory not only leads to a reduction of mind and thinking . . . to a social determinism in which whatever the individual thinks, says, or does is determined by society or culture, or the mores, and so forth. Nothing is farther from the truth. <u>Mead does not have the problem of explaining why it is that individuals are creative despite the fact that every self has a social component and that thinking involves the other. Rather, he shows that it is only because the individual is social that he can be creative</u>.[111]

The essential point brought out here is that it is precisely a presupposition on Mead's part that man is an intelligent, creative being, and that this emergent fact must be the beginning point of any analysis. Mead's specific problem is the conceptual, pre-empirical problem of delineating how this capacity could have arisen, and how it functions within nature. His solution concentrates, in part, on the sociality of the human species and on the process of internalization, but within the general presupposition of emergence. Thus, to argue that reflexive intelligence, that self and mind, are rooted in, or presuppose a social, interactional process, among other elements, is not to argue that the former is reducible to the latter.[112]

Not only is reflexive intelligence not reducible to its social and physical components; consistent with the general idea of emergence, it is a "whole" which reciprocally effects its constituent elements. For example, both physical nature and, perhaps more so, the social basis, become interdependent with and, in part, dependent on the reflexive intelligence of men. Simply put, the social context, which is presupposed by mind, becomes interdependent with that mind once it emerges as a part of nature.[113]

This idea is reflected, in turn, in the epistemo-

logical position which Mead constructs, a position which is centered on the notion of knowing as an active and interdependent _relationship_ between knower and known. To begin with, it must be emphasized that knowing, or specifically human reflexive awareness, is something that emerges historically with self and mind, which is to say that it also is integrally connected with the prior, "self-maintaining" activity of man as a living organism.[114] Indeed, Mead clearly views thought as a higher-order, or qualitatively different capacity of the human animal to deal with his environment in the fulfillment of both physical and social needs.[115] Human reflexive intelligence is a capacity which is brought into play in the face of problematic situations, or in situations in which desired, habitual or unreflexive action is inhibited in some manner. Thought enables persons to reconstruct their situation imaginatively, or "in mind", before responding overtly; the so-called trial and error reactions of other species are carried out implicitly or in mind.

> . . .(K)nowing is an _undertaking_ that always takes place within a situation that is not itself involved in the ignorance or uncertainty that knowledge seeks to dissipate. Knowledge is _not then to be identified with the presence of a content in experience. . . . Knowledge is a process in conduct that so organizes the field of action_ that delayed and inhibited responses

> may take place. The test of the success of the process of knowledge, that is, the test of truth, is found in the discovery or construction of such objects as will allow conduct to proceed. . . . Reflection is the operation of inference in the field of ideation, i.e., the functioning as symbols of contents and characters of things, by means of which construction of objects sought can be carried out.116

Mead explicitly rejects the positivistic, "copy" or "correspondence" theory of knowledge in this passage.[117] Nature is a "world that is there" apart from mind, but it cannot be known, in itself, as a reflection in mind. Reality is always reality-for-man in that knowing is an active, selective "process" or "undertaking". Furthermore, what is understood as reality is not solely determined by what can possibly be known, but, as well, by the needs of men whose fulfillment has become problematic.

Perception is never a raw reflection of data, nor a simple effect in the organism.[118] Rather, it contains, at once,

> . . . all the elements of the act -- the stimulation [or impulse], the response represented by the attitude and the ultimate experience which follows upon the reaction, represented by the imagery arising out of past reactions. It is a process of sensing . . . itself an activity.[119]

What is seen is, therefore always,

> . . . a hypothetical, hence future, accomplishment of an initiated process to be tested by contact experience. . . . The environment around

> an individual is a set of such hypotheses . . . , objects which then [have] . . . a provisional assurance which may be shaken at any moment.[120]

Reality-for-man is, in these terms, a reality of perspectives of the individuals involved -- perspectives which contain more or less common elements or attitudes or "hypotheses".[121] Furthermore, such realities are understood as "means" -- means to achieve the ends of persons that have this capacity for reflexive perception.[122] Thus, in general terms, knowing is a relationship between the "world that is there" and the need to organize perception so that "delayed and inhibited responses may take place", or so that problematic situations (from the point of view of species needs), may be overcome, and ends achieved.

It is essential to note, as well, that Mead further and carefully distinguishes between "knowledge" and "information":

> Information is the experience arising from the direction of attention through the gestures of others to objects and their characters [the "me" aspect of self] and cannot be called "knowledge" if that term is denied to perception as immediate experience under the direction of the attention springing from the organic interest of the individual. Perception is not itself to be distinguished from information, insofar as one uses a social mechanism in pointing out objects and characters to himself as another. The perception of a self may be already in the form of

> information. . . . Knowledge, on the other hand, deliberately fashions objects whose reality it tests by observation and experiment. The justification for this is found in the actual disappearance of objects and their characters in the problems that arise in conduct.123

Mead understands the scientist in these latter terms, as a person responding to problematic situations by an active construction of hypothetical objects which are then tested in experience. He does not picture the scientist as cumulatively building an accurate and final picture of the "world that is there".[124] Though he is in high praise of the efforts of "science", it is precisely the essential character of it as a critical, probing activity in response to problematics of life that he is attached to[125] -- not any specific causal, positivistic framework that is often involved in the self-understanding of science.

> . . . (T)he experimental scientist, apart from some philosophic bias, is not a positivist. He has no inclination to build up a universe out of such scientific data. . . . The reference of his data is always to the solution of problems in the world that is there about him. . . . Nothing would more completely squeeze the interest out of his world than the resolution of it into the data of observation.126

Further, the activity of even the physical scientist is a social activity:

> . . . The analysis of experimental science, including experimental psychology, never operates in a mind or experience that is not social, and by the term "social" I imply that in the thought of the scientist the supposition of his mind and his self always involves other minds and selves as presuppositions and as standing upon the same level of existence and evidence.127

One further aspect of the human conscious relationship to nature must be considered, before proceeding to a discussion of the implications of these ideas for Mead's social theory of man. This concerns the notion, mentioned above, that _knowing changes_ or is a process of changing the world for men in which it, as an emergent capacity or activity, takes place.

> . . . (A) world within which an essential scientific problem has arisen is a _different_ world from that within which this problem does not exist, that is, different from the world that is there when this problem has been solved.128

Mead adheres to the assumption ". . . that the _world that is there_ is a _temporal_ world; i.e., that it is continuously _passing_, or is a world of events".[129] Thus, reality-for-man is always, and necessarily, "contingent" in this sense; as well as in the sense that perception and the construction of objects is always a hypothetical relationship to the world that is there. Man's emergent consciousness, his ability to indicate things to himself as attitudes, enables him to stretch out the immediate and passing "knife-edge" present by means of "memory and

anticipation".[130] However, this ability to extend the "specious present" of the organism does not rule out the contingency of the future (nor of the past, for that matter).[131] "Knowing" something may be functional for man at the moment and adequate for some time in the future, but it is always uncertain, hypothetical. Problematics arise in the passage of events and are, or can be, solved only through active reconstruction of the content of mind and, therefore, a change in the pre-problematic perspective to a greater or lessor extent.

Thus Mead argues that the truth or objectivity of a perspective, and of particular ideas, is relative to the capacity it affords man to satisfy his needs actively, and to the period of time during which this is unproblematic.[132] With passage in nature, perspectives lose their "objectivity", and the world must be constructed anew, at least in respect to those aspects which have become problematic.[133] Thus, the prediction of future events is, itself, contingent and always hypothetical:

> Things emerge; and emerge in the mechanical order of things, which could not have been predicted from what has happened before.134

For Mead, the "world that is there" is, but is not, our world. Reality is always reality-for-man, a reflexive construction which answers both selectively to the world that is there and to the needs of the species,

or to the perpetuation of action essential to the fulfillment of needs. Furthermore, given passage and emergence in nature, what is understood as reality must constantly change as the inadequacies of present perspectives are indicated by the appearance of problematics. The human species is qualitatively different from other species in that problematics may be defined and solved through reflexive intelligence; through the reflexive reconstruction of perspectives. Particular reconstructions are "proven" by virtue of the maintenance of the life of the species that results from action based in the reconstruction.

At the same time, reflexive reconstruction of perspectives is the constitution of a new reality-for-man which is not totally reducible to the prior reality or past, and could not have been predicted on the basis of past "information" or internalized attitudes.[135] Mead, clearly, does not view knowledge in positivistic terms and does not view science, whatever its self-understanding, as a cumulative approach to a mental reflection of the "world that is there" which allows anything like certain prediction of the future. As argued in The Philosophy of the Present, he holds, in contrast, that men live always in a present. This present can be "stretched out" and given a temporal, if contingent, span through the reflexive capacity rooted in internalization. Still, the past and

the future must change through reconstruction in the face of problematics. Thus, Mead views science as but the highest form or expression of man's reflexive capacity to reconstruct his world so that it is amenable to his needs.[136] He comprehends the truth of the results of scientific work as precisely the functional relationship of reconstructions to the needs of man as a social being. The predictive aspect of science is always temporally limited and contingent.

Implications for Interpretation of the Social Theory of Man

The criticisms of Mead's theory of the development of mind and self, as that theory is presented in MSS, can be viewed as a refutation of the adequacy of his attempt to develop a synthesis of positivistic and idealist theories of human life. These criticisms concentrate on two specific issues. Briefly, it was shown that Mead's introduction of the "I" aspect of the self is not consistent with, or logically integral to, his theory of self and mind as arising through an internalization of the prior, on-going social process in the form of conscious attitudes. The "I" is considered as a residual category which is not explained within the theory of socialization, and is largely spoken of in terms of

"chance"; the unexpected aspect of the actual response of the organism to the situation. Without the necessary elaboration, the individual is reducible, without contradiction, to the "me" aspect of the self, to the internalized meanings present in his situation. Mead is quite clear in arguing that the self is continually undergoing change, but this is predicated strictly on changing responses of others and things to the specific individual.

Second, it was demonstrated that the social process, out of which self and mind emerge is, in turn, reducible to a specific and predictable idea of an evolutionary process in nature. Mead clearly expresses the view, especially in the chapter entitled "Society", that human history is an almost automatic expansion of universality: the gradual realization of a global community of common and shared attitudes, characterized by democratic government and a high development of functional social differentiation and interdependence. In fact, he argues that this predicted future follows precisely from the social-behaviouristic theory of mind and self that he develops, and that this future is indeed being realized.

It cannot be denied that the charge that Mead develops an "oversocialized" conception of man has considerable warrant. However, the preceeding discussion of the ideas of emergence, and of knowledge as an active,

creative process, can not be ignored. At minimum, to the extent that the criticisms are warranted, then a contradiction exists between the social theory of man found in MSS, and both Mead's desire to achieve a synthesis of idealism and positivism which recognizes the qualitative differences between men and other animals, and his development of these particular ideas in other works. However, having outlined the ideas of emergence and Mead's epistemological stance, it can be demonstrated that the criticisms rest, in part, on incomplete elaboration of his ideas, and, in part, on the existence of gratuitous elements.

In the first instance, it was suggested that the "I" is inadequate and awkward reference to the presupposition that self and mind are emergent aspects of the "world that is there". That is to say, self and mind emerge as specific processes in nature, rooted, in part, in the prior social interaction and gestural communication that goes on between persons. In these terms, the "me" aspect, spoken of in MSS, must not be identified with the emergent self; rather, it is but an integral part of the emergent whole that is more and other than the combination of elements. Thus, the "I"/"me" distinction must be understood as an analytical distinction between an emergent capacity for mental reflexion, and the attitudinal content of mind that

is internalized through socialization. Furthermore, it is but one of the necessary elements at the basis of this capacity of the human species. It is through the internalization process that individuals become aware of themselves, become objects to themselves, or become parts of their own environment. It is on this basis, in turn, that they can then gain reflexive control of their own responses. Given internalization, the potential for a reflexively conscious self is present and is not identical with, or reducible to, the content internalized.

Thus, on the assumption that the human species evidences the capacity for reflexive reorganization of its relationship to the world in the face of problematics, the social theory of self and mind must be understood as a theory of the social process through which the reflexive capacity emerges, and not as a mechanistic, reductionistic theory of that capacity itself. In this sense, the accusation that the "I" is but an ad hoc presupposition, misses the important point -- it is indeed a presupposition, but an essential one when placed in the perspective of emergence as a fact in nature.[137]

Furthermore, to speak of the reflexive capacity that self and mind introduce, as but the "unexpected" chance response of the organism, is to leave out of account the specific discussion of this capacity as entailing the in-

tentional, hypothetical reconstruction of reality, in mind, before acting. In these terms, the unexpected character of a response, following the reflexive moment, is a matter of the individual acting differently than one would expect, knowing only the initial content of attitudes taken to the situation. The reflexive capacity is the ability to reorganize these present attitudes in the face of problematics; it is no longer conceived as simply a matter of chance discrepancy between an actual action and the action demanded by the "me". Thus, the essential argument is, that while self and mind are social in origin and initial content, they constitute an emergent, reflexive capacity which is not, at least not necessarily, limited to the initial content internalized.

This point is admittedly not presented with any clarity in MSS. Furthermore, it was noted that this was not the only difficulty to be dealt with. Mead also limits the "creative process of mind in nature" within a conception of human history as a specific evolution in social form toward a predictable future of global attitudes (concepts and categories), and functional differentiation and integration of social elements.

It is not, of course, implied in any of Mead's writing that the human reflexive capacity that emerges is unlimited or totally free of constraint. Consistent

with his desire to avoid idealism, Mead clearly accepts the reality of the "world that is there" over against mind, as has been noted. In order to survive and develop, men must continually "adapt", but, within broad limits, to this world and its passage. Human freedom inheres in the fact of passage in nature on the one hand, and in the capacity to reconstruct continually the selective relationship between self and nature on the other.[138]

But, though Mead argues that, "We are neither creatures of the necessity of an irrevocable past, nor of any vision given in the Mount",[139] his discussion of "Society" clearly includes a limitation of man's ability to construct and reconstruct his reality within a specific, predicted social future. In very clear language, the ability to reflect is limited to problematics identified as those which the "exigencies of evolution from time to time require". Further, it is implied that the outcomes of such reconstructions will become the new reality-for-man, only if consistent with the specific evolutionary movement towards greater globalization of functional differentiation and integration.

In contrast, however, it was argued in the previous section that Mead's framework contains the idea that reality-for-man is always the reality of _present_ perspectives, and that both past and future are hypothetical

constructions. Such constructions are therefore contingent; their truth inheres in their functionality, not for Society, but for action in relation to species-needs. Their persistence is dependent, at least, on an absence of problematics in action. Thus Mead specifically holds that predictive "knowledge" is highly probabilistic. This position stands in direct contradiction to his own adherence to an extrapolation of his idea of evolution into a consideration of the future social form.

Mead argues, at one point, that his prediction follows from, or is deducible from, the social behaviourist theory of self and mind that he develops.[140] However, if he is to remain consistent with his own epistemological stance and conception of science, this argument would have to hold only insofar as, and for as long as, the passing present remains unproblematic and calls forth no reflexive reconstruction of perspectives. And, given the assumptions of continual passage and emergence in nature, there is no warrant, within the theory itself, for such an expectation. Indeed, Mead himself argues at one point that:

> Men in human society have come into some degree of control of the process of evolution out of which they arose.[141]

It is not inconsistent with his epistemology for Mead to reconstruct the past in terms of a specific notion of evolution; nor is it inconsistent for him to predicate

intended future actions in these terms. It is inconsistent, however, to write as if this necessarily hypothetical and contingent future was rather a necessary outcome. He commits this error insofar as the character of future problematics and the valid reconstructions of men are described as defined and limited by such a future.

Mead not only argues that the future is hypothetical; in addition, he holds that man and environment (including the social environment) are mutually determinant. His hypostatization of the future, as a specific evolution of social form, contradicts this idea of reciprocal dependence, for it reduces mind to a determined and predictable role within this evolution.

Clearly, the basis of these contradictions is an inessential, indeed gratuitous, element of Mead's writing. The social theory of self and mind, given Mead's epistemological stance and conception of reality, can only be considered a theory of the <u>basis</u> and functions, within action, of the human reflexive capacity. To remain consistent, the theory cannot be predictive of the future form of conduct, for this depends on reflexion in the face of problematics; problematics which have not yet occurred, and which themselves are unpredictable as they involve the aspect of emergence.

Furthermore, there is nothing in the statment of

the basis of mind and self which involves the necessity of such a predictable future. The reflexive, creative capacity is experienced in our present; it is taken as given. The past is always known from the perspective of the present and thus one can reconstruct the past in order to demonstrate how this capacity could have emerged; that is, one can state the conditions of its emergence and persistence.[142] One may then anticipate the future as including this capacity, insofar as one can maintain and foster those conditions that are essential to this capacity in the face of emergent problematics. The essential conditions that Mead speaks of involve the biological characteristics of the species on the one hand, and, open, gestural communication as a part of social interaction, on the other. The specific evolution of social form that is so much a part of the discussion of "Society", is not an essential element in this basis.[143] In fact, as will be suggested below and developed in the subsequent chapter, Mead's predicted social future actually negates the very conditions necessary to the existence and perpetuation of the reflexive capacity of men.

In conclusion, it is clear that the criticisms of Mead's position, especially as developed in MSS, are only partially warranted. The oversocialized conception

of man disappears with the elaboration of self and mind as emergent, functional capacities of the human species in relation to the "world that is there". The ambiguous "I"/"me" distinction is more fully and clearly presented as a distinction between the internalized content of meanings on the one hand, and the emergent capacity for reflexive reorganization of attitudes on the other. In these terms, the "me" aspect of the self is only a "part" which stands in reciprocal dependence with the "whole" which is characterized by the reflexive capacity. The apparent reduction of mind and self to the social process, in terms of a specific evolution of social form, also disappears on recognition that such a reduction contradicts Mead's own understanding of the future as hypothetical and contingent. The removal of this element does not, however, affect the basic social theory of man that Mead presents.

The Social Theory of Mind and the Sociology of Knowledge

From the point of view of issues in the sociology of knowledge, Mead's perspective has usually been considered of importance primarily because it is understood as presenting a conceptualization of the "mechanics" involved in how "knowledge" is internalized from the social

situation of individuals. In this interpretation, knowledge is understood as "given" in the group and in its structure of relationships; that is, that meaning is inherent in the form of interaction. Mead's framework is apparently important because it provides conceptual clarity as to how the individual's ideas are tied to, and determined by, his social situation through the process of socialization.[144]

This approach to the possible importance of Mead's work is suggestive as far as it goes. However, in the light of the interpretation developed above, it is rather narrow, and because of this, quite misleading. In the first place, Mead was _not_ concerned solely with the internalization of a specific content of attitudes from the social situation into which individuals are born. This process must be understood as an essential aspect of the overall basis of the emergent and qualitatively different reflexive capacity of men -- a capacity which enables men to react back on, and change intentionally, both the initial content of ideas internalized, and, therefore, the initial interactional context.

Second, Mead did not identify knowledge with the content of internalized meanings. He distinguished between information, which is more clearly associated with the internalization of existing attitudes, and knowledge as

an active construction and reorganization of attitudes in relation to the solution of problematics that arise in experience. It is an assumption, on Mead's part, that the internalized meanings and the social context are "two sides of the same coin".[145] On this level, the self is precisely the social context and process internalized, and there would appear to be little in the way of a relationship to analyse, insofar as thought, as an internalized conversation of gestures and the social process, are identical.[146]

On both counts, then, a social study of consciousness involves more than simply an analysis of the relationships between specific social situations and the ideas (information) held by persons within these situations. This is so precisely because reflexive intelligence and knowledge are more, and other, than given attitudes and social patterns. In fact, Mead's perspective implies an analysis of the internalized content of mind as itself problematic or potentially so; it implies a critical analysis of existing ideas as themselves an element in the existence and persistence of problematic situations.

Briefly, Mead understands all science as but the clearest expression of reflexive intelligence, and thus equates it with the general capacity of men to reorganize

attitudes in the face of problematics. Thus, social science as well must be understood as basically problem-solving activity. However, the object of its investigation, the social context, is considered a set of interaction patterns which are, in large measure, interdependent with the organized and shared attitudes (information) of the individuals involved. It follows that, insofar as the patterns of action that are traditionally and habitually performed have become problematic in relation to the achievement of ends, so too are the organized attitudes involved in these patterns called into question. Thus, the reorganization of social activity implies the reorganization of attitudes involved in this activity. This, in turn, implies the necessity of critical reflexion on the adequacy of existing ideas in relation to species-needs.

Nonetheless, it must be admitted that Mead's work does not fully draw out or deal with this implication of a critical analysis of ideas in relation to social form. His view of science does indeed entail critical analysis insofar as knowing, as opposed to being informed, is understood as an active process of constructing perspectives which enable men to overcome problematics that arise in experience. But, this critical orientation is not adequately carried over into social analysis, and, in

particular, is not pursued in relation to the analysis of the relationship between ideas and social factors. Mead does not explicitly view this relationship as itself potentially problematic, in terms, for example, of persistent ideas inhibiting social change, or of persistent social patterns inhibiting the reorganization of attitudes.

Instead, Mead's writing tends to concentrate on the social being of men only insofar as it is considered a basis for the emergence of reflexive intelligence in the first place. The problematics that are generally of concern are those that arise in the relationship between men, the fulfillment of their needs and physical nature, which is the object of these needs.[147] Primarily by omission, there is, in his writing, no problematic entailed in the relationship between the emergent reflexive capacity, knowledge and the social forms and attitudes that are part of the basis of thought. The criticism that Mead's work is idealistic reflects this omission. As noted previously, he appears to view social change as, indeed, unproblematic -- through the interaction of groups with diverse perspectives, reciprocal role-taking is represented as relatively unproblematic, and as leading automatically to a common attitudinal

structure, change in the thought and action of both groups, and an end to conflict.

However, there is no logical necessity for the exclusion of such a consideration, which, in Marx' perspective was captured by the concept of alienation. Indeed, there are a number of suggestive passages in Mead's writing which demonstrate that he was not totally unaware of such problematics.[148] The fact that these implications, vis à vis a critical social analysis, are not made explicit by Mead himself is apparently related to the specific evolutionary assumptions discussed above. These aspects of Mead's writing will be considered in greater detail in the following chapter as they are of central importance in the investigation of compatibilities between the work of Marx and Mead.[149]

Summary and Conclusions

This analysis of Mead's social theory of man has attempted to lay a basis for the following considera-tion of the compatabilities between his work and that of Marx which was discussed in the previous chapter. It has in no way attempted to be exhaustive, but only to present basic elements of Mead's thought that are considered of importance in relation to problems in the sociology of knowledge. Moreover, the analysis has been guided, in

part, by the specific considerations that arose out of the analysis of Marx' work in relation to the discipline.

It was suggested, in the introductory remarks to this chapter, that the possibility of compatibility rested on the demonstration that both positions contained similar conceptions of man, the social and knowledge; that both contained similar epistemological views and that both positions were consistent with a concern for the specific problematic which Marx denotes by the terms alienation and reification. The effort to demonstrate such compatibilities, however, is only begun here. It was necessary to deal, first, with the criticisms that are directed to Mead's position, criticisms which find considerable support in his own writing and which throw considerable doubt on the hypothesis that the so-called interactionist perspective is compatible with a Marxian, critical perspective.

Thus, the chapter first presented Mead's social theory of mind and self with particular emphasis on the internalization process in interaction. It is the conceptualization of this process that has been assumed to be of importance in clarifying the relationship between thought and social factors in an adequate sociology of knowledge.

The following section presented the central criticisms that are directed at the perspective;

criticisms which amount to a refutation of his attempted synthesis of positivistic and idealist perspectives on man and thought, and which are found to have considerable warrant on investigation of the writing itself. Basically, Mead is shown to reduce the individual to a reflection of the on-going social process. Mind and self are, in his view, absent at birth, are constituted through an internalization of existent meanings, and are, thereby, identical with the social situation in which they emerge. The social process itself is conceptualized as "progressing" historically, according to a specific and predictable evolutionary outcome. Even though Mead speaks of mind as a reflexive and creative capacity, the results of this capacity are limited to, and directed by, the context of social evolution. Critical theorists, in addition, accuse Mead of naivety in relation to his conception of social change. In their view, the reduction of the historical transformation of social form to evolutionary law is a denial of the individual, and of the historical experience of conflict between individual and society.

While considerable support for such criticisms was found, especially in MSS, it was noted that insufficient attention has been given to Mead's epistemological presuppositions, and, especially, to the fundamental presupposition of emergence in nature. To the extent that

the criticisms hold, it must be admitted that Mead's work is reductionistic and, therefore, incompatible with the Marxist framework. However, the consideration of these central presuppositions led to the conclusion that his work is also contradictory within itself. The analysis then proceeded to reconsider Mead's social theory of men from the point of view of these presuppositions, in an attempt to remove this contradiction.

It was demonstrated that, in terms of the conception of mind and self as emergent processes, it is incorrect to interpret the theory as limiting or reducing man's reflexive capacity to the content of internalized attitudes, meanings, or the "me" aspect of the self. Rather, it is a theory explaining the conditions under which the potential for a reflexive capacity, and thus a self-conscious control of response and environment, emerges. It is axiomatic for Mead that the human species has this capacity; his interest lies in conceptualizing its basis, or conditions, as a fact in the "world that is there". The attempt to capture this idea in the distinction between "I" and "me" is much more clearly rendered as the distinction between initial content of attitudes internalized and the ability or capacity to manipulate reality that emerges on the basis, in part, of this very internalization.

The second issue, that of the limitation of this emergent capacity within the confines of a predictable evolution of social form, was reconsidered from the point of view of Mead's epistemology. As expressed both in the Philosophy of the Act and in the Philosophy of the Present, Mead conceptualizes knowing as a functional, active process in the relationship between persons and a "world that is there". Reality-for-man is considered a selective and self-conscious construction of a perspective whose objectivity is contingent, both upon the satisfaction of needs and upon the "patience of nature" or upon the "world that is there". Furthermore, in this view, past and future are always understood from the point of view of the present, and, therefore, prediction of the future is always contingent on the continued absence of problematics.

Thus, it was demonstrated that Mead cannot, without contradiction, extrapolate present characteristics of social form into the future. If this inconsistent element is removed from his work, it is, in turn, no longer necessary to limit the occurence, or the products, of the reflexive capacity to the exigencies and demands which reflect such a future, as Mead hypostatizes in MSS.

This elaboration of the "I" aspect of the self, through consideration of it as an emergent capacity, and the removal of the tendency to hypostatize present social

form, answers some questions but leaves others open. In the first place, his social theory of mind and self can be recognized as only a conceptual elaboration of the essential social aspect of the emergence of qualitative differences between man and other species. Whether or not, and to what extent, this reconsideration renders his perspective consistent with that of Marx, and especially Marx' idea of praxis, will be considered in more detail in the following chapter.

Second, it was suggested in the previous section that Mead's view of science, as critical reorganization of thought in the face of problematics, implied the compatibility of his perspective with a critical theory and analysis of the relationship between thought and social factors. However, this possibility is not dealt with by Mead, and, in fact, is countered in his work by two major factors. Mead presents thought and social factors as "two sides of the same coin"; social patterns depend on common attitudes and attitudes are internalized in the process of interaction within those patterns. Also, and more important, Mead continually writes as if human social conflict is automatically transcended through internalization, or through taking the role of the other. These aspects of Mead's writing suggest, to some, that his work is "untouched by a concern with alienation",[150]

and thus not compatible with the critical perspective, in which this concept is central and essential. This issue is the major difficulty in any attempt to synthesize the work of Marx and Mead in respect to the construction of an adequate sociology of knowledge and becomes the central focus of the following chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

[1]See Chapter I, note 13.

[2]It is generally recognized that the perspectives of these writers differ considerably, nonetheless, and that the compatibility is therefore not a matter of simple "addition". "Dialectical materialism" and "social behaviourism" are rooted in somewhat different presuppositions, and considerably different intellectual traditions. Thus, whatever "use" either perspective can make of the other will require fundamental transformations. Cf. R. Ropers, "Mead, Marx and Social Psychology", Catalyst, No. 7 (Winter 1973); R. Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism and Social Reality: Some Marxist Queries"; G. F. Cronk, "Symbolic Interactionism: A 'Left-Meadian' Interpretation"; I. M. Zeitlin, Rethinking Sociology (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973).

[3]Certainly this is not the direction in which Mead's work has been developed. The "Symbolic Interactionist" school tends to be quite descriptive and a-critical. Concentration has been placed on the ability of the theory to account for the moulding of self and mind in social situations, with little or no emphasis on the negative aspects of such moulding. Cf., Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction, chp. 3; E. Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959); J. G. Manis and B. N. Meltzer, eds., Symbolic Interaction: A Reader in Social Psychology (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1972), part v, "Research Implications and Applications". For a brief discussion of the limitations of this development of Mead's ideas, see H. P. Dreitzel, ed., Recent Sociology No. 2 (London: The Macmillan Co., 1970), editor's introduction. See also, W. W. Mayrl, "Ethnomethodology: Sociology Without Society", Catalyst, No. 7 (1973), 15-28.

[4]Cf. R. W. Hornosty, "Conceptions of Human Nature in the Sociological Tradition" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, SUNY at Buffalo, 1973), esp. chp. 5, "Dissolution of the Inner Dialectic and the Birth of 'Homo Sociologicus'".

[5]This is especially true of the chapter entitled "Society" in G. H. Mead, Mind, Self and Society, edited and introduced by C. W. Morris (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972). The point will be considered in detail below.

[6] For the basis of this argument, see D. Wrong, "The Oversocialized Conception of Man", American Sociological Review, XXVI (1961).

[7]See Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism"; Schroyer, "Toward a Critical Theory for Advanced Industrial Society", in Dreitzel, Recent Sociology No. 2; Maryl, "Ethnomethodology"; Zeitlin, Rethinking Soc.

[8]Unlike Marx, Mead clearly does not often direct his attention to analysis of social problematics, and, indeed, as is discussed below, there is an overall tendency to assume an "automatic" process of change in social form when problems arise. Mead's early writing does consider the problematic nature of education as a social form and its negative impact; he wishes a transformed educational process which would recognize and be based in the social character of actual development, but, only in order to better achieve the development of a person who conforms to the values and interests of his society. Already in these writings there is a contradiction present between the implications of a presupposed ability on the part of persons to transform social form, and the desire to do so in the interest of existing institutions. See Mead's address, "The Psychology of Consciousness Implied in Instruction", in A. J. Reck, ed., Mead: Selected Writings (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), p. 114ff. It is interesting to note however, that in spite of Mead's "conservative" emphasis in respect to social form and social change, his perspective has been utilized in an entirely opposite direction -- after being shorn of certain aspects. See, for example, J. Taylor, "Anthrocracy", Catalyst, No. 2 (Summer 1966).

[9]Specifically, more emphasis must be placed on identification of the "gratuitous" elements in Mead's writing, and on how these elements distort the otherwise important critical insights present. As indicated, while in Marx the central problem primarily concerned a lack of clarification of ideas present, in Mead, the problem is the presence of definite elements which contradict any critical orientation implied by aspects of his perspective.

[10]It should be noted that while other writers have viewed Mead's importance in the same light, they have done so from the point of view of rather different, and, indeed, positivistic presuppositions. This point will be taken up in subsequent sections.

[11]See above, chapter IV, pp. 141-143 where the same point is made in respect to Marx' writing.

[12]See Hornosty, op. cit,; W. L. Kolb, "A Critical Evaluation of Mead's 'I' and 'ME' Concepts", in J. G. Manis and B. N. Meltzer, Symbolic Interaction: A Reader in Social Psychology (Boston: Allyn Bacon, 1972), pp. 253-261. Mead himself explicitly argued in an earlier (1912) essay that the "I" is but a "fiction", see Mead, "The Mechanism of Social Consciousness", in Reck, Mead, p. 141.

[13]Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism", 81-82.

[14]The central thesis of this chapter is that the roots of the conservatism and a-critical tone of Mead's writing can be identified and can be removed, and, that through this operation, Mead's basic insights become more clearly important for the critical perspective. Cf., Cronk, "Symbolic Interaction".

[15]In particular, "The Genesis of Self and Social Control", "The Social Self" and "A Behaviouristic Account of the Significant Symbol", in Reck, Mead.

[16]Clearly, the central emphasis in Mind, Self and Society is on the development of a conceptual framework which can be a basis for the interpretation of self and mind as emerging within the on-going social process into which each individual is born. The basic ontological and epistemological presuppositions remain largely, though not totally, implicit in that work and are more completely developed, in themselves, in The Philosophy of the Act (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967) (hereinafter P.A.); The Philosophy of the Present (LaSalle, Illinois: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1959) (hereinafter P.P.); and in various articles -- those reprinted in Reck, Mead, and two articles introduced by David Miller, "Relative Space-Time and Simultaneity" and "Metaphysics", both in Review of Metaphysics, XVII (1964), 514-535. For some idea of the background to the develop-

ment of Mead's basic ideas see Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967) (hereinafter M.T.).

[17]This fundamental question must constantly be kept in mind in any adequate interpretation of Mead's perspective and its limitations -- the development of an answer to the question is the fundamental intention behind his work, and he repeatedly insists that any adequate conception of men must combine both the reality of nature, and yet the significance of the emergence of mind in nature. For example, he holds that: "Nature -- the external world -- is objectively there, in opposition to our experience of it, or in opposition to the individual thinker himself . . . nevertheless [objects] possess certain characteristics by virtue of their relationship to . . . mind, which they would not possess otherwise or apart from those relations. . . . . Experienced objects have definite meanings for the individuals thinking about them". MSS, p. 131; cf., M. Natanson, The Social Dynamics of G. H. Mead (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1956).

[18]MSS, pp. 1-8; the same criticism reappears throughout his writing: see for example, P.A., "The Nature of Scientific Knowledge", pp. 45-62, "Mechanism and Contingency", pp. 313-320, "Categorical Fragments", pp. 626-663, "The Process of Mind in Nature", pp. 357-444; also P.P., pp. 14-15.

[19]MSS, "A Contrast of Individualistic and Social Theories of the Self", p. 222ff. Again, this criticism is repeatedly stressed throughout Mead's writing; see, for example, P.A., "The Process of Mind in Nature", passim; P.P., pp. 14-15, 38-39.

[20]MSS, p. 131.

[21]Thus Mead criticizes positivistic behaviourists, such as Watson, who ignore these differences or rule them non-existent simply because they are not observables. MSS, pp. 1-13.

[22]See, for exmaple, Mead's discussion of "Form and Environment", P.A., pp. 308-312.

[23]That is, consciousness, in the sense of awareness, not self-consciousness; see, "The Self and the Process of Reflection", in MSS, pp. 354-378.

[24]Ibid., pp. 371-373; see also, P.P., pp. 69-70.

[25]MSS, p. 136.

[26]Ibid., pp. 198, 328-336. The concept of emergence is only fully developed in the P.A., and, especially, in P.P., and will be discussed in detail below.

[27]"In the type of temporary inhibition of action which signifies thinking, or in which reflection arises, we have presented in the experience of the individual, tenatively and in advance and for his selection among them, the different possibilities or alternatives of future action open to him within the given social situation. . . . Reflection . . . arises only under the conditions of self-consciousness and makes possible the purposive control and organization by the individual organism of its conduct, with reference to its social and physical environment . . .", MSS, pp. 90-91; see also, ibid., pp. 42-43, 62-66, 73, 94-95, 122-125; P.A., pp. 372-373.

[28]In one sense this dual criticism is quite "encouraging" in the context of Mead's intentions and in respect to the basic concerns of this study. On the one hand, writing in opposition to both positivism and idealism, Mead parallels Marx' concern to achieve synthesis of these positions in response to their separate inadequacies. On the other hand, to be accused of erring in both directions at least suggests that the critics misinterpret particular ideas; e.g., what appears sociologistic may more aptly be seen as a step on Mead's part away from what are seen by him as idealist pitfalls. In similar fashion, Marx' arguments, against the idealist position of the Young-Hegelians, are often misinterpreted as an embrace of the opposite pole. See note 25, chapter IV.

[29]See, for example, "Evolution Becomes a General Idea", in M.T., pp. 153-168; in particular p. 168 where both emphases are present.

[30]Ibid,; also, MSS, passim.

[31]MSS, pp. 98-100.

[32]"The Self and the Process of Reflection", op. cit., p. 363; MSS, p. 249.; cf., D. L. Miller, G. H. Mead: Self, Language and the World (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1973), pp. 60-65.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Ibid. See also "The Function of Imagery in Conduct" and "The Biologic Individual", MSS, pp. 337-353.

[36]Ibid.

[37]This idea is an early statement of the idea of emergence in the essay "The Self and the Process of Reflection", ibid., where Mead contrasts the situation of other animals with that of men. Particular species may be more developed in some aspects, than is the case for the human species, but do not evidence the same unique combination of aspects.

[38]P.P., pp. 70-72.

[39]MSS, pp. 150-152.

[40]It must be emphasized that in Mead's view, self and mind are absent at birth, and thus, that initial "gestures" of the child are not "significant" or meaningful in the sense of reflexive intelligence. On the other hand, as noted, these gestures are not the result of specific and clearly defined instincts as is the case with other animals at birth. Cf., "The Self and the Process of Reflection" and "The Biologic Individual", in Reck, Mead.

[41]This is not to say that the infant does not contribute in some way to the interaction and pattern established. The cholicy infant, for example, would effect the character of the relationship -- but, in a non-meaningful, non-intentional manner from the standpoint of the infant itself. Meaningfulness inheres initially in the interpretation of the gesture by the adult -- the gesture only subsequently becomes "significant" for the child.

[42]"The situation in which one seeks conditioning responses is, I think, as far as effective intelligence is concerned, always present in the form of a problem. When a man is just going ahead, he seeks the indications of the path, but he does it unconsciously. . . . But when he reaches the chasm [a problematic], this onward movement is stopped by the very process of drawing back. . . . That conflict, so to speak, sets him free to see a whole set of other things . . . the characters which present various possibilities of action under the circumstances. The man holds onto these different possibilities of response in terms of the different stimuli which present themselves, and it is this ability to hold onto them there that constitutes his mind", MSS, p. 124.

[43]Mead, "The Self and the Process of Reflection", pp. 360-361, emphasis added.

[44]"Meaning is . . . a development of something objectively there as a relation between certain phases of the social act; it is not a psychical addition to that act and it is not an 'idea' as traditionally conceived. A gesture by one organism, the resultant of the social act in which the gesture is an early phrase, and the response of the other organism to the gesture, are the relata in a threefold relationship of gesture to first organism, of gesture to second organism, and of gesture to subsequent phases of the given social act; and this threefold relationship constitutes the matrix within which meaning arises or which develops into the field of meaning", MSS, p. 76.

[45]"It is . . . the relationship of . . . this vocal gesture, to such a set of responses in the individual himself as well as in the other that makes of that vocal gesture . . . a significant symbol. A symbol does tend to

call out in the individual a group of reactions such as it calls out in the other, but there is something further that is involved in its being a significant symbol: this response within one's self to such a word as 'chair' or 'dog' is one which is a stimulus to the individual as well as a response. This is what is involved in what we term the meaning of a thing, or its significance. . . . When we speak of the meaning of what we are doing we are making the response itself, that we are on the point of carrying out, a stimulus to our action. It becomes a stimulus to a later stage of action which is to take place from the point of view of this particular response", ibid., pp. 71-72.

[46]Mead repeatedly speaks of two aspects of this development which he tends not to clearly separate: on the one hand, a content of mind is internalized, but, on the other, mind is an ability or capacity of awareness of meaning or significance. This lack of clear distinction will be discussed in detail later and is essential to a comprehension of the contradictions in Mead's framework.

[47]"There is an organization of the various parts of the nervous system that are going to be responsible for acts, an organization which represents, not only that which is immediately taking place, but also the later stages that are to take place. When one approaches a distant object he approaches it with reference to what he is going to do when he arrives there. . . . The later stages of the act are present in the early stages -- not simply in the sense that they are all ready to go off, but in the sense that they serve to control the process itself. . . . The act as a whole can be there determining the process", MSS, p. 11.

[48]"The human animal is an attentive animal. . . . Our whole intelligent process seems to lie in the attention which is selective of certain types of stimuli. . . . Not only do we open the door to certain stimuli and close it to others, but our attention is an organizing process as well as a selective process. . . . Our attention enables us to organize the field in which we are going to act. Here we have the organism as acting and determining its environment. It is not simply a set of passive senses played upon by the stimuli which come from without", ibid., p. 25.

[49]See Mead's contrast of the human situation with that of the dog-fight; MSS, pp. 42-43.

[50]Ibid., p. 132.

[51]"If we seek the ideal character of a horse in the central nervous system we would have to find it in all those different parts of the initiated acts. . . . We can find in that sense in the beginning of the act just those characters which we assign to 'horse' as an idea, or if you like, as a concept", ibid., p. 12.

[52]"The Self and the Process of Reflection", op. cit., pp. 368-371.

[53]MSS, p. 47.

[54]See Mead's contrast of the situation of man and animal in the face of a problematic situation, ibid., pp. 122-125.

[55]Ibid., pp. 92-94.

[56]"The self has the characteristic that it is an object to itself, and that characteristic distinguishes it from other objects and from the body. . . . The apparatus of reason would not be complete unless it swept itself into its own analysis or the field of experience or unless the individual brought himself into the same experiential field as that of other individual selves in relation to whom he acts in any given social situation. . . . For the individual organism is obviously an essential and important fact or constituent element of the empirical situation in which it acts; and without taking objective account of itself as such, it cannot act intelligently or rationally", ibid., p. 136, 138.

[57]Ibid., pp. 144-164; se also, "The Genesis of Self and Social Control", in Reck, Mead, pp. 267-293.

[58]Ibid., pp. 150-151.

[59]Ibid., pp. 151-152.

[60] *Ibid.*, pp. 156-158.

[61] *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 219.

[62] ". . . an institution is . . . nothing but an organization of attitudes which we all carry in us, the organized attitudes of others that control and determine conduct", *ibid*, p. 211. Cf., J. W. Petras, ed., *G. H. Mead: Essays on his Social Philosophy* (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1968), pp. 8-9.

[63] "All social interrelations and interactions are rooted in a certain common socio-physiological endowment or every individual involved in them. The physiological bases of social behaviour -- which have their ultimate seat or locus in the lower part of the individual's central nervous system -- are the bases of such behaviour, precisely because they consist in drives or instincts or behaviour tendencies, on the part of the given individual, which he cannot carry out or give overt expression and satisfaction to without the co-operative aid of one or more other individuals", *MSS*, p. 139, note 2a.

[64] "There are what I have termed 'generalized social attitudes' which make an organized self possible. In the community there are certain ways of acting under situations which are essentially identical, and these ways of acting on the part of anyone are those which we excite in others when we take certain steps. . . . There are then a whole series of such common responses in the community in which we live, and such responses are what we term institutions. The institution represents a common response on the part of all members of the community to a particular situation", *ibid*., pp. 260-261; "Human society as we know it could not exist without minds and selves, since all its most important characteristic features presuppose the possessions of minds and selves by its individual members; but its individual members would not possess minds and selves if these had not arisen within or emerged out of the human social process in its lower stages of development . . . ", *ibid*., p. 227; "Human society . . . does not merely stamp the pattern of the individual's self; it also, at the same time, gives him a mind, as the means or ability of consciously conversing with himself in terms of the social attitudes which constitute the structure of his self and which embody the pattern of human society's organized behaviour

as reflected in that structure. And his mind enables him in turn to stamp the pattern of his further developing self (further development through his mental activity) upon the structure of organization of human society, and thus in a degree to reconstruct and modify in terms of his self the general patterns of social and group behaviour in terms of which his self was originally constituted", *ibid.*, p. 263, note 10. The "conservatism" that remains in Mead's work, despite such passages, is investigated below.

[65] In other words, Mead emphasizes the character of social *forms*, in contrast to the notion of the underlying social *process*, as "means" in the relationship of human form and physical environment.

[66] *MSS.*, p. 173.

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 175.

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 173.

[69] *Ibid.*, p. 174.

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 176.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 177.

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 178, emphasis added.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 174.

[74] *Ibid.*

[75] "If it [self] did not have these two phases ['I' and 'Me'] there could not be conscious responsibility, and there would be nothing novel in experience", *ibid.*, p. 178. Mead himself labelled the "I" a "fictitious" element in an early article, "The Mechanism of Social Consciousness", in Reck, *Mead*, pp. 134-141. The argument here is that his later writing rejects such a view.

[76]However, as will be argued, it is only "apparently" the case that the "I" has no basis in the socialization process.

[77]As already motivated, Mead speaks of man's qualitative differences as involving the ability to reorganize reality systematically and reflexively and thus to control intentionally the course of action in the face of problematics. To pin these differences solely to the concept of the "I" and, in turn, to the notion of chance, is to lose sight of this broader notion of the differences between the human species and other animals.

[78]In other words, human reflexive intelligence must then be comprehended as only quantitatively different from animal intelligence -- a more complex phenomenon perhaps, but, reducible to stimulus-response patterns, a position Mead himself explicitly rejected and sought to transcend.

[79]MSS, pp. 122-125, 308-309; P.A., p. 68.

[80]Ibid.

[81]Ibid., pp. 309-310, 324.

[82]MSS., pp. 214-215; P.A., "Mechanism and Contingency", pp. 313-320.

[83]This particular problem is most clearly evident in the section "Society", MSS, pp. 227-336.

[84]Ibid., p. 324.

[85]Ibid., p. 308, emphasis added.

[86]Ibid., pp. 309-310, emphasis added.

[87]Ibid., p. 208.

[88]Earlier, as noted, Mead clearly uses the term "impulse" to capture the differences between the animal and man, i.e., the lack of any defined instinctual

patterning in the human infant. Here he tends to contradict that differentiation by attributing to man specific biological tendencies, in order to explain social conflicts. As will be shown, however, Mead could have explained such conflict in terms of his social theory of self and mind, and avoided the contradictory recourse to instincts.

[89]MSS, p. 208.

[90]Ibid.

[91]Ibid., p. 323.

[92]See Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism"; Schroyer, "Toward a Critical Theory for Advanced Industrial Society".

[93]See "The Limits of the Problematic", P.A., pp. 26-44.

[94]See, for example, MSS, pp. 119-120.

[95]Ibid., pp. 303-305.

[96]Ibid., pp. 284-285.

[97]Ibid., p. 309.

[98]Ibid., p. 309, note 19, emphasis added.

[99]Ibid., p. 323; see also, P.A., p. 655.

[100]Ibid., p. 325.

[101]Ibid., p. 328.

[102]Ibid., p. 262.

[103]*Ibid.*, p. 310. From another point of view, Mead's "idealism" in respect to social change and in relation to his intentions, is a matter of not dealing adequately with any problematic that might be entailed by the very "existence" of social forms, institutions, habits or attitudinal structures. Mead nods to the existence of this "problem", as will be shown below, but in this section of his work he speaks, clearly, as if, given problems in the relationships between men and in the relation between men and the "world that is there", change "automatically" occurs in the patterns of interaction and in the structure of the selves involved.

[104]It is not necessary to go into Mead's lengthy discussion of this concept here, but only to emphasize that it is a basic presupposition of his work which has important consequences for the interpretation of various ideas in his perspective that cannot be ignored in relation to the difficulties under discussion.

[105]P.A., p. 641, emphasis added.

[106]P.P., p. 24.

[107]*Ibid.*, p. 35.

[108]*Ibid.*, pp. 33-34, see also "The Objective Reality of Perspectives", *ibid.*, pp. 161-175; and, P.A., "Consciousness and the Unquestioned", p. 71.

[109]P.P., pp. 70-77, 84-85.

[110]Cf. Miller, *G. H. Mead: Self, Language and the World*, pp. 46-47.

[111]*Ibid.*, p. 148, emphasis added.

[112]In other words it is mind, individual mind, that presupposes an on-going social, interactional context. The emergent whole is not Society, in any ontological sense, but a mind whose locus, as Mead puts it, is social, but whose focus lies in the individual. Cf. Durkheim, *The Rules of the Sociological Method*, pp. xlvii-xlviii.

[113]MSS, p. 227.

[114]P.P., p. 68, P.A., p. 68.

[115]P.P., pp. 70-71.

[116]Ibid., p. 68, emphasis added.

[117]See ibid., p. 38 and P.A., "The Nature of Scientific Knowledge", op. cit., especially, pp. 50-51, and "The Process of Mind in Nature", p. 359.

[118]P.A., p. 8.

[119]Ibid., p. 3.

[120]Ibid., p. 25, emphasis added.

[121]Ibid., see also, Mead, "The Objective of Reality of Perspectives".

[122]Ibid.

[123]Ibid., p. 55, emphasis added; see also, P.P., p. 68.

[124]"The Process of Mind in Nature", P.A., ibid. p. 424.

[125]See especially, "The Limits of the Problematic" and "The Nature of Scientific Knowledge", P.A., pp. 26-62, passim.

[126]Ibid., p. 62.

[127]Ibid., p. 53; see also, Mead, "The Process of Mind in Nature", pp. 398-399.

[128]*Ibid*., pp. 59-60, emphasis added.

[129]*Ibid*., p. 64, emphasis added.

[130]Mead, "Consciousness and the Unquestioned", pp. 65-66.

[131]See P.P., pp. 6-14, 23-25.

[132]"A Pragmatic Theory of Truth", in Reck, *Mead*, pp. 320-344; see also, P.P., p. 68.

[133]P.A., pp. 30-33; Mead, "Objective Reality of Perspectives".

[134]P.A., p. 88; see also pp. 412-420; P.P., p. 173.

[135]P.A., "Fragments on the Process of Reflection", pp. 87-90; "The Process of Mind in Nature", pp. 412-420.

[136]*Ibid*., pp. 90-91.

[137]In other words, the "I" concept captures the emergent characteristic of man, his ability to self-consciously control himself and his environment; whereas, the "me" aspect refers to the internalization of the communicative process, which is but a *part* of the emergent whole. In these terms, both "I" and "me" are integral parts of the social theory of mind and self.

[138]P.A., pp. 662-663.

[139]P.P., p. 90.

[140]*MSS*, p. 323.

[141]P.A., p. 511, "A Philosophy of History"; see also, *MSS*, pp. 251-252.

[142]P.P., pp. 14-16.

[143]At most, Mead could speak consistently only in terms of this social form as a possible value to be achieved, or an end to be striven for.

[144]Cf. J. C. McKinney, "The Contributions of G. H. Mead to the Sociology of Knowledge", Social Forces, XXXIV (December 1955), and T. V. Smith, "The Social Philosophy of G. H. Mead", American Journal of Sociology, XXXVII (November 1931).

[145]MSS, p. 140.

[146]The same problem was noted in respect to Marx, see above, chp. 4, "Alienation and the Social Analysis of Ideas".

[147]Beyond the brief discussion of problematics in the relationships betwen men in the section on "Society" in MSS and in scattered early articles, Mead tends to concentrate only on conceptualizing the process of problem-solution in the relationship between men and the "world that is there".

[148]These will be discussed in detail in the following chapter; see, for example, "The Relation of Play to Education", in Petras, Mead: Essays, chp. 2, pp. 27-34, especially pp. 28-29.

[149]As there is no explicit rationale for critical social analysis in Mead's work, it is necessary to demonstrate the compatibility of the concept of alienation with his framework.

[150]Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism".

CHAPTER VI

MARX AND MEAD: CONTRIBUTIONS TO A CRITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

Two general hypotheses have guided this study. The first argues that the writings of Marx and Mead contain "anticipations", however inadequate, of the Critique of the sociology of knowledge; the second argues that through a basic compatibility, elements of each perspective can be utilized to complete the other; and that this completion constitutes the basis of an adequate framework for the sociology of knowledge.

The works of Marx and Mead have been discussed separately, and the analyses have substantiated the first hypothesis and provided implicit support for the second. It was found that both writers develop basic presuppositions and concepts that are consistent with the insight that social factors and knowledge are integrally related. It was also found that both writers demand a critical mode of analysis; explicitly in the case of Marx, implicitly in the case of Mead. Thus, it can be argued that both Marx and Mead clearly "anticipated" the Critique, though this is true more obviously of the former than the latter.

However, it was also found that neither position alone was adequate. On the one hand, Marx failed to elaborate precisely the relationship between praxis and the problematic of alienation; the problematic which provides the rationale for critical analysis. On the other hand, Mead demonstrates little or no appreciation that any problematic intervenes in the dialectical relationship between social context and ideas which is not "automatically" resolved through the reciprocal process of "internalization". Thus, attention must now be focused, more directly, on the question of compatibility, for it is in terms of a synthesis of the separate positions that these remaining problems can be overcome.

It must be emphasized, once again, that the basis of complementarity, and thus the character of the resulting sociology, diverges considerably from the expectations of others who propose the fruitfulness of a Marx/Mead synthesis. As indicated previously, there is a definite parallel between those who initially suggested the hypothesis, and those who are critical of the ideas of both Marx and Mead, and of the sociology of knowledge. The critics of the separate perspectives and the proponents of the compatibility thesis tend to understand these perspectives in positivistic terms.[1]

Marx is interpreted as attempting to develop a framework whereby human activity and thought can be understood as "determined by" social-existential factors, especially by sub-structural, economic forces. Those who put forward the compatibility thesis view his perspective as limited in regard to conceptualization of the "social-psychological" dimension. Specifically, this is phrased in terms of an apparent absence of any conceptualization of the "mechanics" of the specific process of determination of ideas by social factors; an absence of an answer to the question of how, exactly, each individual's mind and self are determined by the social-structural factors integral to his biography. What must be included in Marx' perspective, in their view, is a statement of this relationship which may be subjected to controlled, empirical, experimental analysis.[2]

It is Mead's work, of course, that immediately appears promising, because it deals in detail with the dynamics of internalization or role-taking, the process through which ideas, embedded in social relationships, "get inside" the heads of individuals.[3] It is appreciated by these writers that Mead's work, in its initial form, tends not to be amenable to empirical, experimental validation, but, this is not considered an insurmountable difficulty.[4]

However, to view Marx and Mead as working within

positivistic presuppositions, whether pro or con, is to place their work squarely within the parameters of the Critique of the sociology of knowledge. And, as demonstrated previously, there is a basic contradiction between the presuppositions of the Critique and the insight of the sociology of knowledge. Thus, it is difficult to comprehend in what way any compatibility of the perspectives, that might be developed within positivistic presuppositions, could ever provide the basis of an adequate framework for the social analysis of ideas.

In contrast, the analyses of Marx and Mead undertaken here demonstrate that the positivistic interpretation misrepresents their ideas, in large measure, and introduces severe contradictions into their writing. Furthermore, such interpretation overlooks important elements of their thought that do, indeed, appear relevant to issues in the discipline, but for quite different reasons. The analyses imply a basic compatibility in respect to presuppositions and in respect to basic concepts, but it is not a compatibility captured in positivistic terms. As indicated, the most obvious point of compatibility involves the implicit demand of each perspective for a critical, as opposed to positivistic, approach to the analysis of ideas in relation to social factors. Thus, despite reservations as to the accuracy

or possible fruitfulness of the compatibility hypothesis as originally stated, the hypothesis still appears to be meaningful, and perhaps more promising; but only in terms of the reinterpretation presented in the foregoing chapters.

In the following section, the elements of the work of Marx and Mead that have been dealt with separately, will be reviewed in order to show more explicitly the consistency between their ideas. In respect to the insight of the sociology of knowledge, attention will be focused on their concepts of man, the social context and thought, and on their ontological and epistemological presuppositions.

It has already been indicated that at least one essential element of the hypothesized compatibility is missing. This concerns the absence, in Mead's writing, of any concept similar to that of alienation, a concept which is an integral and necessary part of the critical implications of Marx ideas.[5] Therefore, a second section will deal directly with this issue in an attempt to determine if Mead's lack of explicit appreciation of the nature and basis of problematics in the relationship between thought and social factors indicates a necessary element of incompatibility. It is demonstrated that the concept is not incompatible with Mead's perspective, and that its

absence is related to the gratuitous evolutionary assumption, which was discussed in the previous chapter. This demonstration of the logical consistency of the concept of alienation with Mead's "interactionist" framework goes beyond a concern with a possible lack of compatibility. It is, at the same time, a demonstration of the extent to which Marxian ideas can be formulated as a contribution to, and perhaps a completion of, that framework.

A third section will then return to a consideration of the essential limitation of Marx' ideas; the question of the relationship between alienation and praxis. Previously, it was shown that the positivistic overtones of Marx' writing can be traced to his vague and insufficient elaboration of this relationship, especially in respect to the question as to why men alienate themselves. Only suggestive elements of a non-positivistic answer were found in Marx' own writing, and these did not, in themselves, constitute an adequate rebuttal of the positivistic responses to this question, present in both Marxist and non-Marxist literature. Thus, the essential concern of this section is the degree to which Mead's conceptualization of the "nature of human development" can be used to clarify the relationship between alienation and praxis. This demonstration is, at the same time, a demonstration of the extent to which Mead's ideas constitute an essential contribution

to the elaboration of a critical sociology of knowledge.

A final section will recapitulate and summarize the results of the analysis to this point, before proceeding, in the last chapter, to a systematization of the critical framework, as a response to the Critique of the discipline.

Interactionism and Critical Analysis: Aspects of Compatibility

The preceeding analyses of Marx and Mead were, as noted, not intended as exhaustive considerations of their work. The primary concern of the thesis is to construct a basis of an adequate sociology of knowledge, and, as the literature suggests, this can be accomplished by utilizing those specific elements in their writing that are relevant to the basic conceptual questions of the discipline. In particular, these elements included their conceptions of man, the social context, knowledge, and the nature of the relationships between these terms.

Specific attention was also directed to each writer's epistemological presuppositions, since it was demonstrated that the theoretical possibility of a sociology of knowledge depends on the elaboration of a conception of objectivity which is consistent with the insight of the discipline. Thus, the hypothesis concerning Marx and Mead

and an adequate sociology of knowledge depends, in part at least, on the demonstration of an explicit "anticipation", of the Critique as reflected in the presence of a non-positivistic conception of objective knowledge.

Having considered these basic ideas separately, it remains to determine the degree of compatibility between the perspectives. Following this, it can be asked whether or not particular ideas of each writer can be formulated in such fashion as to constitute a completion of the perspective of the other; and whether or not this operation makes possible a single perspective which answers to the issues raised by the Critique, that is, whether or not the hypothesis that has directed the study can be supported.

To what extent then, in terms of basic concepts relevant to the insight of the discipline, are the perspectives of Mead and Marx compatible? In relation to the emphasis and organization of this study, it would appear that compatibility is to be found in respect to at least four basic and interrelated elements. First, both Marx and Mead conceive of persons as, fundamentally, social beings. Second, they have compatible conceptions of the social context which do not necessarily reduce individuals to "society". Both writers emphasize, though perhaps not with complete clarity, the unique, irreducible character of persons as social beings. In their view, persons are

active, intentional, individual subjects, precisely through their sociality. Third, human reflexive intelligence is conceptualized by both as a functional process within the life and the activity of the species. This implies an integral unity of thought and social being; all thought, including science is conceptualized as inextricably related, and thus relative to, the social context in which it takes place. Despite the apparent relativistic implications of this conception, a fourth point of compatibility is present in the specific conception of objectivity that both writers articulate: their conception of man himself as a productive, self-productive historical being.[6] Each of these interrelated points will be elaborated in turn, emphasizing the degree of explicit compatibility. Following this, the one area in which there is no explicit compatibility will be considered: the issue of alienation.

Clearly, both Marx and Mead presume the fundamental social nature of man, and, indeed, they argue that it is only through their sociality that men can be individuals. Marx includes sociality as a basic and interdependent element of praxis as reality-for-man. In his view, man does not exist as man except in terms of social interrelation and interdependence. This is true, whether or not it appears to be the case; for example, even where competitive relationships "exist" from the superstructural

point of view, and even where such a conception of man is supported by an individualistic philosophy, productive life or praxis remains essentially co-operative; bourgeois and proletarian, lord and serf, master and slave, live by and through one another. Indeed, Marx continually emphasizes that, despite the individualistic gloss that is part of capitalism's self-justification, the very system helps produce a national and global interdependence of men such as has never previously existed in human history.[7]

Marx, however, fails to clarify the full implications of this presupposition, and it is Mead who develops the conception of human sociality in the necessary detail. In particular, Mead elaborates what is only implied in Marx' writing: that mind and self presuppose and emerge from the prior, social, communicative process into which individuals are born, through a process of internalization.

The essential point is to recognize an emphasis that is too often overlooked; both Marx and Mead adhere to the view that "socialization" is _not_ properly understood as but a process of bringing the "individual" into a sufficient conformity with others so that community action is possible. In contrast, both these writers presume that the individual depends upon an ongoing, interactional process for those specific human characteristics which qualitatively distinguish him from other species.[8]

However, neither Marx nor Mead lapse into any necessary sociologistic or positivistic framework of analysis. This second point of compatibility concerns the fact that they both argue the essential sociality of persons without, at the same time, reducing the individual to "Society". Though this argument is not fully clarified by either writer, it can be shown that their dialectical conceptions of man and social context capture both the experience of conformity and the experience of individual responsibility, creativity and freedom, without denying either side of the relationship.

Both Marx and Mead regard sociality as predating mind, self-consciousness and language; both assume an historically prior and more primitive "herd" situation out of which qualitatively different human characteristics have emerged. Further, both hold that the capacity for reflexive, problem-solving activity, emerges in an individual's biography only through interaction with others. But, though the historical and biographical genesis of mind is social, the focus of mental activity lies within individuals; Mead and Marx both deny the conception of a "group mind".

Furthermore, the emergence of individual mindedness is understood by both writers as the emergence of a "whole" which is reciprocally determinative in relation to the "parts" which are its basis. In this sense, the emergence of this in-

dividual capacity, while still rooted in a social context is an _irreducible_ factor which must be adequately considered in any comprehension of the subsequent development of human life. In other words it is evident that both Marx and Mead recognize that what the social context has become, subsequent to the emergence of mind, is inextricably bound up with the capacity. With the evolutionary emergence of reflexive intelligence, the passage of events becomes history and thereby becomes amenable to and reflexivee of a considerable degree of self-conscious control in relation to species needs.

Thus, in neither perspective is there any conception of "Society", or of a social substratum, which can legitimately be considered apart from a dialectical or reciprocal relationship to the fact of individual mindedness. For Marx and for Mead, "Society" can only be properly understood as a "form of co-operative activity", precisely the phrasing that they both utilize. In one sense, any given social form is, then, an aspect of the "solution" to specific, historically emergent problematics, a solution reflecting the necessity of some type of co-operative activity in relation to the fulfillment of needs _vis-a-vis_ the "world that is there". Such organizational solutions are understood by both theorists as historically contingent, and, therefore, impermanent -- they are subject to refutation and change in terms of subsequent problematics that arise in experience.

The third point of compatibility lies in the fact

that with both writers, thought is conceptualized as an essentially functional and dynamic, constructive process, as already implied in the foregoing discussion of the social context. It is important to recognize, moreover, that thought is understood as functional in relation to the life of the species, and not in relation to any externally given "Society" or specific form of sociality.[9]

The reflexive capacity does, indeed, have its origin in existing social relationships, and, therefore, to a considerable extent will "reflect" present social conditions in terms of the initial content internalized. Mind, however, is understood, by both, precisely as a capacity, and thus as a "cause in itself" in terms of its function in relation to human need and problematics. To argue that this capacity has a social genesis need not imply a reduction to social factors; the genesis is understood as a "meaningful genesis" discussed especially by Mead in terms of symbolic interaction or language, and it implies the potential for an immanent development beyond the point of emergence. As a capacity, reflexivity or thought implies the presence of an ability, in the face of problematics, to transform the initial content internalized, to recognize and draw out possible implications and thereby to transform activity, its form and relational content. Both Mead and Marx assume the emergent existence and

character of this capacity at a basic ontological level, although both subsequently lose this emphasis, to some degree, through the introduction of rather gratuitous elements.

Compared to Marx, Mead presents a much more complete conceptualization of mindedness and knowing through his emphasis on the individual's symbolic or imaginative awareness of situations, on his selective perception of stimuli in the "world that is there", and on his ability to reconstruct attitudes in the development of adequate response to needs. However, his conception is consistent with Marx' insistence on the active character and role of thought in history. It should be noted that, despite the attribution of an "independent" role to thought in history, neither position may be accused of idealism. On the one hand, knowing and acting are limited by the fact of a "world that is there", other than mind, and, on the other hand, they are limited by human needs and their relationship to problematics that arise within "present circumstances".

The ideas of these writers converge, as well, in respect to the character of the relationship posited between thought and social context. Both theorists regard thought and social interaction as "two sides of the same coin"; yet, both "sides" are understood as essential and quite ir-

reducible to the other. Marx speaks of thought and sociality as integral and essential parts of the totality of human life, which is a life of praxis. Mead speaks of these realms, in like manner, as aspects forming the basis of the reflexive capacity, which, congruent with the idea of praxis, is involved in the basic and essential problem-solving or need-fulfulling activity of the species.

In the absence of problematics, individuals are understood as acting habitually and non-reflexively, for the most part, in terms of the structure of attitudes initially internalized from, and integral to, their social context. However, both writers assume change as an integral aspect of the "world that is there", and thus they attribute an essential factor of contingency to the relationship between form and environment, between social, interactional patterns, attitudes and the "world that is there".

In the face of problematics, habitual action ceases to be adequate, and this implies that the existing organization of attitudes and social patterns have become inadequate in some respect. In other words, the contingency of existing thought and activity becomes evident; one can no longer act effectively in terms of initially internalized "information". Under this condition however, one has the emergent capacity to hypothesize potentially effective "knowledge", and to act on this basis of reflexive reconstruction and reorganization of attitudes. Such a reflexive

reconstruction of attitudes is, concomitantly, a change in the relational pattern of action toward the world; it is a transformation, in at least some respect, of social form. Thus, with the emergence of mind, social forms, or institutions, can be understood as themselves objectifications of systems of ideas or as human products related to biological and social needs. Marx speaks of them as "objectifications" of human capacities or powers; Mead speaks in similar vein of social actions as "tests" of ideas formulated in the face of problematics. Both are consistent in emphasizing the contingency of any historically specific social form that is constructed. The primary point, however, is that both writers presume that men have the capacity to change their social world actively in relation to the "world that is there", through reflexively dealing with the difficulties that arise in experience.

Finally, both writers avoid any total relativization of thought through reference to a similar notion of an "absolute" defined precisely in terms of the conception of human life as praxis. On the one hand, both Marx and Mead are in agreement that any total or complete knowledge of nature, or of any aspect of nature, is impossible. On the other hand, both refuse to accept any historically specific intellectual method of arriving at

absolute knowledge, precisely because they interpret the intellectual sphere as inextricably bound up with the social context in respect even to "knowledge about knowledge". They both, therefore, have recourse to an absolute, implied in and consistent with their conception of thought as essentially a functional process for the maintenance and development of human life. Specific ideas are "judged" in respect to their adequacy within human praxis.

In terms of these basic elements, then, a fundamental congruency can be demonstrated between the ideas of Marx and Mead that are essential to the sociology of knowledge. This, of course, presumes the previous analyses of their work, and the attempt to rule out apparent contradictory elements. There is, however, at least one fundamental difficulty which denies any total compatibility, and this problem has been noted in several places. The essential Marxian ideas that are related to the sociology of knowledge include his conceptualization of a basic issue within the dialectical relationship between thought and social context; his concept of alienation. Mead's writing contains only minimal and totally undeveloped references to this issue and thus is not explicitly compatible with Marx' work in this respect. It is essential to consider this problem in greater detail.

Mead's Social Theory of Man and the Problem of Alienation

It has been argued that Mead and Marx avoid the pitfalls of both positivism with its reductive tendency, and idealism with its tendency to separate totally mind and nature. However, this is only partially true in respect to what is explicit in Mead's writing, and there are some difficulties with Marx' work as has been noted. Some writers, especially those of a critical orientation, accuse Mead of "sociological idealism", which is translated as meaning that his work is "untouched by a concern with alienation". More specifically, the issue raised concerns Mead's understanding of the relationship between thought and social factors as apparently entailing no problematic in itself. Mead's theory tends to assume that when problematics arise in the relationship between needs and the "world that is there", between form and physical environment, reflexion automatically takes place and automatically results in both changed ideas and changed forms of social activity which overcome the particular problematic in question.[10] In contrast, Marx referred, centrally and continually, to the fact that existing social forms and ideas were not so readily changed; they become "crystallizations", "growing out of control; thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations".[11]

One of the essential implications of this consideration of the relationship of thought and social factors as unproblematic in Mead's work, is that the very rationale for sociological analysis disappears, and, thus, any rationale for a sociology of knowledge as well. Historically, sociology receives its primary motivation from a concern to comprehend the tension between the individual, his thought and social form.[12] Mead appears to deny this tension by conceptualizing the individual and the social context as "two sides of the same coin", and by conceptualizing the change that does occur in both as proceeding smoothly and without problematics. By virtue of his collapse of the traditional duality, Mead emasculates the discipline.[13]

The same argument could be applied to Marx with one important exception. He, like Mead, develops an image of men as social beings who are active, intentional and creative problem-solvers in relation to nature. This is what men are, what their life as a species is, a continual "dealing with" nature in relation to the needs of the species. Human life requires constant reformulation of ideas and thus, concommitantly, changes in social form. Marx understands human reality or praxis as basically this on-going, changing social process. Thus, it could be argued that in terms of the reality of praxis, a reality

in which thought and sociality constitute an integral unity, Marx also collapses the individual/society duality and tension.

But unlike Mead, Marx is explicitly and continually motivated, both theoretically and practically, by a concern with a problematic aspect or tension in this natural process of problem-solving in relation to a "world that is there". Specifically, though Marx presumes the on-going reality of praxis and though, at this level of praxis, he presumes that thought and social form constitute an "integral unity", he, at the same time, appreciates the fact that necessary social and ideational change is "fettered" by existing social form and ideational structure. That is, he appreciates the extent to which existing form can be a "system of alienation" characterized, for example, by persistent and unresolved problems of poverty, exploitation, labour strife, discrimination, etc.

It is precisely in these terms that Marx retains a rationale for sociological analysis, though it is a specific rationale which explicitly demands a critical, rather than positivistic, analysis. In his view, the tension between individual and society is improperly conceived as a tension between two separate realities, for the "individual is the social being". On the contrary, such tension results from and signifies the inadequacy and

contradictory nature of present, contingent interactional form.[14] Thus, a critical investigation, both of the existing social form and of the ideas which rationalize its acceptance and perpetuation, is required, with a view to transforming actively the existing, problematic patterns of interaction. It is precisely Marx' intention to develop a mode of analysis which would enable one to pin-point and transcend the specific, contingent limitation expressed in the concept of alienation, so that the "natural problematics", on the level of praxis, could be handled on a rational, less trial-and-error basis, free of the paradoxical limitations of man's own products. This is not to say that there are no problems associated with Marx' conception of alienation in relation to praxis. These problems will be dealt with in the following section.

The essential point is that while Mead's perspective also implies critical analysis, it does not explicitly contain any comprehension of a problematic that would constitute the rationale in terms of which critical analysis would be necessary and meaningful. Mead stops short of any detailed consideration of a conceptual equivalent to Marx' ideas of alienation. His work is not explicitly a critical sociology; rather, it is a conceptualization of men, knowledge and the social which appears, in itself, to be of little "use". One could argue

that, as it stands, it is of "ideological" relevance only; for in his failure to relate the perspective fully to any concrete problematics that might be associated with the active nature of man, Mead suggests a present world in which "problem-solving" is an inevitable flow of evolutionary progress from one moment to the next.[15] Thus, sociology, of both positivistic and critical persuasions, apparently loses any point in Mead's work, not simply because he collapses the individual/society distinction, but, because at the same time, he ignores all evidence of persistent tensions (of which even he is somewhat aware) by viewing them as but momentary and passing aberrations in an evolutionary transformation of social form.

Thus far, however, the two perspectives have been compared at a basic presuppositional and conceptual level and it is evident that a fundamental compatibility is to be found. There is no apparent reason, then, why compatibility is necessarily denied in respect to the issue of alienation, or why their perspectives should differ so greatly on this particular issue. Thus, the essential question concerns the extent to which Marx' appreciation of the issue of alienation is consistent with the Meadian perspective, and can be utilized to complete the critical implications of Mead's framework.

One way of approaching this question is to consider, within Mead's perspective, the impact of institutionalized divisions within an historical social form. For Marx, social divisions were understood as "positive" in respect to increased productivity, yet, as eventually negative in relation to the basic sociality of men and the realization of further potentialities. In his view, the divisions of productive labour within capitalism were an integral aspect of this "system of alienation" which must therefore be transcended. The vertical division into classes and status groups was also understood as a human social product which ultimately interfered with praxis, and, therefore, denied the realization of human potentialities implied in capitalistic organization.

In contrast, Mead deals minimally with social divisions as actually or potentially problematic aspects of social form, in relation to the fulfillment and development of needs. Indeed, it is apparent that he views such division in an almost totally positive light. For example, it was demonstrated that Mead predicts the future of society as involving greater and greater degrees of functional differentiation of tasks, or roles, within a gradually realized, global, democratic community. But it is not this alone which betrays Mead's positive orientation to social division. He also associates the "growth of individuality"

with this evolution of social form; individuality is, in this context, defined by reference to the functional differences of one's task from others.[16]

However, this "positive" view of differentiated social form is inconsistent with the aspects of Mead's thought that are relevant to the sociology of knowledge. In fact, these ideas entail precisely the opposite appreciation of differentiation in relation to the emergent reflexive capacity that is central to Mead's image of man. Moreover, the inconsistency can be removed, for it is rooted in the gratuitous assumption of a specific evolutionary future previously discussed. It can, therefore, be shown that the idea of alienation can be integrated with Mead's perspective.

In the previous analysis of Mead, it was demonstrated that his specific evolutionary assumption, with its supposed behaviouristic justifications, contradicted his basic epistemological stance. The assumption entailed the prediction, by Mead, of a social future consisting of the development of global attitudes within a social structure characterized by increasing functional differentiation. The assumption, in turn, involved a limitation and reduction of the emergent reflexive capacity to only a functional role within this social evolution. Two specific contradictions are entailed by this assumption. First, it contra-

dicts Mead's epistemological stance; a conception of knowledge which denies his own attempt to predict the future of social form. Second, it contradicts his emphasis on the functionality of the reflexive capacity in relation to human species-needs, as opposed to "societal" needs. The future is always hypothetical, or contingent, and "known" from the perspective of the present. The appearance of problematics demands the reconstruction of perspectives, and thus of both past _and_ future.

The removal of this evolutionary assumption rendered the perspective consistent by removing the basis of the criticism that Mead fundamentally reduces the individual and his reflexive capacity to the on-going social process. The removal of the assumption also negates Mead's positive orientation toward social differentiation.

First, in terms of Mead's conceptions of the social context and knowledge, the future of existing, differentiated social form may or may not involve increasing degrees of functional differentiation. The persistence and increase in this aspect of social structure is always contingent on the continued absence of particular problematics that would demand transformation of those attitudes reflected in existing social form. Thus, it is inconsistent and contradictory for Mead to predict the persistence and

expansion of social differentiation. His own conception of knowledge denies that present social form or present conceptual frameworks can be the basis of prediction of future social conditions.[17]

Second, the relationship between individuality and social, functional division also disappears. In terms of Mead's discussion of the reflexive capacity, individuality inheres in the fact that the focus of this capacity lies in the individual. Though a social being whose mind and self are genetically rooted in a social context, it is the individual who thinks, and who is capable of transcending initial contents internalized. This idea is distorted by the introduction of the evolutionary assumption. The assumption entails the idea of social history as a necessary and specific evolution of functional differentiation, and Mead adds to this, almost as an element of justification, the idea that the degree of individuality is rooted in functionally differentiated role-playing. The removal of the assumption, however, leaves the basis of individuality squarely within the emergence of the reflexive capacity.

Thus, it is argued that, on removal of the gratuitous assumption of a predictable form of social evolution, the existence of societal division, as an example, need no longer be considered "positive" by any necessity within

the Meadian perspective. As an aspect of present social form, particular social divisions are, if anything, "neutral" in relation to the reflexive capacity and in relation to solutions to future problematics. On closer inspection, however, and in terms of Mead's own statements in respect to social conflict, the inadequacies of educational forms, relationships between classes, the tendency to reify ideas within science, etc., the relationship between reflexive intelligence and existing social forms is only consistently understood as negative. To demonstrate that this is the case, is to show that Mead's perspective further parallels Marx' ideas, in respect to the concept of alienation.

For example, in the context of discussing the nature of institutions, Mead notes that there are, in the present:

> Oppressive, stereotyped and ultraconservative social institutions -- like the church -- which by their more or less rigid and inflexible unprogressiveness crush or blot out individuality or discourage any distinctive or original expressions of thought and behaviour in the individual selves or personalities implicated in and subjected to them.18

This insight reappears in his writing in various places, but it is continuously obscured by the implications of the evolutionary assumption. In this context, for example, Mead goes on, immediately, to argue that while

such institutions or social forms are "undesirable", they are, ". . . not necessarily outcomes of the general social process of experience and behaviour".[19] But while it may be the case, in terms of Mead's perspective, that such negative social forms are not necessary, in any ontological sense, they do "exist" in a present, by his own admission, and it is curious how he can so blithely pass over them. That he does so is, once again, due to the fact that the "general social process" referred to is obscured by Mead's own hope for the future -- his inconsistent conception of it as a necessary, non-conflictual outcome of an evolutionary process.[20]

While Mead often admits of social forms as in some manner problematic, and of change as a "struggle" requiring active reflexion and reconstruction, he continually downplays this aspect of his writing. He seems content to argue that because it is "better" that social forms or institutions are not oppressive, then it is necessary and inevitable that they will become "very broad and general", "affording plenty of scope for originality, flexibility and variety".[21] However, to say that institutions may be oppressive, is to say that they inhibit change and, therefore, that they inhibit the operation of the reflexive capacity that Mead indicates is integral to such change.

There are several other brief, but suggestive, sections of Mead's writing which allude to what can be considered the problem of alienation and reification; to the problematic relationship between existing attitudinal organization, social form and the realization of the reflexive capacity. It was previously noted that Mead was extremely critical of the self-conception of science as positivistic, and of the "copy-theory" of knowledge which is its justification. Though he does not use the term, he is referring very clearly to what Marx would call reification -- in this case, the distortion of the actual practice of science through the impostion of an uncritically accepted theory of science in the place of that practice. In Mead's words, the copy-theory and other epistemologies have ". . . obscured it [science] with their tangled and forest growth".[22]

Another discussion that points in the same direction concerns present social problems; "questions of property, of the family, or of the criminal". Mead notes, but does not develop the point, that it is all too often the case that, "Our institutionalized past has determined for us what [these problems] are".[23] Furthermore, "the most serious obstacle to [their correction through reflexive reconstruction] lies in the failure of traditional ideas lying in our minds. . . ."[24]

> We live in a universe whose past changes with every considerable change in our scientific [in his sense] account of it, and yet <u>we are prone to look for the meaning of our biological and social life in fixed forms of historical institutions and the order of past events</u>. We prefer to understand the family, the state, the church and the school by forms which history has given to their social structures.[25]

In another context, Mead alludes to the fact that the process of overcoming these "traditional" contents of mind, especially those that are operative in the conflicts between social groups, is not always an automatic process:

> The task, however, is enormous enough, for it involves not simply breaking down passive barriers such as those of distance in space and time and vernacular, but those of fixed attitudes of custom and status in which our selves are imbedded.[26]

The impact of such scattered points is minimal in relation to the overwhelming emphasis that Mead places on the "belief" that the future will indeed follow the course that he lays out for it. However, in that the evolutionary assumption stands in contradiction to the basic elements of his social theory of man, it is, perhaps, more accurate to say that the impact of the insights outlined are minimized rather than minimal. In fact there is nothing but the presence of this contradictory assumption, which inhibits Mead from pursuing conceptual elaboration of the existence of a problematic between

existing attitudes, social forms and the operation of the reflexive capacity.

Thus, while it can be argued that his work is almost totally "untouched by a concern with alienation", it cannot be maintained that such a concern is inconsistent with the basic elements of his theory. Furthermore, in that the concept of alienation is consistent with Mead's theory, it then constitutes a rationale which renders sociological investigation on a Meadian basis meaningful. Basically, this entails a critical orientation to existing social form at both interactional and ideational levels in respect to the reciprocal and negative impact that such forms can have on the capacity to transcend existing, natural problematics. Thus, in respect to the issue of alienation, Mead's ideas, stripped of the gratuitous and contradictory, evolutionary assumption, are quite consistent with, and benefit from, particular Marxian ideas.

The suggestion that Mead's theory contains elements essential to an explanation of how the issue of alienation is rooted in the "nature of human development", can now be considered. Though not explicit in his writing, it is in these terms that Mead's ideas can be formulated as a reciprocal contribution to the completion of the critical perspective.

Praxis and Alienation: A Meadian Contribution to a Critical Perspective

The question of utilizing Mead's insights, in respect to deficiencies in the critical framework, concerns the fundamental problem of the nature of the relationship between the on-going reality of praxis and the recurring issue, within praxis, of alienation. Marx did not elaborate why it is that man, defined as a being of praxis, should alienate himself; why, if men are, in reality, active, social and self-conscious producers of their means of subsistence, they should relate to what they themselves produce in a manner which "fetters" that productive, problem-solving activity, which is their very being.

The lack of any complete elaboration of this crucial aspect of non-positivistic critical theory is the basis both of a misinterpretation of Marx' perspective as positivistic, and of his own recurring tendency to deprecate his conception of man as a self-productive being of praxis. This tendency involved, on the one hand, an overemphasis on the reciprocal effect of alienated products, an effect conceived almost mechanistically, and, on the other hand, a lack of clarification of the extent to which alienation may be understood as a denial of praxis. If it may be said that Mead errs in the direction of viewing

praxis itself as unproblematic, it may be said that Marx errs in the opposite direction of emphasizing the limitations on praxis to the point of denying the relevance of this initial conceptualization of human life.

Despite this inadequacy, it was noted that Marx' writing does contain scattered and isolated elements of a possible, non-contradictory answer to the question of the relationship between praxis and alienation. The potential importance of Mead's social theory of man involves the elaboration and articulation of these isolated elements, such that a clear and unambiguous conception of the relationship can be expressed; a conception that is consistent with the basic presuppositions of the critical orientation. This is, perhaps, a more reasonable suggestion, having demonstrated that the concept of alienation is consistent with Mead's perspective.

By way of review,[27] the elements found in Marx' writing were points related to his general statement that an answer to the question of why men alienate themselves lay in comprehension of the very "nature of human development". The first point concerned the importance of the reification of consciousness within the phenomenon of alienation, as expressed in the implicit differentiation between "two levels of consciousness". The second point concerned the nature of the process of cultural trans-

mission in relation both to reification, and to the particular content transmitted; the "circumstances" of the transmission process.

It was demonstrated that Marx could not, without contradiction, present alienation as a total denial of praxis and, further, that the issue in specific instances could not be understood adequately apart from awareness of an integral component of reified ideas. It was argued that a consistent completion of his critical perspective would require elaboration of this concern with two levels of consciousness -- the process itself and products on the level of praxis, understood as "practical consciousness"; and the process and products at a purely theoretical, abstract and reified level. In Mead's writing, a similar, but explicit, distinction was discovered in his differentiation between "information", as the passively internalized and utilized content of attitudes, and "knowledge" as the actively and reflexively constructed hypothesis guiding action and interaction in the face of problematics.

Mead's connection of "information" and internalization immediately suggests a direct and explicit connection of the problem of reification, and, therefore, alienation, with the nature of the transmission process. The same link seemed to be implied in Marx' own concern with the fact

that each person "first sees himself and recognizes himself in other men". Thus, it becomes important to consider how Mead's explicit and detailed conceptualization of the internalization process might be utilized in clarifying the relationship between praxis and alienation.

It was also noted that Marx implied a connection between reification, within alienation, the transmission process per se, <u>and</u> the content and, therefore, context of that process. He stated clearly that each new generation is limited, in degree, by the sum of productive forces or circumstances "found" already in existence or present at birth. These "forces" -- social forms, technologies, ideas, class relations, etc. -- can and must be modified through praxis in relation to problematics and needs, but Marx, nonetheless, emphasized that "circumstances make men just as much as men make circumstances". The "circumstance" of particular importance to Marx was the "structure" of horizontal and vertical differentiation. On one level, the "effect" of such a circumstance on men was simply the ability of some to impose specific ideas on others due to differential power. But, on a second level, Marx was aware that even the powerful were alienated, and thus subservient to the very structure of differentiation in which their power inhered. This level of subservience to existing circumstances seemed,

however unclearly, to be related once again to the transmission process, and is reflected in Mead's concern with, what he called, the constraint of tradition over the emergence of the reflexive capacity.

In the following pages these points will be elaborated and integrated through a consideration of Mead's understanding of the social genesis of mind and self, and, in relation to this, of his rather indirect insights into the nature of the "effects" of particular human products.

Marx himself expressed awareness that individuals come to know even themselves, and come to an understanding of their world, initially, through others: "the relation of man to himself is first realized, objectified, through his relation to other men".[28] It is Mead's elaboration of this, perhaps common-sense appreciation, however, that draws out an important implication in regard to the relationship between alienation and the "nature of human development" within praxis.

In Mead's perspective, assuming the requisite physio-biological conditions, each person's mind and self are absent at birth on the qualitatively different human level. They emerge only through the internalization of other's responses to one's gestures, to others and to things of the environment. But, most importantly, Mead understands the initial development of mind and self as largely a

matter of internalizing existing attitudes and their organization. He thereby emphasizes the extent to which what one "is" initially, and the extent to which the initial attitudinal content of mind, is a reflection of the present and given social situation of a particular individual.

To use his distinction between levels of consciousness, this is to point out a predominance of "information" over "knowledge", at least in the initial stages of self-development. The child tends to comprehend and respond to his world and to himself, primarily in terms of information internalized. This conception of initial internalization thereby emphasizes that there is a potential for, rather than any necessary or automatic actualization of the critical, reflexive capacity through which "knowledge", as a construction in the face of natural problematics, is possible.

Clearly, the degree to which initially internalized attitudes predominate in the definition of self and environment, is, in part, the degree to which the individual is alienated from the realization of his own essential capacities. Thus the very process of gaining self and mind is itself limiting by virtue of its paradoxical character. The alienation from essential powers, from self, is related to the fact that an initial content and organization of attitudes must be internalized in order to achieve the

basis of the reflexive capacity. As Mead argues, part and whole, initial attitudes and emergent reflexivity, stand always in a reciprocal relationship with one another.

The elaboration of this insight is perhaps the most important and original contribution that Mead's theory has to offer to the articulation of the elements of an answer to the question of the basis of alienation and, therefore, to a completion of the critical perspective. Through the reflexive capacity, men are capable, self-consciously and intentionally, of "making their own circumstances". But, they do so only on the basis of circumstances which they did not make themselves, which they are born into and which "make them" through socialization; just as much as they then acquire, through this process, the power to make new circumstances in the face of natural problematics. Furthermore, as is clear in Mead's writing, and hinted at by Marx, this implies that the very selves of men, at least initially, are fashioned by and in the image of existing circumstances, which are previously constructed human products. Thus, to reflect critically on existing ideas and action patterns is to reflect critically on, and to call into question, one's own self, what one has become as a social being.[29]

If nothing else, these emphases on the reciprocal relationship between mind and attitudes internalized, and on the self-criticism implied in reflexion, indicate that reflexion, and even the continuity of the process of "taking the role of the other", are more problematic in themselves than Mead was wont to believe. At a very basic level, socialization entails an alienation of men from the process of production or praxis in that it paradoxically fosters, and yet inhibits the functioning of the self-consciousness, or specific species-power, of men that is an essential aspect of this process. Though Mead was not as aware as was Marx that enormous difficulties intervene in the realization and effective use of human powers, his work, nonetheless, contributes more complete conceptual tools for expressing such difficulties, especially at this basic level.

Essentially, because self and mind are rooted in a specific internalized content and organization of attitudes (the social situation or "historical circumstance"), there is a tendency to respond to the world, and to the problematics that arise in experience, in precisely these initial terms, even though they are rendered inadequate, at least in some part, by the very appearance of a problematic. Such ideas, thereby, become reifications in that they continue to define the situation for the individual, but are not ade-

quate to the changes that have occured in that situation.

It must be emphasized that this limitation on human powers is not presented, nor meant, in any absolute sense. Mead's comprehension of the paradoxical character of socialization simply indicates (often in spite of itself) the fact that reflexion, and the construction of knowledge adequate to needs and to the "world that is there", is an <u>active</u> process demanding "effort". Reconstruction of perspectives and thus of social form, is not automatic or passive. It is something that must be accomplished actively, against the opposition of one's own internalized attitudes or images of reality and thus against one's own self. Further, though such reflexion is focused in the individual, there is an additional problem entailed in social change; the necessity of communicating to and convincing others, whose selves, for the same reasons, are not amenable to automatic change.[30]

There is a second level on which Mead's perspective contributes to that of Marx, in regard to the relationship between alienation and the "nature of human development" within praxis. This concerns Marx' emphasis on the character of the specific "circumstances" which are internalized, and the nature of the "effect" that these can have on the degree of realization of human capacities.

The first contribution simply argues, in very general terms, that a tension exists in the reciprocal relationship between content internalized and reflexivity, which must be recognized and accorded due importance. The second contribution is an elaboration of the recognition that this tension can be more or less increased in the direction of maintaining existing circumstances.

To use a specific example, Marx was centrally concerned with the negative effects of the division of labour, and especially with the vertical division of class or power. However, as this concern is expressed, it almost implies a reification of this "social fact", such that the division of labour and class acquire ontological status as "existential" determinants within and of historical development. Furthermore, it was noted that this tendency allows an interpretation of alienation as a total denial of praxis. As indicated, such interpretation entails contradictions with the critical implications of Marx' ideas, and the elaboration necessary to avoid this problem is absent from his work. The question therefore, concerns whether or not Mead's insights can be utilized in a non-contradictory clarification of how such social factors have their "effect", how they can apparently become self-perpetuating, or a "power" in themselves, "bringing to naught all our calculations".

Marx himself expresses the view, if not always clearly, that such social-structural factors as the division of labour and the class hierarchy are contingent historical human products, just as much as are material objects worked up from natural elements, technologies, specific institutions, etc. They are, as well, part of the "circumstances" into which individuals are born, which are internalized as a specific content of mind, and which, thereby, define the individual's self and "determine" his actions.

Such "circumstances" become problematic in themselves, in Marx' view, in that, as "solutions" to historical problems within praxis, they no longer contribute effectively to the development of the species. As part of the capitalistic social system, for example, the division of labour has contributed to a tremendous increase in material productivity. At the same time, this increase has accrued to a minority, to the point where even basic needs of the majority of individuals are met only at the whim, and in terms of the self-defined interests, of this minority.

Clearly, what is expected of men, as beings of praxis, faced with such a problematic, is critical reflexion and action to change such social factors into forms which are more amenable to the fulfillment and development of needs. While certain actions have been taken historically,

these actions have seldom fundamentally or successfully questioned the basic division of labour or class hierarchy; they have generally been actions, within the existing social form and ideology, which have simply attempted to achieve a redistribution of the social product. That the basic structural patterns of the system are not persistently or effectively called into question can not, however, be understood consistently as indicating the "reality" of such patterns in any ontological sense. Marx emphasized the extent to which the persistence of problematic social form lay in the controlling power of the minority who benefitted most from the existing structure, but this is only a part of the total problem as he, himself, recognized.

From Mead's point of view, the existing structure of relationships forms an integral part of the attitudinal structure that each individual internalizes; a part of his very definition of himself as an individual, and as a member of his community. This is to emphasize a point no less essential to Marx; that of the integral and interdependent unity between thought and social form. In these terms, the persistence of existing patterns of interaction is, in part, dependent on the very organization of common attitudes, and, therefore, common responses, that have been internalized.[31] Thus, the lack of critical reflexion,

and the lack of a reorganization of attitudes and social forms, reflects the tension which exists between the existing content of attitudes and the emergent reflexive capacity.

However, though a specific, differentiated structure of activity reflects or manifests a particular organization of commonly held attitudes, it has consequences in practice which can not be left out of account. Clearly, a differentiated structure involves the "segmentation" of a population, and thus a narrowing of the specific, concrete activity, or praxis of each "functionally" differentiated group. This, in turn, can have negative consequences which flow from an institutionalization or crystallization of these differentiated contexts, for this implies a narrowing of the practical contexts in which socialization and subsequent development takes place. Thus, the very attitudes involved in the existence of differentiation, have the consequence, in practice, of more or less isolating the concrete and practical contexts, or "circumstances" of each group, from those of other groups.

Mead is clearly aware of the fact of differentiation and, in degree, is aware of the negative consequences that flow from such a structure. He argues for example, that individuals,

> . . . may belong to a small community. . . . We all belong to small cliques, and we may remain simply inside them. The organized other present in ourselves is then a community of narrow diameter. We are struggling now to get a certain amount of international mindedness.32

He then explicitly connects this factor of differentiation to the issue of problematics or conflicts in the relationships of groups within a "community":

> A highly developed and organized human society is one in which the individual members are interrelated in a multiplicity of different and intricate and complicated ways whereby they all share a number of common social interests . . . and yet . . . are more or less in conflict in relation to numerous other interests which they possess only individually or else share with one another in small and limited groups. . . . [And there] . . . are conflicts among their respective selves or personalities, each with a number of social facets or aspects, a number of different sets of social attitudes constituting it. . . .33

Mead then connects this concern, in regard to the differentiated aspect of social relationships, with the introduction into social structures of formal education, and this brings out the implications of his position more clearly. First, he argues that the internalization of ". . . any institutionalized attitude organizes in some degree the whole social process".[34] However, he then suggests that, within a highly differentiated community, this process is achieved only with the introduction of such elements as formal education:

> The getting of this social response into the individual constitutes the process of education which takes over the cultural media of the community in a more or less abstract way. Education is definitely the process of taking over a certain organized set of responses to one's own stimulation; and until one can respond to oneself as the community responds to him, he does not genuinely belong to the community.35

What Mead describes is a situation in which, because of differentiation, the existence of common attitudes, necessary to the integration and maintenance of the social structure as a whole, comes to depend, in part, on the introduction of such means as a formal learning process, rather than on the existence of a common, concrete interactional context of activity in which all participate. Thus, the division of labour, and the attitudes which it reflects, have, in this sense, a practical consequence not present in the attitudes themselves.

But of greater importance is Mead's rather offhand reference to the fact that common attitudes internalized through education are "more or less abstract". In terms of the distinction between levels of consciousness, this is an emphasis on the degree to which specific attitudes and their organization are learned and held outside of the concrete contexts in which they have (or have lost) their meaning. Given a division of labour, itself an aspect of existing structures or patterns of interaction reflecting

attitudes internalized, a situation arises in which the attitudinal basis of action for any particular individual or group, is, in greater or lessor part, "abstract" in relation to the specific concrete context of action of that particular group. The concrete context of their lives and attitudes is rendered of "narrow diameter" as a result of differentiation. The "expansion" of this diameter, to encompass the total "community", is accomplished only through the introduction of common attitudes on an abstract basis. As a consequence, specific persons are not directly in a position to "test" the adequacy of of these "common" attitudes, and, thus, they are further limited as to the functioning of the reflexive capacity in relation to the broader community of which their concrete "functional" role is only a part.

For example, most persons are isolated from any intimate contact or involvement with the political process of their society. Their "information" as to the nature of this process may diverge considerably from the actuality that the political institution has become over time; and yet, they are seldom in a position to become directly aware, either of the discrepancy, or of the relatedness of the problematics in their own lives to what the political activity has actually become. The "narrow diameter" of their concrete practice with others and with

things, makes it highly problematic that many of the common internalized attitudes will ever be directly questioned. This is precisely because, through the division of labour, individuals are isolated, both practically and ideationally from concrete relationships with the context to which these common attitudes refer. Thus, the persistence of attitudes, whose reification is witnessed by the persistence of problematic forms of interaction, is "determined" by historical social forms that are internalized, but only "determined by" in this very specific manner.[36] Specific social forms have no ontological status through which they could be considered direct "causes" of alienation and reification.

Another example, in connection with the manner in which historical human products can negatively effect the present, concerns Mead's sporadic references to the reciprocal impact of a persistent, reified understanding of reflexivity itself. This problem is also related to the educational process through which common and "abstract" attitudes are internalized in a highly differentiated society. As noted previously, Mead objected to the positivistic, "copy-theory" of science and knowledge. This concern is repeated in his criticism of the educational process, and introduces another manner of interpreting

how specific, internalized attitudes can increase the problematic relationship between content of mind, action patterns and reflexivity.

Specifically, Mead argued that the reified, positivistic conception of knowledge is reflected by an educational process which does not emphasize the critical appreciation of the abstract ideas internalized, and thus does not intentionally foster the active constructional character of knowledge. Rather, it is too often the case that emphasis is placed on the uncritical acceptance of ideas taught, and on their rote application to reality, as if they were a reflection of it. This results in a confusion of information and knowledge, and in a predominant emphasis on abstract consciousness over practical consciousness. Not only are many of the individual's ideas held in separation from the context in which they have their meaning, but the self-understanding of education, through which such ideas are, in part, gained, emphasizes an uncritical approach to knowledge.[37]

Together, these considerations, derived from Mead's perspective, can be utilized in elaborating a non-reified, non-positivistic comprehension of how historically created circumstances reciprocally and negatively effect praxis. In contrast, Marx was centrally concerned with the vertical, power differentiation between persons and groups about

which Mead says very little. In Marx' perspective, an essential element in the persistence of the "system of alienation", beyond the "false consciousness" of the majority, concerned the fact that a minority had control of the basic means of production, and that they actively used this power to maintain the system without or against opposition. However, two points must be kept in mind in this regard. First, the emphasis that Marx placed on power relationships does not, in itself, present any contradiction with the basic elements of the critical perspective. Second, Marx appreciated power relationships in terms which went beyond the naked and intentional exercise of power for its own sake, and in terms which suggest a relevance of Mead's ideas even in regard to power.

The emphasis on the power dimension is essential to the critical perspective in that it entails a further and contingent limitation, both on the reflexive capacity, and also on the possibility of a realization or objectification of the results of such reflexion as does occur. Through their position of dominance, the ruling class is able to control education and communication processes which, therefore, may, in content and form, reflect a promotion of specific "common" attitudes consistent with their perspective, and with the perpetuation of their

dominance. However, this emphasis on power, in relation to the persistence of alienation, does not contradict the basic presuppositions of the critical framework, for it does not suggest any "mechanistic" relationship, nor any positivistic reductionism inconsistent with the idea of praxis. To speak of the consequences of dependence relationships is to speak directly of the effect that some men have in actively limiting the capacities of others.

However, Marx' concern with power relationships was not simply a concern with the naked and intentional exercise of power or control over others for its own sake. Marx was quite clear in arguing that a ruling class is itself alienated and that it, therefore, acts within reified ideas, "The ideas of the ruling class are the ideas of its domination". This returns one to Mead's perspective, for this is to say that the ideas of this group reflect the "narrow diameter" of their position within a differentiated structure.[38] Marx simply emphasizes, as Mead does not, the necessity of considering the control any group has which helps account for the group's ability to uphold its ideas against those of others, irrespective of the adequacy of such ideas in relation to problems faced by the larger community.

Furthermore, it is at least implied by Marx that the persistence of the dominance of a particular group

can only be fully appreciated in terms of the reciprocal relationship of this dominance with the reified ideas of the subject classes. In his own words, it is alienated labour that is the basic issue, and through this, historically,

> . . . the worker creates the relation of another man, who does not work and is outside the work-process, to this labour. The relation of the worker to work also produces the relation of the capitalist . . . to work. Private property is therefore, the product, the necessary result of alienated labour, of the external [abstract] relation of the worker to nature and to himself.[39]

Thus, the persistence of the system of relationships and the persistence of a group's domination within it rests, in considerable part, on the persistence of attitudes which, in effect, directly or indirectly legitimate this domination. Both these points, the alienation of the dominant class, and the relationship between the persistence of this domination and the alienation of the subject classes, return analysis to Mead's contribution, based in the social theory of self and mind.

In summary, Mead's ideas contain at least two basic and related emphases which can be utilized in developing a non-positivistic clarification of the nature of alienation in relation to praxis. First, the very socialization process in which man's self-consciousness and critical-reflexive capacity is based, is itself paradoxical.

Initial attitudes are internalized from others and become the definition of self and environment. Any problematics that arise may call forth reflexion, as Mead argues, but such reflexion entails the potentially difficult process of what amounts to self-criticism on the one hand, and, on the other, to a reorganization of ideas as to the nature of reality and appropriate action which have, hitherto, been quite accepted and acceptable to both self and others.

The second emphasis involves a focus on the manner in which specific historical products may be understood as having a reciprocal effect on man, and may become "self-maintaining", without, at the same time, having to treat this effect as mechanical in nature. In Mead's framework, this is basically a question of how the content of specific internalized attitudes, and their manifestations in action, increase the predominance of "information" over "knowledge"; the predominance of initially internalized ideas over the potential for reflexion and reorganization in the face of problematics. The division of labour, for example, is an aspect of interaction which itself is rooted in the persistence of particular common attitudes. The existence and persistence of these attitudes is, however, "self-maintaining" in that, in action, they lead to an effective isolation of individuals and groups from each other, and

from the concrete contexts to which many of their attitudes refer and in which the ideas may indeed be, or become, problematic.

In neither case is the limitation on human capacities conceptualized as, in any sense, a total limitation or denial of praxis. They are essentially understood as difficulties directly related to the social nature of mind and self. The framework focuses attention on these limitations with the intention of removing or gaining control of them, such that a more adequate apprecia-tion of the nature and basis of problematics arising in experience may be achieved.

Recapitulation and Summary

Drawing on the previous analyses of Marx and Mead, this chapter has considered the hypothesis that the elements of their writing that are important, in respect to the in-sight of the sociology of knowledge, are fundamentally compatible. It has also demonstrated, in respect to the second hypothesis, how the insights and particular emphases of each writer, can be utilized to complete or overcome the deficiencies that were identified in the separate perspectives.

The essential points of compatibility were found

in the conceptions of persons, social context, thought and the relationship posited between these terms, as well as in respect to a conception of objectivity consistent with the insight. Both writers view persons as fundamentally social beings whose very individuality exists only by virtue of and through, social interaction. Second, there is none but a contradictory tendency on the part of both Marx and Mead to lapse into a sociologistic or positivistic conception of the social context. "Society", for both, is interpreted as "forms of co-operative activity" which are but contingent, constructed means in relation to human survival and development. Third, both theorists interpret human reflexive intelligence as focused in the individual, yet as, nonetheless, social in origin and consequence. Thought is conceived of as never independent of the social context of human life; it is termed a "functional", constructive capacity integral to the species' survival and development. Thought and social form are presented as "two sides of the same coin", or as two interdependent moments of praxis which cannot be reduced to one or the other. Finally, both Marx and Mead transcend the apparent relativism implied by this dialectical conception of thought and social context by arguing that objectivity inheres in the relevance of ideas (and action patterns) to the satisfaction of human species needs and the realization of

further potentialities. Both writers are quite aware of the inadequacies of the positivistic conception of objectivity in respect to the integral relationship between thought and social context.

In sum, a particular image of human life emerges from their ideas which is shared by both Marx and Mead. Basically, men are social, reflexive beings who construct particular patterns of interaction and ideas which facilitate the fulfillment of needs and which continually open up new possibilities in their relationship with their environment, and in their relationships with each other. Problems that arise in experience indicate the inadequacy of existing patterns and existing ideas; the inadequacy of existing means. Yet, through reflexive and intentional activity, men are capable of reconstructing their world and resolving such problems as they occur.

However, it was indicated that there is a fundamental inadequacy in this very image of human life when taken only this far; an inadequacy which only Marx appreciates in any explicit detail. The image contains no conception of the experience of the particular problematic that arises in the reciprocal relationship of thought and social context; the "tension" between men and society which has been a primary concern underlying the development of sociological thought. As Marx clearly recognizes, the

resolution of naturally occuring problematics, and the social and ideational change that attends such resolution, has not been a smooth, continuous process, historically, as the image suggests. Marx deals with this problem through the concept of alienation; the concept which is the very rationale behind his concern with critical social analysis.

In contrast, Mead's writing is inadequate precisely because it contains no developed appreciation of this issue. There are scattered references to such problematics, but this minimal awareness finds no direct or integrated expression in his theoretical framework. Thus, while his conceptions of social context and thought do imply critical social analysis, the essential rationale for such analysis is missing. Mead writes as if the reflexive, problem-solving activity of men is continous and unproblematic in itself. Furthermore, Mead clearly slips into a sociologistic position, as a result of his introduction of a specific, determinative and predictable course of social evolution in respect to which men appear to be quite passive.

Despite Marx' own appreciation of alienation within praxis, his ideas were shown to be inadequate in respect to historicist and sociologistic overtones. These overtones are rooted in Marx' failure to develop fully the relationship between alienation and his image of human life as

praxis. Because of this, Marx' own writing, and that of many of his interpreters, sometimes implies that alienation is somehow separate from, and even a total denial of praxis, such that human products take on a life of their own which becomes causally determinative of thought and action. In these terms, Marx' ideas become susceptible to the Critique and internally self-contradictory.

Thus it was demonstrated that while both Marx and Mead separately "anticipated" the problems of the sociology of knowledge, and developed conceptions requisite to solving these problems, neither position alone is free of fundamental difficulties. It therefore became relevant, given the compatibilities that exist, to consider the second hypothesis; that the different emphases of each position can be utilized in the construction of a consistent basis for a critical sociology of knowledge.

Clearly, the differences between the perspectives of Marx and Mead appear to relate very closely to the deficiencies of each position, taken alone. Whereas Mead presents an image of the social process and its change and development as unproblematic, Marx emphasizes the problematic of alienation within the process and thereby provides a rationale for critical analysis of social factors and thought. Whereas Marx fails to articulate the relationship between alienation and praxis, Mead clearly

articulates the elements of this relationship precisely through his much more detailed elaboration of the "nature of human development".

The question of whether or not the conception of alienation was, for any reason, inconsistent with Mead's perspective was considered first. Essentially, it was demonstrated that Mead himself was aware of the extent to which institutions could become "oppressive, stereotyped and ultra-conservative"; of the extent to which tradition could dominate present concerns; and of the extent to which thought could become confined within reified formulations. But it was also shown that such considerations were, in each case, subordinated to his overriding "faith" in a conception of social life as pursuing a specific and automatic evolutionary path towards a "democratic" integration of non-conflictual, functionally differentiated elements on a global scale. This aspect of Mead's writing seems to have led to an almost total emphasis on conceptualizing the social and reflexive process of human life as unproblematic, in itself, thus ignoring the relevance of the difficulties in everyday-life of which he himself was aware.

However, it was also demonstrated that, both in respect to Mead's epistemological stance and in respect to his own conception of socialization, his postulation

of the evolutionary future and its unproblematic realization can not be maintained as other than a gratuitous and contradictory element. The removal of this element immediately renders Mead's scattered remarks about problematics much more significant and a concern consistent with his basic concepts of thought and social form. Thus it was argued that the Marxian conception of alienation was not inconsistent with the Meadian framework.

The analysis then shifted to a consideration of Mead's detailed elaboration of self and mind in relation to Marx' suggestion that alienation is rooted in the "nature of human development" within praxis. The central concern was to demonstrate that the phenomenon of alienation did not lie outside of praxis, but that it was integrally connected with the development of mind and self within that process. In other words, it was necessary to show that alienation and the limitations on praxis that the phenomenon entails, could be conceived in non-mechanistic, non-positivistic terms.

Two related points emerged from this analysis. First, Mead's conception of the development of mind and self emphasizes that the process is fundamentally paradoxical. On the one hand socialization is an essential aspect of the emergence of the reflexive capacity and yet, on the other hand, it involves the internalization of a specific

content of exisitng attitudes or "circumstances", which, in itself, constitutes a potential, if not actual, limitation of this essential human quality. Second, Mead's concept of socialization can be extended as a clarification of how specific human products (historical circumstances as captured in predominant attitudes) can gain an "apparent" determinative status in regard to thought and subsequent activity. In terms of his perspective, the alienation or estrangment of man, both from the process and the products of praxis, involves the "unintended" consequences that particular social forms entail. As an example, social differentiation has its "effect" insofar as it entails an isolation of persons from the concrete situations in which many of the ideas internalized have their meaning, and become problematic in relation to their lives. Essentially, Mead's perspective emphasizes the degree to which particular products have the reciprocal effect of rendering "information" (existing attitudes) predominant over "knowledge" (reconstruction in the face of problematics).

In conclusion, it has been demonstrated that the two central hypotheses of concern to this study can be supported. Both Marx and Mead separately "anticipate" the fundamental arguments of the Critique primarily

through a presentation of a conception of objectivity consistent with the basic insight of the sociology of knowledge. Second, though there are deficiencies within each framework, in terms of a complete and consistent development of the critical orientation demanded, these deficiencies can be overcome in terms of particular elements peculiar to each perspective.

It remains to systematize the essential elements of the critical sociology of knowledge, as a response to the Critique of the discipline.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1]For example, the criticism that Mead develops an "over-socialized conception of man", or reduces man to the social context, is not really directed at the reductionism per se, but, at a narrow reductionism. Wrong, "Oversocialized Conception", in particular, would have one introduce extra-social factors (Freud's ideas), in addition to Mead's social factors, in order to come up with a complete explanation of human behaviour. Kolb, op. cit., as well, seeks a "total explanation" and this is his main difficulty with the "I" concept. Those who find Mead's work relevant to that of Marx, such as McKinney, op. cit., basically see this relevance, as well, in positivistic terms -- Mead is understood as providing the "researchable mechanisms" involved in the relation between thought and social factors which are omitted by Marx. Both the critics and proponents of his "importance" tend, thereby, to miss the central problem with which Mead was trying to deal -- the problem of comprehending human action in such a manner as to not omit the non-reducible, emergent characteristic of human life.

[2]Child, "The Problem of Imputation Resolved"; Israel, Alienation; Merton, "Paradigm".

[3]McKinney, "Contribution of Mead to Soc. of Know."; Child, "The Existential Determination of Thought".

[4]See, for example, S. F. Miyamoto and S. M. Dornbusch, "A Test of the Interactionist Hypothesis of Self-Conception", in Thompson and Tunstall, Sociological Perspectives, pp. 180-187.

[5]Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism: Some Marxist Queries", p. 80.

[6]Cf., Lichtman, ibid.; see also, Zeitlin, Rethinking Sociology; Cronk, "Symbolic Interactionism: A 'Left-Median Interpretation".

[7]Manifesto, op. cit.; Selected Writings, op. cit., pp. 127-145.

[8]It is not unfair to say that sociology has largely "imported" its theory of socialization from psychology, with the result that the process is understood narrowly in terms simply of "domesticating" the child. In other words, socialization is usually thought of as bringing the child into conformity with existing culture; non-conformity is then understood as deviance resulting from, in part, incomplete socialization. This misses Mead's point, and the implications of Marx' position as well; for them, socialization is a much broader process, a process necessary to the emergence of specifically human characteristics. Yet it is understood by them both as a paradoxical and limiting process, and this point becomes important in the elaboration of the basis of alienation.

[9]What is fundamental for both writers is human life itself and human self-development. The "social" is but a necessary aspect of this life, understood as essential to or "functional" for specifically human existence. Equally, self-consciousness is an aspect of human life or functional for that life and in relation to the social aspect. Priority is given to human being and becoming, and not to any of the aspects that lie at the basis and are part of this life.

[10]One way of expressing this problem is to say that Mead places such complete emphasis on the unity of parts in the whole; on the unity, for example, of person and the social, that he ignores the importance of his own scattered insights into the problematics that arise in this unity. Thus Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism", 81, argues: "Society and persons are _dialectical_ aspects of each other, and their _distinctiveness_ must be maintained along with their continuity. If their continuity alone is emphasized, the self becomes a passive and even trivial aspect of social life". Yet, as noted, it is the individual that is reflexive in Mead's view, and, therefore, he cannot hold consistently to this overemphasis on the non-problematic character of the relationship between aspects of the emergent mind.

[11]_Selected Writings_, p. 97.

[12]See Nisbet, Sociological Tradition; Zeitlin, Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory; Dawe, "The Two Sociologies"; L. Bramson, The Political Context of Sociology (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970); C. W. Mills, The Sociological Imagination (London: Oxford University Press, 1972); Gouldner, Coming Crisis.

[13]Hornosty, Conceptions of Human Nature, chp. 5.

[14]Thus capitalism, while historically a development of human potentialities, must be transcended if further possibilities (which it has in part made possible) are to be realized.

[15]Cf. MSS, "Society" and G. Chasin, "G. H. Mead: Social Psychologist of the Moral Society", Berkeley Journal of Sociology, IX (1964), 95-117.

[16]Ibid., pp. 325-328.

[17]Mead's understanding of "knowledge" implies that the absolute, in terms of which statements and actions are judged, is that of functionality for the continuance and development of specifically human life. However, his tendency to "predict" the future social form, is also expressed as a tendency to utilize this "future" to judge present activities -- thus shifting the criteria of objectivity from functionality, to an acceptance of specific forms as the way of the future. This he cannot do if his position is to remain consistent, for it implies the granting of ontological status to Society.

[18]MSS, p. 262.

[19]Ibid.

[20]For example, Mead argues that social conflicts at one time resulted in one group "wiping out" the other. This situation gradually "evolved" as "domination" of one group over another and, finally, the ". . . achievement on the part of the individual of a higher self . . . passes over, under what we consider high conditions, into the just recognition of the capacity of the individual in his own field. The superiority which the person has is not

a superiority over the other but is grounded in that which he can do in relation to the functions and capacity of others", _ibid_., pp. 284-285.

[21]_Ibid_., p. 262.

[22]P.A., p. 53; see also, "Scientific Method and the Individual Thinker", in Reck, _Mead_, pp. 190-191.

[23]"Back of Our Minds", in P.A., p. 488.

[24]_Ibid_., p. 492.

[25]_Ibid_., pp. 492-493, emphasis added.

[26]"The Genesis of Self and Social Control", in Reck, _Mead_, p. 292.

[27]See above, chapter IV, pp. 199-209.

[28]_Early Writings_, p. 130.

[29]". . . the relations between social reconstruction and self or personality reconstruction are reciprocal and integral or organic; social reconstruction . . . entails self or personality reconstruction . . . ., for, since their selves or personalities are constituted by their organized social relations to one another, they cannot reconstruct their selves . . . without also reconstructing, to some extent, the given social order . . . ., in short, social reconstruction and self or personality reconstruction are two sides of a single process . . . .", _MSS_, p. 309. Thus Mead provides a conceptualization of the considerable depth to which social control, or the limitations of present social form, penetrates the existence of each individual. Cf. Cronk, "Symbolic Interaction"; even Lichtman, "Symbolic Interactionism", nods to this element as Mead's important contribution to critical theory.

[30]_MSS_, pp. 215-222, 324.

[31]_Ibid_., pp. 262-263 and note 10, p. 263.

[32]*Ibid.*, pp. 264-265, emphasis added.

[33]*Ibid.*, pp. 307-308, emphasis added.

[34]*Ibid.*, p. 264.

[35]*Ibid.*, pp. 264-265, emphasis added.

[36]Marx himself argued that through the division of labour, ". . . the productive forces appear to be completely independent and severed from the individuals and to constitute a self-subsistent world alongside the individuals. The reason for this is that the individual whose forces they are, *themselves exist separated and in opposition to one another*, while on the other hand these forces are only real forms in the intercourse and association of these individuals", *Selected Writings*, p. 174; *German Ideology*, pp. 83-84, emphasis added.

[37]Cf., P.A., pp. 50, 52; "The Teaching of Science in College", pp. 60-72, and "The Psychology of Social Consciousness Implied in Instruction", pp. 114-122, both in Reck, *Mead*; "Industrial Education, the Working Man, and the School", in Petras, *Mead: Essays*, pp. 50-62. In the latter article it is interesting that Mead objects to the division of labour, if indirectly, in terms precisely of the narrowness of mind entailed; see especially pp. 55-58.

[38]And, of course, this is doubly problematic in that their perspective develops within interaction most divorced and isolated from the basic productive process in which problematics between men and nature continually arise. As Marx argues, ". . . consciousness *can* really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness of existing practice . . . [precisely because] . . . the division of labour implies . . . the fact that intellectual and material activity -- enjoyment and labour, production and consumption -- devolve on different individuals . . .", *German Ideology*, pp. 43-44, emphasis in original.

[39]*Early Writings*, p. 131.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION: THE CRITIQUE AND THE CRITICAL ORIENTATION

It has been the intention of this paper to investigate the repeated suggestion that it is possible to construct an adequate sociology of knowledge on the basis of a synthesis of pertinent aspects of the writing of Marx and Mead. Before summarizing the results of the analysis by expressing the main elements of the critical perspective, however, it is worthwhile to review the major problems which constitute the context in which the hypothesis has been put forward.

The insight underlying the discipline in all its formulations, is that ideas are not independent of the social context in which they are formed and expressed. In its radical form, the insight implies the integral and positive unity of thought and the social dimension of human life and this, in turn, implies that there can be no "knowledge" completely independent of man's sociality -- knowledge is itself a socio-historical phenomenon. Many writers have been drawn into a consideration of this insight, but very few, if any, have developed or pursued a formulation that is fully consistent with the ultimate

implication that thought is radically social in nature. This hesitancy, in respect to the insight, is more forcefully and explicitly expressed in the Critique of the discipline that has developed, and which holds that the discipline is theoretically impossible or of but extremely limited applicability.

The critics have argued, and most proponents of the discipline basically agree, that any belief, affected by the social context, cannot be true belief or knowledge; to connect validity with socio-historical origin is to commit the genetic fallacy, and, thus, to relativize all thought. Ultimately, objective statements, especially about the relationship between ideas and social factors, cannot be achieved, if it is true that all ideas are inextricably connected with the social context, and, thus, socio-historically relative. Besides this rejection of the radical implication of the insight, the critics spare no effort in demonstrating that no perspective, so far developed, has even managed to present a clear conceptualization of "knowledge", of the social context or of the relationship between these terms that is implied by the insight. Finally, it is argued that the insight is neither demonstrable nor refutable via empirical analysis, and, thus, that it cannot be accepted in its more radical meaning.

Despite these criticisms, attempts to construct an adequate framework for the social analysis of ideas persist. However, because there is a basic agreement with the critics' claims, the attempt to elaborate the insight is generally pursued within the parameters of the Critique. This entails a tendency to move away from any consideration of the radical implications of the insight, in the direction of functionalist, co-relational studies of given ideas in relation to what are conceived of as social-existential factors of human existence. In general, the sociology of knowledge is conceived of as the empirical investigation of the social distribution of knowledge, or of the functionality of ideas for society and particular institutions, on the assumption that the "empirical" approach is itself free of social penetration, and, therefore, productive of objective, valid, non-relative statements.

However, even these efforts, which accept and attempt to meet the demands of the Critique, have not been satisfactory. The impasse of relativism has not been transcended, and considerable support is thereby accorded to the claim that a sociology of knowledge is indeed theoretically impossible. It was, therefore, an initial concern of this study that, because of the repeated failure of so many different approaches to the elaboration of the insight, the suggestion of the importance of a Marx/Mead

synthesis was less than convincing. This doubt was reinforced by the fact that the hypothesis has usually been phrased in the very terms that have never been able to deal with the relativistic impasse; in terms of achieving a fully adequate, empirical sociology of knowledge.

The uncertainty about the relevance of pursuing the hypothesis was at least diminished by two additional considerations. First, the repeated failure of so many different formulations of the insight suggested an inherent contradiction between the presuppositions of the Critique and the implications of the insight in regard to knowledge. Second, it was observed that there were no developed or convincing arguments present in the literature which would justify what is, otherwise, a rather uncritical acceptance of the parameters of the Critique, as taking precedence over the implications of the insight. These considerations suggested that, before pursuing the hypothesis in regard to Marx and Mead, it might be fruitful to carry out an analysis of the Critique itself, in order to determine whether or not the general acceptance of its parameters, by various theorists, was at all necessary.

The analysis demonstrated that the Critique is rooted in the positivistic conception of knowledge which, in turn, reflects the historical dominance of individualistic

philosophies. In other words, it presupposes a particular conception of objectivity which defines the essence of understanding in terms of strict empirical verifiability, as supposedly exemplified in the observational, experimental approach of the natural sciences. Furthermore, this conception has emerged out of the historical, individualistic problem of achieving a method of thought, through which the perception of individuals could be purged of what were considered to be biasing, relativizing effects of "external" factors; especially institutional, social factors.

The conclusion of this analysis was, therefore, that the Critique itself is rooted in particular presuppositions about the nature of human knowledge, and about how certainty with regard to statements can be attained. Of greatest relevance to the study is the fact that, though these presuppositions and the positivistic approach to validation reject the notion of a social theory of knowledge quite by definition, they themselves can not be verified empirically. Thus, it followed that the critics' rejection of the insight and its implications, on the grounds that it is not empirically demonstrable, is inadequate, because the same argument is equally applicable to their own basic presuppositions about knowledge.

The "debate" between critics and proponents of the discipline was, therefore, shown to reflect a difference which is much deeper than has usually been recognized. It represents a contradiction between a-social and social conceptions of knowledge, and it is a contradiction which, in respect to the insight, has seldom been fully recognized and never explicitly dealt with. Thus, it could be argued that the persistent failure to develop an adequate, non-contradictory sociology of knowledge lies precisely in the repeated effort to work within the parameters of the Critique. This is to say that the failure results from the attempt to combine a conception of thought as social, with the contrary positivistic conception of objectivity that has too often been accepted as an article of faith without critical reflexion.

The analysis of the Critique, therefore, suggested that it was, indeed, impossible to construct an adequate sociology of knowledge, if this was attempted on the ground of the positivistic conception of thought and objectivity. Thus, the hypothesis, in respect to the implications of the Marx/Mead synthesis, is quite false when phrased within these parameters. However, since the positivistic conception is itself rooted in presuppositions which can not be empirically validated, it

became relevant to consider whether or not the insight might be elaborated within a conception of objectivity consistent with the assumption that thought is indeed a social phenomenon, yet a conception antithetical to positivistic canons. Furthermore, given contemporary, non-positivistic re-evaluations of the writing of Marx and, to some extent, Mead, it was proposed that their work would be important, if their ideas included the necessary conception of objectivity. Only if this could be demonstrated would it be relevant to pursue the hypothesis, for only in these terms could a synthesis of their work possibly avoid the pitfalls of previous, positivistically inclined efforts.

Having rephrased the basic problem of developing an adequate sociology of knowledge, in terms of the development of a conception of objectivity consistent with the insight, the work of Marx and Mead was then analysed. It was demonstrated that both theorists did develop such a conception of objectivity based, precisely, on the insight that knowledge is essentially a social phenomenon. Furthermore, it was shown that both writers developed more or less detailed responses to the other basic conceptual questions central to the elaboration of a sociology of knowledge; questions as to the nature of ideas, of the social context and of the character of the

relationship between these terms. It was also demonstrated, however, that neither writer, alone, elaborated answers to these questions which were without serious deficiencies.

The previous chapter then considered the specific hypothesis that, despite differences, the ideas of Marx and Mead, relevant to a sociology of knowledge, were nonetheless quite compatible. This compatibility was demonstrated and, in addition, it was shown that the unique elements of either set of ideas are relevant to the other, and precisely in terms of their separate deficiencies. Marx' concept of alienation is compatible with, and of essential importance to clarifying the implicit critical leanings of Mead's ideas; Mead's conception of socialization is, likewise, compatible with, and essential to a correction of the apparent positivistic tendencies of Marx' basic ideas. It remains then to clarify the basic elements of the critical sociology of knowledge that can be constructed on the basis of these compatible elements.

The essential elements and orientation of this perspective can be expressed in response to the Critique of the insight and the discipline. However, while the basic concepts of knowledge and social context, and of the relationship between these terms, must be clearly expressed; and while the perspective must transcend the

self-contradiction of relativism, if it is to resolve the problems that have beset the discipline, it is now obvious this can not be done in terms of the parameters of the Critique itself. Thus, this response to the Critique must demonstrate, in addition, that it transcends the essential meaning of the Critique and avoids the further contradiction entailed by any inadvertent acceptance of the positivistic conception of objective thought. In other words, the expression of the perspective, and response to the Critique must include an expression of the conception of objectivity demanded by the insight.

First, the proposed perspective contains a very definite conception of the nature of human life, and, within this, of thought and social context. Men are understood as organisms who, in their complete development as a qualitatively different species, exist only through each other or through their natural sociality. The very individuality and self-consciousness of men, assuming the requisite physio-biological characteristics, is dependent on their participation in prior, communicative relationships with others; mind and self emerge through social interaction. Furthermore, men exist and develop only by actively and intentionally producing their means of subsistence, instead of relying on the direct produce

of nature. This productive activity always, and necessarily, involves some form of social co-operation, and is always self-conscious activity. Social forms and ideas are specific and dialectically related <u>means</u> which mediate man's relationship with the rest of nature, and which serve both the fulfillment of needs and the realization of the further possibilities opened up by present activity. Thus, man is conceived as a historical being whose activity and thought, or praxis, is not to be explained as simply the product of natural forces, whether physical, biological or social. In other words, given the conception of man as a productive and self-productive or historical being, then an essential aspect of any explanation of activity and thought requires consideration of the unique contribution of man himself as a "determinant" of his own activity, in relation to nature.

To be more specific, this image of man contains no tendency to conceptualize "society" as an entity in itself; the social context has no ontological status and cannot be properly appreciated in sociologistic terms. Man is not simply a derivative of social forces, but, as a social being, is the fundamental reality from which social form results and is transformed. Therefore, the sociality of men does not refer to any specific form of

social interaction, nor to an "existentiality" of such form, but rather to the basic "herd" character of the species, and, thus, to the social character of the process of human production. To speak of society is simply to speak of the relatively persistent historical patterns of interaction or co-operation, within which individual and common needs are pursued in relation to the rest of nature, which is the object of these needs. Specific social forms are but particular functional means to collective and individual ends, and are historically contingent. They are historical human products whose persistence is contingent on their adequacy to the fulfillment of present need, and to the creation and realization of new need. Finally, social form stands in a reciprocal relationship of interdependence with the organization of attitudes or ideas of the individuals who act within these patterns.

Within this image of man, thought is also conceptualized as but a dimension of praxis; as a functional capacity within productive, self-productive social activity. The consciousness of man is a self-consciousness through which one can be an object to oneself, and, thus, through which one's own activities become a conscious part of the total environment. Unlike other species, who are bound largely by an instinctually selective, highly

patterned and slowly changing relationship with the rest of nature, the self-consciousness of man confers a considerable degree of control over both self and environment. Nonetheless, human consciousness is not something outside of or beyond nature; it is a qualitatively different capacity, though a capacity which emerges within nature, and which serves the species' survival and development within nature. Human thought, like the social dimension, is a means that is functionally operative in relation to the problematics that arise in experience, that are, in turn, related to need fulfillment, potentiality and nature.

Furthermore, human intelligence is understood as integrally rooted, both historically in relation to the species, and biographically in relation to the individual, in the social interactional and communicative dimension of praxis. The ability to "take one's self as an object", to internalize and organize responses of others as attitudes and to think or carry on an "internalized conversation of gestures", depends not only on requisite physio-biological conditions, but, as well, on an on-going process of interaction with others. Thus, human consciousness is understood as a functional capacity of the individual organism, which is nonetheless integrally bound up with the forms that have historically been given to praxis.

Precisely because mind and self emerge within the specific social or organized context into which the individual is born, it is essential to distinguish between two different levels of consciousness. First, much of human activity is habitual, and simply reflects a _content_ of meanings that have been internalized. This is to imply a relationship between consciousness and activity little different from the instinctual situation of other species, except that, because the organization of activity is symbolic and comes through internalization, human activity can be much more complex than is the case for other species. But, human consciousness is more than simply a content of meanings and attitudes, however complex, that reflect the social situation into which one is born. It is also an emergent, reflexive _capacity_, not only in the sense of allowing much more variegated and complex activity, but also in the sense that it is the element that confers a degree of control over both self and environment. Human reflexive consciousness is a capacity allowing reconstruction and reorganization of attitudes; a capacity to transform attitudinal structure, and, therefore, action and action patterns, whose adequacy has been called into question by the appearance of problematics.

This distinction, between content and capacity, or between "information" and "knowledge", is of central importance. Information is acquired and held, passively for the most part, through the internalization of the responses of others as the meaning of self, objects, others and situations. It is, therefore, inextricably tied to the given social context into which the individual is born, initially without mind or self. Knowledge, on the other hand, is less a phenomenon than it is a process, an active, intentional process called forth in the face of problematics. "To know" in this perspective is to construct hypothetical objects, situations or relationships, implicitly or in mind, and then to act to "test" the adequacy of these created objects, in relation to both the need whose fulfillment is problematic, and to nature. Knowledge is, therefore, change; to know something is to change self, objects and activity or to change historical "circumstances", at least in reference to what has become problematic within the existing form of praxis.

Knowing, then, begins in a given content and organization of attitudes or information. It entails a change in respect to what has become problematic in this initial content and its organization, and, attendant upon the success of the reconstruction, it passes back into

the level of information. It is the individual who becomes aware of problematics and who reflects, but thought is and remains, integrally, a social process. The information level in terms of which discrepancies or problematics become apparent, is social in origin and content; thus, the changes that occur through individual reflexion must be translated into a social impact, if they are to become factually relevant to the problematic situation.

In the positivistic approaches to a comprehension of thought and social context, there has been a tendency to define these terms in total separation from one another, and to define the relationship in causal or functional terms. In contrast to this approach, it is apparent that within the proposed perspective, these terms cannot be defined in complete independence of one another. They are defined "relationally" or in terms of one another, for it is held that thought and social context constitute an integral, dialectical unity. Each term, taken alone, is but a different perspective on a unitary and unique life process, human praxis. Nonetheless, each aspect is a necessary and integral part of praxis, and neither is totally reducible to or explicable in terms solely of the other. To place primary emphasis on "society", as happens within positivistic formulations of the insight, is to

abstract illegitimately from its character as the minded activity of persons, and to reify what are but historically contingent patterns of co-operation. To speak of Thought in isolation is to sever the process illegitimately from the concrete social activity which is the basis of an individual's consciousness, and from the "circumstances" which are always the beginning point of reflexion. Furthermore, to speak solely of the Individual is to abstract from his necessary existence, as an essentially social being, and to risk reifying a specific moment in the development of the species.

Obviously, in these terms alone, no sociology of knowledge is called for, as there is no "problem" which would justify or call forth such reflexion. At the level of praxis, men construct ideas and create social forms in the effort to deal with, and modify, nature, in the interest of fulfilling needs. As problems emerge in experience, either in the form of limitations on present activity or in the form of new possibilities hampered by present circumstances, men are capable, through the capacity of reflexion, to reformulate and reorganize existing attitudes, and thus to change existing patterns of activity in order to resolve these problems. However, it is also quite obvious, in historical terms, that this

image of change in the face of problematics is inadequate, for change is seldom continuous or smooth. Change, in both ideas and social form, is more apparently a conflictual, difficult process, promoted by one class and resisted by another. Indeed, it is the very resistance to change, as well as conformity and adherence to traditional ideas and action patterns, which lends at least superficial credence to the sociologistic, positivistic approaches to human thought and individual action, and which denies the relevance of the image of human life as praxis.

However, this apparent contradiction between the image of life as praxis and the difficulties and conflictual nature of social change can be resolved consistently with the idea of praxis. The resolution is entailed by the concept of alienation, which, at the same time, provides the necessary rationale for a critical sociology of knowledge. Alienation is a conceptualization of the situation in which the very products of man's labour, or of praxis, cease to be appreciated as such, and become reified as non-contigent and independently existing entities; entities which, apparently, define a "reality" on which men "must" predicate their activity, and to which they "must" adapt. This occurs in respect to objects treated as commodities; in respect to methods or tech-

nologies or even social forms treated as the "one best way", or simply as "the way"; and in respect to conceptions of thought itself, and specific, "self-evident", beliefs. In general, alienation reflects, at least in part, the predominance of internalized "information" over the emergent reflexive capacity of persons.

This phenomenon of alienation is, itself, a "problematic" for man in that it inhibits or fetters both the appreciation of, and the reflexive attack on, those problems that arise in the praxical relationship between persons and nature. It is further problematic in that it renders persons and groups unreceptive to and intolerant of, both the necessity of critical reflexion and the necessity of changes in ideas and activity, if problems in the relationship between man and nature are to be resolved.

That alienation occurs is not simply fortuitous, for it is related to the very character of human development and to the unintended consequences of the products that men establish, as these relate, in turn, to the social nature of man. Of central importance is the fact that the mind and the self emerge through an internalization of existing meanings, and, thus, of the existing form given to praxis by previous generations. Reflexion is not only predicated on this base, it is this base with

which it must deal, which, in some respect, must be changed. To reflect on the adequacy of existing "information", is to reflect on the adequacy of an aspect of the world which has, hitherto, been quite acceptable, and, perhaps, very dogmatically taught; but it is also to reflect on one's own identity, insofar as this is bound up with the internalized content as a whole. Clearly, the inherent tension involved in, and inhibiting reflexion will be more or less acute, depending on the extent to which existing ideas are called into question by problems as they arise.

The tendency to alienation is also rooted in the unintended consequences of historically created attitudinal or conceptual structures and interaction patterns. The historical development of an increasingly intricate division of labour, and the theories which rationalize it, have had the consequence of dividing and isolating various groups within a community praxis. This, in turn, has resulted in more or less differentiated contexts of socialization, and in differentiated and "narrowed" contexts of concrete problem-solving activity through which historical change takes place. The potential for eventual disagreement and conflict between differentiated groups is offset, in part, by the very interdependence created by

differentiation; in part, by the development of "societal" or political-legal bonds; and in part, through the formalized or institutionalized teaching of "common" ideas and values. The negative consequences of this, for the reflexive moment of praxis, is that persons are more and more isolated from any but a remote and "abstract" appreciation of the contexts to which most of their ideas refer, and certainly are isolated from any but a minimal and abstract appreciation of the whole of the community of which they are a part. Clearly, they become isolated from the concrete interactional contexts in which they might directly experience the emergent problematics that call many of their ideas into question.

This issue is, of course, exacerbated when such differentiation is combined with a differential access to resources, and thus to inequalities and power relationships between groups. Such dependence relations make it more likely that a minority is able to impose its own "narrow" perspective and specific ideas on others, in spite of, if not because of, recurrent, unresolved problematics.

The proposed perspective demands investigation of precisely this issue of alienation. In particular, as a sociology of knowledge, it seeks to determine the adequacy of existing thought and institutional structure

in relation to human need and potentiality. The perspective does not entail an attempt to state "correct" thought or action beyond what is implied in its presuppositions regarding man and thought as fundamentally social in nature, for this is the task of praxis itself. Rather, it is an attempt to discover the degree to which persistent problems are a consequence of an unreflexive adherence to particular, abstract ideas, and to particular modes of action; and how, in turn, the predominance of existing information is rooted in the reciprocal relationship of attitudes and specific, historically developed action patterns. The ultimate intention, then, of this mode of analysis, as itself an aspect of and not separate from praxis, concerns the understanding, in order to contribute to removing, the negative impact of alienation on the ability of men to deal directly with the natural problematics that emerge in their daily lives.

In other words, the proposed perspective demands a critical sociology of knowledge, and thus the contrast between it and most other elaborations of the insight could not be more clear. Whereas the discipline has generally been conceived as concerned with the empirical investigation of the relationships between "mental constructs and the existential aspects of society and culture", the critical perspective presumes the dialectical

unity of this relationship, and investigates the problematic dysjunction of this unity which is captured in the concepts of alienation and reification. It is precisely the effort of previous frameworks, to carry out a positivistic analysis of a supposed, social-existential determination of ideas, which renders such attempts contradictory in relation to the insight. In contrast, this critical perspective remains consistent with the implications of the insight, precisely through its refusal to bow to a methodological stance which disallows the central presupposition of a unity between thought and the social aspect of human life.

One further issue remains; from the point of view of positivistic canons of objectivity, this critical perspective apparently accepts the relativity of all human thought; ideas and action patterns are both considered historically contingent. However, within its own parameters, the critical mode of analysis does provide a basis of judgement, though it is not a basis stated in terms of a specific intellectual method, and certainly not one rooted in an individualistic metaphysic. Nor is it a basis of judgement which intends the production of "knowledge" in any final sense. Rather, the basis, in terms of which thought is judged, is that of praxis itself -- the conception of human life as an active, social,

reflexive and self-productive relationship to nature.

It must be emphasized that this criteria of objectivity, human life as praxis, is an absolute which incorporates change or passage. It is not a set of timeless, a priori categories and canons that are imposed on mind and, thus, specifically define its proper form of operation and form of communicative expression. It remains a general predicate which must be constantly redefined, in specific terms, in response to the historical development of the species. Ideas and, thus, social forms, are judged adequate or inadequate in reference to their unproblematic or problematic operation within the life and development of the species. The destruction of foodstuffs, the intentional manipulation of employment, discriminatory practices against certain groups, etc., and the "information" on which such actions are based, may perhaps be "adequate" in terms of canons which apparently enable one to divorce socio-economic "laws" from productive existence or praxis; such thought and action is entirely inadequate and reified in relation to the contradictions it entails, as reflected in persistent poverty, starvation, prejudice and exploitation.

In other words, the critical perspective understands itself as essentially an aspect of, and not

divorced from praxis, and in this idea lies, perhaps, the fundamental difference between this perspective and the positivistic framework of both critics and some proponents of the sociology of knowledge. To be fully consistent, critical analysis of ideas in relation to social forms must be rooted in, or depart from, the concrete problematics of every-day life. Its justification lies, ultimately, in the relevance and "functionality" of its findings to the appreciation and transcendence of existing and historically contingent social forms and ideas in their limiting, distorting or alienated aspects, and in relation to man's ability to deal with natural problematics that continually arise in experience. Thus, it cannot be "disinterested", value-free analysis or a search for "knowledge for knowledge sake", as defined and intended by the positivistic framework. It is itself "construction of knowledge", oriented to change and a functional moment within praxis.

Nor does the critical perspective "devalue reason" or human rationality, though it comprehends rationality in terms which depart, somewhat, from traditional conceptions. Indeed, the position quite clearly presumes the fundamentally rational character of man as a being of praxis, in contrast to those positivistic sociologies which conceive of persons' action and thought as

essentially derivative -- as abstractions in relation to a more real, existential social substratum. In one sense, the ideas of alienation and reification capture the existence of irrationality in human life, but in such a way that it becomes a problem to be dealt with, and not the fundamental, or necessary condition of the human species.

In conclusion, this analysis has been concerned to reopen the historical "debate" between critics and proponents of the idea that the intellectual and social dimensions of human life are fundamentally inseparable. The specific approach to the debate, adopted here, has been through an investigation of the repeated hypothesis that an adequate sociology of knowledge and response to the Critique lies in a synthesis of relevant aspects of the perspectives of Marx and Mead. It has been demonstrated that this hypothesis has considerable warrant, and that the synthesis achieved provides definite and adequate response to the basic difficulties raised by the critics. A sociology of knowledge, consistent with its original intention and promise, is, therefore, possible, but only when developed outside of the questionable constraints of the positivistic intellectual framework.

While this study has limited itself, primarily,

to an investigation of a specific hypothesis expressed in the literature, it is but a beginning in the development of a critical sociology of knowledge. It requires further elaboration, both through a more detailed analysis of such writers as Weber and Mannheim, and through the development of its implications in concrete historical analysis of particular issues. Beyond this elaboration, it would appear fruitful to pursue the implications of this critical synthesis for general sociological theory and research, in respect to the continuing debate over positivistic approaches to social analysis. In particular, the concepts of alienation and reification promise to provide an effective, non-sociologistic appreciation of the historical tension between the individual and society -- the central tension, and problem, which has historically motivated the development of sociological thought.

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