Postmodern American sociology: A response to the aesthetic challenge

Jongryul Choi
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/rtds

Repository Citation
https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/rtds/2482

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Scholarship@UNLV. It has been accepted for inclusion in UNLV Retrospective Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.
POSTMODERN AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY: A RESPONSE

TO THE AESTHETIC CHALLENGE

by

Jongryul Choi

Bachelor of Arts
Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea
1990

Master of Arts
The Academy of Korean Studies, Pundang, Korea
1993

Master of Arts
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1998

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Doctor of Philosophy Degree
Department of Sociology
College of Liberal Arts

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
May 2002
The Dissertation prepared by

Jongryul Choi

Entitled

Postmodern American Sociology: A Response to the Aesthetic Challenge

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

David R. Oliver
Examination Committee Chair

Dean of the Graduate College

Examination Committee Member

Examination Committee Member

Graduate College Faculty Representative
ABSTRACT

Postmodern American Sociology: A Response to the Aesthetic Challenge

by

Jongryul Choi

Dr. David R. Dickens, Examination Committee Chair
Professor of Sociology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Over the past two decades, American sociologists have debated about the postmodern and what we might call “postmodern American sociology” began to emerge at the turn of this century. This dissertation examines the nature of the postmodern in general, and postmodern American sociology in particular, in terms of three models of knowledge: science, morality, and aesthetics.

This dissertation pays close attention to the fact that science, morality, and aesthetics began to be differentiated from religion in the modern era, which posited two problems: the problem of legitimacy of knowledge and the problem of figuring out the relationship among science, morality, and aesthetics. It sees the modern as a specific way to address these two problems. About the first problem, the modern derived legitimacy of knowledge from the idea of progress: progress in science and technology will lead to the improvement in material well-being as well as the moral perfection of individuals and societies. About the second problem, the modern presented two positions. The
Enlightenment tried to reintegrate science, morality, and aesthetics into society according to scientific laws while the Counter-Enlightenment did so according to moral laws. In this sense, the modern is defined as the scientization and moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which proceeded from the 17th century to the early 1960s in Western societies.

This dissertation also observes how the process of dedifferentiation, a process of social entropy leading to the collapse of boundaries, is changing the two issues associated with the modern. It is increasingly difficult to derive legitimacy of each knowledge from the idea of progress because science and morality become contested arenas mainly by the implosive impact of electronically-mediated culture industry on ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. The process of dedifferentiation also makes the problem of integration of science, morality, and aesthetics into society outdated by refiguring them in terms of the state of incommensurability. In this sense, the postmodern is defined as the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which has proceeded from the early 1960s on in advanced Western societies.

This dissertation examines the nature of postmodern American sociology by situating it within this general relationship between the modern and the postmodern. It investigates how sociology has been based on the modern, excluding the aesthetic, how the postmodern as the aesthetic challenge is threatening the modern discipline of sociology, and how some American sociologists, especially critical and interactionist sociologists, form postmodern American sociology in the course of responding to the aesthetic challenge. Finally, this dissertation proposes that postmodern American sociology needs multi- or trans-disciplinary approaches for addressing the postmodern,
the core of which is the synthesis of poststructuralist linguistics and post-Marxist political economy.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................................. iii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ........................................................................................................ viii

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................. 1
   Organization of Dissertation .......................................................................................... 11

CHAPTER 2 THE MODERN AS THE SCIENTIZATION AND MORALIZATION OF ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND ETHICS/POLITICS ................................................................. 14
   Reformulation of Kantian Trilogy .............................................................................. 16
   Definition of the Modern as Scientization and Moralization .................................. 26

CHAPTER 3 THE POSTMODERN AS THE AESTHETICIZATION OF ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND ETHICS/POLITICS ................................................................. 66
   Postmodern Social Theory ....................................................................................... 67
   Some Historical Parallels of the Aesthetic Moment .............................................. 115

CHAPTER 4 VULNERABILITY OF SOCIOLOGY TO THE AESTHETIC CHALLENGE ................................................................................................................................. 141
   Classical European Sociology as the Exclusion of the Aesthetic ....................... 142
   Modern American Sociology as the Exclusion of the Aesthetic ....................... 176

CHAPTER 5 THE EMERGENCE OF POSTMODERN AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY AS A RESPONSE TO THE AESTHETIC CHALLENGE ......................................................................................... 212
   Critical Postmodern Sociology ............................................................................. 213
   Interactionist Postmodern Sociology .................................................................. 240
   Critics of Postmodern Sociology .......................................................................... 265

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUDING REMARKS ........................................................................ 278

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................................................................. 286

VITA .................................................................................................................................... 304
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am enormously grateful to my committee members who read one or more earlier versions of this dissertation and who provided me with critical but supportive guidance. In the first place, I wish to thank Dr. David R. Dickens, who by his suggestive teachings was of invaluable help in the shaping of the original project of the dissertation. I am grateful to Dr. Simon Gottschalk and Dr. Kate Hausbeck, both of whom gave me extensive criticisms and detailed suggestions in very different ways. I am also grateful for Dr. Colin Loader's critical suggestion which helped me to reorganize this dissertation. Without their time, guidance, and support, this dissertation would not have been possible. Most of all I am grateful to my wife, Sookpyo, for her constant support and encouragement.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, American sociologists have debated about the postmodern. As a result, what we might call "postmodern American sociology" began to emerge at the turn of the century. This dissertation aims to understand the nature of the postmodern in general, and postmodern American sociology in particular, in terms of three models of knowledge: science, morality, and aesthetics.

These three models of knowledge stemmed from the long history of Western philosophy, according to which there are three discrete categories of knowledge based on three discrete human faculties: theoretical knowledge based on cognitive faculty (thinking or knowing), practical knowledge based on moral faculty (doing), and aesthetic knowledge based on aesthetic faculty (feeling). But these three models of knowledge were eclipsed by religious "faith" during the medieval age, but the situation fundamentally changed when science, morality, and aesthetics began to be differentiated from religion in the modern era. Losing religious foundation, each of them confronted the problem of legitimacy of knowledge, and another problem of figuring out the relationship among science, morality, and aesthetics emerged. The modern tried to solve these two problems. About the first problem, the modern derived legitimacy of knowledge from the idea of progress. About the second problem, the modern presented two positions. The Enlightenment tried to reintegrate science, morality, and aesthetics
into society according to scientific laws while the Counter-Enlightenment did so according to moral laws. The postmodern is challenging the modern by embracing aesthetics as the axial principle to (dis)organize humanity and society.

I believe that the nature of postmodern American sociology would be better understood by situating it within this general scheme about the modern and the postmodern. The postmodern as the aesthetic challenge to the modern calls modern American sociology into question because its fundamental assumptions about ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics were based on the modern. Postmodern American sociology has emerged in the course of responding to this challenge. One of the main merits of my approach is that it might help us see postmodern American sociology not as a intellectual fad of the 1980s, but as a sociological response to the emerging aestheticized world in which the traditional ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics modern American sociology has embraced do not work well as before. In this sense, postmodern American sociology is a durable project to investigate a new world in which aesthetics is the axial principle to (dis)organize man and society.

I think it will be helpful to the reader to know from the outset the general outlines of the dissertation. Thus, I will briefly describe the postmodern in general and postmodern American sociology in particular in terms of the dynamic relationship between science, morality, and aesthetics. I believe that this might be one way to grasp the nature of the postmodern in general and postmodern American sociology in particular.

In the modern era, science, morality, and aesthetics (art) were considered to be separate disciplines. For this separation, Kant's trilogy, *Critique of Pure Reason*, *Critique of Practical Reason*, and *Critique of Judgment*, played a decisive role. Kant
grounded science, morality, and aesthetics on their own foundation. The a priori principle of the faculty of cognition could provide a basis for theoretical judgment being universally valid and binding; the a priori principle of the faculty of doing could provide a basis for moral judgment being universally valid and binding; and the a priori principle of the faculty of feeling could provide a basis for aesthetic judgment being universally valid and binding. In the early modern era, this Kantian division played a crucial role in justifying science, morality, and aesthetics as mutually exclusive autonomous disciplines. Accordingly, science is concerned with true and false, morality/ethics is concerned with good and bad, and aesthetics is concerned with beautiful and sublime.

This Kantian division sounded reasonable to modern thinkers because it was connected with the substantial process of differentiation of modern society, in which new institutions of science, morality, and aesthetics were relieved from the control of the traditional institution of religion and specialized relative to one another in terms of their respective functions. But this process also provoked the problem of integration: if each institution has its own specific foundation as well as function, what would be the proper interrelationship among science, morality, and ethics?

Modern thinkers presented different answers to this question. For the Enlightenment thinkers who tried to apply Newtonian science to society in order to organize it according to universal scientific laws, differentiation itself would solve the problem of integration because it meant specialization of functions as well as integration (mutual independence of the structurally differentiated parts and coordination of their functions). In this sense, specialization of function entails integration. Thus, science, morality, and aesthetics are considered to be subsystems equipped with their own specialized functions, which are

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
integrated into the whole society. But the Enlightenment thinkers observed that this optimism did not always come true in the real world. They needed a new encompassing foundation, like God, to reintegrate differentiated parts into the whole society. The idea of progress replaced the medieval God: progress in science and technology will lead to the improvement in material well-being as well as the moral perfection of individuals and societies (see Bury 1920; Wright 1997). The main concern is how to organize individuals and societies according to universal scientific laws. In this sense, the Enlightenment thinkers believed that science should be the axial principle to functionally "reintegrate" specialized parts so as to form a highly organic society. The ideal of the Enlightenment is the "scientific" organization of humanity and society.

For the Counter-Enlightenment thinkers who objected to the application of the Newtonian science to human society and tried to complement the extremity of the Enlightenment by recovering morality of the ancient Greeks and the Renaissance humanism, differentiation meant specialization of functions as well as fragmentation, alienation, and dehumanization. The Counter-Enlightenment thinkers claimed that although progress in science and technology would bring about the improvement in material well-being of individuals and societies, it could not automatically lead to the moral perfection of individuals and societies. Science could not solve the problem of integration. Rather, it was incorporated into the economy or the system and turned into domination (see Horkheimer and Adorno 1993). The Counter-Enlightenment thinkers criticized the modern ideal of autonomy of science, morality, and aesthetics was false, because each of them was under control of its objective experts and specialists detached from the public. In this sense, science failed to reintegrate science, morality, and
aesthetics into society. Nevertheless, they basically believed in the idea of progress. What is needed is to re-ground science, morality, and aesthetics on the principles of morality (see Habermas 1995). According to them, one of the main features of modern morality is the separation of “ought” from “is,” which opened both the possibility and the burden of autonomy of the human subject. They believed that human beings should be a law unto themselves and represent this law for themselves. In this sense, the basic project of the Counter-Enlightenment is the “moral” organization of humanity and society.

Even though the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment thinkers had different opinions about differentiation, they shared the same belief that society is one entity into which science, morality, and aesthetics should be reintegrated. The difference between them lied in the issue of which principle should play the main role of reintegrating them into society. Science is the main principle for the Enlightenment while morality is the counterpart for the Counter-Enlightenment. In this sense, both the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment shared a nostalgia for the past when religion incorporated all institutions so as to not allow differentiation.

Some Anti-Enlightenment thinkers such as Sade and Nietzsche resisted this view, arguing that there is no entity called society. For them, differentiation referred to the state of incommensurability in which absolute differences stand without effacing their heterogeneity. They recognized the historical inevitability of separating science, morality, and aesthetics from religion but did not believe that these should be reintegrated into society.
The Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment perspectives were two intellectual pillars of the modern. By contrast, the Anti-Enlightenment viewpoint was virtually ignored in the modern. But in the course of the second half of the 20th century, the modern project as scientization and moralization began to be challenged by the new aesthetics associated with poststructuralism, which shifts the main subject from the beautiful to the sublime (see Carroll 1987). Embracing the anti-Enlightenment tradition, the new aesthetics fundamentally challenges the modern project of autonomy of science, ethics, and aesthetics, arguing that they all relied on their own foundations or absolute grounds, which are in fact arbitrary. It argues that science, morality, and aesthetics in the modern era were all discourses (rational orders of concepts), within which unspeakable others (the sublime) were repressed or marginalized. The new aesthetics emphasizes that these unrepresentable others were necessarily at work within and against discourses, disrupting the rules of representation. As a result, the new aesthetics blurs the boundaries between the representer and the represented, or the signifier and the signified: they are not two separated entities in which one represents the other. In this way, the new aesthetics fundamentally challenges foundational science, morality, and aesthetics, revealing their dependence on the unspeakable others. All discourses are always implicated in power and there are no foundations. Modern science as a discourse depended on nonscientific others such as narrative, rhetoric, myth, religion, subjectivity, etc. Modern morality as a discourse depended on the unspeakable others such as desire, sexuality, body, women, etc. And modern aesthetics as a discourse depended on unrepresentable others such as the sublime, the real, etc. The autonomy of science,
morality, and aesthetics is imploded from within, which in turn resulted in the blur of the traditional rigid boundaries between them.

The most salient feature of the new aesthetics associated with the sublime is its defiance of order. This defiance resonated among the so-called postmodern social thinkers when it was situated within a substantive process of dedifferentiation, a process of social entropy leading to the collapse of boundaries (see Lash 1990; Crook, Pakluski and Waters 1992). For this process of dedifferentiation, the change in system of culture is decisive. In differentiation, culture used to be seen as discrete and isolated values, beliefs, attitudes, etc., whose meanings are firmly located within the institutional fabrics of society. Culture also used to be thought to perform integrative functions for the social system. But in dedifferentiation, culture becomes an aesthetic field of signs whose meaning is in a state of infinite regress by way of a continual deferral to other signs. Meaning is not located within the social any more; it is scattered in an indefinite signifying chain. Electronically-mediated mass media play a crucial role in this changing conception of culture. Electronically-mediated culture industry bombards the mass with images and signs whose meanings are neutralized or “imploded.” As a result, any stable structure of meaning is virtually impossible. Modern autonomy of science, morality, and aesthetics used to presuppose their own foundations on which each discipline was grounded. What is at issue is that science, morality, and aesthetics have become more and more aestheticized due to the trend of new aesthetics increasingly permeating and dismantling their foundations. Everything has become at length cultural because everything is mediated by culture saturated with images and signs in the society of the spectacle, the image, or the simulacrum. As a result, the distinction between the real and
the imaginary disappears, which gives rise to a depthless aestheticized hallucination of reality (Baudrillard 1983). In this new reality, no stable meaning is possible due to the ceaseless permutation of signifiers, which neutralizes meaning. Due to the permeation of the sublime into science, morality, and aesthetics, they could not help but accept that truth, justice, and beauty become contested arenas.

Postmodern social thinkers have different attitudes toward dedifferentiation. Poststructuralist postmodern social theorists, who adopt aesthetics as the axial principle of society, see dedifferentiation in purely cultural terms (for instance, see Baudrillard 1983, 1990, 1994). According to them, it is senseless to discern what is not cultural from what is cultural in a dedifferentiated world. By contrast, critical postmodern social theorists who adopt morality as the axial principle of society try to locate the process of dedifferentiation within the restless transformative activity of capital accumulation (for instance, see Harvey 1989). The attempt here is to produce marketable commodities by brutal aesthetics of squalor and shock. In spite of this difference, both postmodern social theory camps share the belief that the modern as the scientization and moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics is being challenged by the postmodern as the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. Both camps argue that dedifferentiation neither entail integration nor alienation. Rather, they pay attention to how dedifferentiation is liquidating the binary opposition of integration and alienation, and how it is producing the aesthetic condition in which the subject becomes like the “schizophrenic” who is unable to link signifiers together in a temporal order (Jameson 1984a). To the schizophrenic, the binary opposition of integration and alienation is senseless because the schizophrenic experiences signifiers as a series of pure and
unrelated presents in time (see Lacan 1993). In this sense, the schizophrenic goes beyond the social.

American sociology was influenced by the historical change of the relationship between science, morality, and aesthetics described above. Inspired by scientific model of knowledge, which derived from the Enlightenment, modern American sociologists took for granted the separation of science, morality, and aesthetics and wanted to make sociology a genuine "science." Following the ideal of the modern, they tried to expunge morality and aesthetics from its horizon. The scientific model that American sociology has embraced has two variations: functionalist sociology and positivistic sociology. Functionalist sociology embraces a theoretical notion of science, which strives to establish a grand abstract system of theory deduced from some fundamental axioms. Positivistic sociology accepts an empirical notion of science which seeks to achieve an analytic synthesis of narrowly-oriented empirical data. As a result, modern American sociology has become an esoteric science at the cost of being isolated from the public (see Agger 2000). Other models such as morality and aesthetics, the two pillars of the Counter-Enlightenment, have been marginalized or repressed, even though morality and aesthetics have challenged the hegemony of science. In fact, the moral notion of knowledge has challenged science from the start in sociology. Classical European sociology counterbalanced morality against science. American sociology was not much different; both interactionist sociology and critical sociology, both of which adopt morality as the primary model of sociological knowledge, have challenged scientific sociology from the start. Yet it cannot be said that their challenge was greatly successful;
until now scientific sociology has been considered as mainstream sociology in the United States.

In this sense, the moral challenge to scientific sociology is not new. What is new is the aesthetic challenge, which does not necessarily mean that the moral challenge is not important in the postmodern. The aesthetic challenge described above demands that American sociologists should refigure what sociology is in an entirely different way. It is not easy to embrace this demand because of the aesthetic nature of the challenge. American sociology has long excluded the aesthetic from its disciplinary knowledge because it believes that the aesthetic challenges the fundamental assumptions of modern American sociology, proposing the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. Modern American sociology, like classical European sociology, has conceived of the aesthetic as being pre- or anti-social or at least outside the social. Mainstream sociologists ignore the aesthetic challenge, trying to make sociology into a genuine science. Nevertheless, some American sociologists, especially critical and interactionist sociologists, embrace this challenge seriously, but their ways of embracing it are distinct. Both critical sociology and interactionist sociology have accepted morality as the primary model of knowledge, whose corner stone is its notion of indeterministic world that allows people to choose their own destinies. But their emphases are different: critical sociology has emphasized a structurally-induced nature of human practice while interactionist sociology has highlighted the indeterministic nature of the world. This difference influences the ways of embracing the aesthetic challenge. Critical postmodern sociology embraces the aesthetic challenge from the perspective of morality, trying to situate the aesthetic challenge within institutional change. By contrast, interactionist
postmodern sociology embraces the aesthetic challenge from the perspective of the new aesthetics, emphasizing the textual construction of the social and the human subject.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 reformulates the Kantian trilogy into the theoretical, the practical (the technically practical and the morally practical), and the aesthetic in order to shed light on the relationship between the modern and the postmodern. Here I define the modern as the "scientization and moralization" of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which proceeded from the 17th century to the early 1960s in Western societies. The Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment will be discussed to concretize their definition. While the Enlightenment proposed scientization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, the Counter-Enlightenment suggested moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.

Chapter 3 defines the postmodern as the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which has proceeded from the early 1960s to the present in advanced Western societies. This chapter addresses postmodern social theory, distinguishing poststructuralist postmodern social theory from critical postmodern social theory. Chapter 3 goes on to demonstrate that poststructuralist postmodern social theory embraced the aesthetic model of knowledge and that critical postmodern social theory embraced the morally practical model of knowledge. Chapter 3 also argues that despite this difference, these versions of postmodern social theory share, to a greater or lesser extent, the view that ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics have been aestheticized. Finally, this chapter argues that this situation is not new, and shows some historical
exemplars such as Gorgias, Sade, and Nietzsche that strikingly parallel the present situation in terms of the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.

Chapter 4 explains how sociology has developed by expunging the aesthetic from its horizon, suggests how classical European sociology developed out of the complex mixture of the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment, and explains how it excluded the aesthetic while criticizing individualist approaches to man and society. As a result of excluding the aesthetic, classical European sociology followed the tradition of the modern as the scientization and moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. Then, a short history of modern American sociology is provided to explain how this exclusion of the aesthetic in the establishment of sociology as a discrete discipline. Finally, chapter 4 presents some of the fundamental assumptions that sociology has preserved, which are now being challenged by the aesthetic.

Chapter 5 shows how American sociologists responded to the aesthetic challenge to the fundamental assumptions in sociology. It also emphasizes that "marginal" sociologists took this challenge seriously, more precisely, critical and interactionist sociologists. This chapter 5 distinguishes critical postmodern sociology from interactionist postmodern sociology. Some critical sociologists, who followed the realist tradition of pragmatism, did not fully accept the aesthetic as social ontology, but relatively welcomed the aesthetic as epistemology. Some interactionist sociologists, who followed the nominalist tradition of pragmatism, embraced the aesthetic as both social ontology and epistemology. Finally, chapter 5 documents how some mainstream sociologists responded to postmodern sociology.
Finally, chapter 6 discusses further implications of postmodern American sociology. It argues that multi- or trans-disciplinary approaches are needed for investigating the postmodern, the core of which is the synthesis of poststructuralist linguistics and post-Marxist political economy.
CHAPTER 2

THE MODERN AS THE SCIENTIZATION AND MORALIZATION OF
ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND ETHICS/POLITICS

Many scholars have tried to define the postmodern, and their definitions differ from
one to another. Nevertheless, they have all defined the postmodern in terms of its
relationship to the modern. I will likewise define the postmodern in comparison to the
modern, but I need to distinguish between some analytic levels in order to compare. I
agree with Dickens and Fontana’s suggestion that any intelligent discussion of
postmodernism should distinguish three dimensions (1996: 182; see also Dickens 2000):

(1) As a substantive theoretical category, postmodernism refers to a series
of profound structural transformations in the so-called advanced societies,
such as institutional changes (in the family, polity, economy, religion, etc.)
and changes in conventional forms of social inequality (race, class,
gender, etc.). This dimension of postmodernism also refers to alleged
changes in the nature of interaction in contemporary mass-mediated
societies, transforming our conventional notions of self and identity.
(2) As a methodological term, postmodernism includes a critique and
reformulation of the epistemology of the social sciences in general, and
sociology in particular, and a corresponding reworking, a broadening
really, of the appropriate strategies for investigating the social world in a
concrete fashion.
(3) As a normative concept, postmodernism refers to ethical and political
implications, focusing on the nature and direction of contemporary social
change and the inadequacy of conventional moral and political theories.

I will rephrase these three categories in philosophical terms as ontology,
epistemology, and ethics/politics respectively. I define the modern as the “scientization”
and “moralization” of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which proceeded from
the 17th century to the early 1960s in Western societies. I also define the postmodern as
the "aestheticization" of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which has proceeded
from the early 1960s to the present in advanced Western societies. What do I mean by
scientization, moralization, and aestheticization? I believe that these notions can be
better grasped when the relationship among scientization (science), moralization
(morality), and aestheticization (aesthetics) is clarified.

The starting point might be in reformulating the Kantian trilogy: the theoretical, the
practical, and the aesthetic. Kant’s notion of the theoretical (pure reason) could be
rephrased into "theoretical science." Kant’s notion of the practical (practical reason)
might be better to be subdivided into two: the technically practical (empirical science)
and the morally practical (morality). Although Kant implicitly divided the practical into
two, he did not give autonomy to the technically practical. In contrast, I believe that one
of the most important features of modern and postmodern worlds is the predominance of
the technically practical model of knowledge, as positivism shows. Thus, I need to
separate the technically practical from the morally practical. Also needed is the
reformulation of the aesthetic. Until recently, the aesthetic has been equated with shared
judgment on beauty. But the notion of the aesthetic has increasingly become associated
with the notion of the sublime, something that disrupts the system of representation,
rather than the beautiful.

I believe that this reformulation is crucial for an understanding the postmodern as the
aesthetic challenge, and postmodern American sociology as a response to this. Before
demonstrating this argument, I will first present four models of knowledge in terms of
ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. It is vital to keep in mind that each model of
knowledge I am presenting here is an ideal type. None of the Western thinkers proposed these models as such. Nonetheless, each model can be seen as having ideal-typical traits.

Reformulation of the Kantian Trilogy

1. The Theoretical (Theoretical Science)

According to Kant, pure reason has its own *a priori* synthetic judgment; pure reason is concerned with "all knowledge after which it [the faculty of reason] may strive independently of all experience" (Kant 1965: 9). Without any experience (i.e., *a priori*), pure reason knows, for instance, that concept A is connected with concept B, the proposition that should be known only by *a posteriori* experience. As pure reason makes synthetic judgment without any experience, the knowledge it produces is of necessity and universal: it is universally true regardless of any historical contexts. The models of knowledge pure reason thinks of are mathematics and physics: they all contain *a priori* synthetic judgments as the principle. Following mathematics and physics, Kant tried to make metaphysics *a priori* synthetic knowledge. That is why Kant investigated *a priori* synthetic elements of mathematics and of the pure science of nature. Using *a priori* synthetic faculty of pure reason as the criterion for the truth of judgment, Kant tried to establish objective knowledge, which is universally and necessarily valid.

The knowledge that Kant’s pure reason aims to produce can be translated into the theoretical model of knowledge. But the theoretical I am presenting here is different from the subjectivist interpretation of Kant’s pure reason, according to which all universals are fictions that the mind produces. The ability of Kant’s pure reason to know truth *a priori* should entail the existence of a necessary relation between the structure of
the mind and its external referents. In this sense, the theoretical ontologically
presupposes a monistic realism that "there exist true, immutable, universal, timeless,
objective values, valid for all men, everywhere, at all times" (Berlin 1976: 251). These
values are "universals." Regarding the relationship between the universals and the
particulars, the theoretical proposes two positions: transcendentalism and essentialism.
Transcendentalism separates the real world of universals (Ideals, Forms, Essence, etc.)
from the illusory world of the particulars (realities, matters, appearances, etc.) and
considers the latter as a shadow of the first world. Essentialism combines these two
worlds into one: the real world of the universals is embodied in the illusory world. The
universals realize themselves in the particulars. The particulars are moving from
potentiality to actuality.

Epistemologically, the theoretical assumes that the human mind is structured to know
the universals a priori, i.e., without using the structure of sense organs. Cognitive
capacities and forms of thought are inherent to the structure of the mind: they are
immutable, universal, timeless, objective categories. Transcendentalism emphasizes the
capacity of the mind to ascend from the illusory world of the particulars to the real world
of the universals. Transcendentalism aims to produce an abstract and contemplative sort
of knowledge suitable to a disembodied mind. Transcendentalism is ready to enjoy the
disinterested contemplation of Truth. By contrast, essentialism emphasizes the capacity
of the mind to conceive a non-rational arrangement of the empirical world in rational
terms. Essentialism seeks to find simple and indisputable a priori First Principle from
which necessary derivatives follow. The First Principle is a counterpart of the First
Cause, the ultimate source of change, the First Mover, which is itself uncaused and
eventually unmoved by its own action. Just as the First Cause serves the foundation from which all beings necessarily follow, so does the *a priori* First Principle serve the foundation on which coherent knowledge is built. The truth of this knowledge is not subject to empirical verification because it is not apprehensible through the structure of sense organs.

The theoretical endorses the linear notion of temporality, where time is moving in a progressive way towards the betterment of humanity. The ideal of ethics is to live as a self-sufficient entity. In order to be self-sufficient, human beings should control accidental features by their essence. The ideal of politics is a centralized absolutism, in which a God-like center controls all other parts so as to serve the equilibrium of the whole.

2. The Technically Practical (Empirical Science)

According to Kant, the practical consists of two worlds of phenomena (determinism) and noumena (freedom): the technically practical and the morally practical. The technically practical emphasizes determinism over freedom: freedom is equated with freedom of choice, options among technical variables. In this sense, the technically practical is subject to the theoretical:

Propositions called "practical" in mathematics or natural science should properly be called "technical," for in these fields it is not a question of determining the will; they only indicate the manifold of a possible action which is adequate to bring about a certain effect, and are therefore just as theoretical as any proposition which asserts connection between cause and effect (Kant 1993: 25).

Like the theoretical, the technically practical assumes that there exist universals which are inherently organized in an orderly fashion. The technically practical believes
that the world is characterized by the recurrent, persistent, permanent, uniform patterns which are empirically observable. It assumes that it is the external world, not the human mind, that is orderly structured. The technically practical holds that the structure of the external world exists prior to, or independent of, human experience. It is an immutable, universal, timeless, objective entity, valid for all men everywhere, at all times. The structure of the external world consists of a variety of particulars which are in a state of motion. Nothing just happens; all the combinations of the particulars are made to occur by prior impact of the particulars on one another and prior motion of the particulars. In this way, the world is mechanically, not teleologically, determined. In this stable system, the relation between input and output is always calculable.

The technically practical has a different epistemology from the theoretical, denying the capacity of the mind to know the patterns of the particulars \textit{a priori}. The technically practical holds that what is given to us are a variety of the particulars from which we should start to seek the universals. In other words, the technically practical believes that knowledge must start with sensory experience and end in formulating empirical generalizations. In this sense, the technically practical gives up the pursuit of the First Cause, and tries to pursue secondary causes, like natural causes that are found in the natural world. In this sense, the technically practical is not concerned with "the true" any more. Rather, the technically practical is concerned with efficiency: it tries to maximize output (the information or modification obtained) and minimize input (the energy expended in the process) (see Lyotard 1984: 44). Knowledge is valuable only when it improves performance. In this sense, cognitive statements are subordinate to the finality of the best possible performances. The technically practical aims to bring together into a
unified body of knowledge the massive quantity of empirical findings accumulated by researchers, and believes that a unified body of knowledge is predicated if all the variables are known. Knowledge is a derivative of sensation or experience rather than a construction of the mind. Since sensation or human experience might be deceptive, technological devices are welcome because they can aid human organs to produce more proof.

The technically practical also accepts the linear notion of temporality. History is mechanically determined towards the betterment of humanity. The ideal of ethics is to live according to the universal law of the maximization of pleasure and minimization of pain, which governs all individuals. The ideal of politics is liberalism, in which the subject is the atomic individual who is freely associated and dissociated with other atomic individuals according to the law of maximization of utility.

3. The Morally Practical (Morality)

To Kant, morally practical reason is synonymous with pure practical reason. Unlike the technically practical, the morally practical emphasizes freedom over determinism. The morally practical is subject to the supersensible, “the unconditioned in a causal series” (Kant 1993: 3). Kant (1951: 9) argued that “the morally practical precepts, which are altogether based on the concept of freedom, to the complete exclusion of the natural determining grounds of the will, constitute a quite special class. These, like the rules which nature obeys, are called simply laws, but unlike them do not rest on sensuous conditions but on a supersensible principle.” A fundamental law of the morally practical
reason is expressed in the following: “So act that the maxim of your will could always hold at the same time as the principle giving universal law” (Kant 1993: 30).

Kant’s notion of the morally practical should be modified to erase its monistic implication. Kant argued that there are universal laws that govern the morally practical, which are fundamentally separate from universal laws that govern pure reason. But I do not believe there are separate universal laws of the morally practical that have their own separate realms. Rather, the morally practical presupposes a totally different ontology from the theoretical. Unlike the theoretical that presupposes a monistic ontology, the morally practical presupposes a pluralistic ontology: “There are many objective ends, ultimate values, some incompatible with others, pursued by different societies at various times, or by different groups in the same society” (Berlin 1991: 79-80). According to pluralism, “beliefs involving value-judgments, and the institutions founded upon them, rested not on discoveries of objective and unalterable natural facts, but on human opinion, which was variable and differed between different societies and at different times; that moral and political values, and in particular justice and social arrangements in general, rested on fluctuating human convention” (Berlin 1979: 2).

The cornerstone of the morally practical is its notion of an indeterministic world that allows the human subject to choose his/her own destiny. Dewey (quoted in Kennedy 1950: 52) argued that we live in “a universe which is not all closed and settled, which is still in some respects indeterminate and in the making. . .an open universe in which uncertainty, choice, hypotheses, novelties, and possibilities are naturalized.” There are two types of the morally practical: the nominalist and the realist. If the nominalist version emphasizes the indeterministic nature of the world, the realist version highlights
the contextually-bound nature of human practice. The nominalist version conceives the relation between reality and language as being open, recognizing the constitutive power of language in reality. The realist version conceives the relation between reality and language as being open, recognizing the constitutive power of reality in language. But both share the belief in contextualism, according to which both the objects and the subjects of the inquiry should be seen as part of culture and the institutional life of a particular society at a specific time.

Epistemologically, the morally practical does not try to reflect or represent pre-existing reality. Rather, the morally practical aims to investigate how reality is linguistically and socially constructed at a specific time and space. The main standard of the validity of knowledge is found in its practical consequences.

The morally practical claims that each society has its own sense of temporality. There is no universal direction of history. Thus, it is important to live within the unique sense of temporality that each society has. The ideal of ethics is to fully participate in a culturally unified communal group without losing individuality. Communication with other members of society is the key to negotiating freedom and necessity. The ideal of politics is participatory democracy, in which individuals and society are in the course of fashioning themselves.

4. The Aesthetic (Art)

Kant divided the Critique of Judgment into the critique of aesthetic judgment and teleological judgment; and he argued that aesthetic judgment is essential. The aesthetic “alone contains a principle which the judgment places quite a priori at the basis of its
reflection upon nature, viz. the principle of a formal purposiveness of nature, according to
its particular (empirical) laws, for our cognitive faculty, without which the understanding
could not find itself in nature” (Kant 1951: 30). The aesthetic consists of two parts: the
beautiful and the sublime. “The beautiful in nature is connected with the form of the
object, which consists in having [definite] boundaries. The sublime, on the other hand, is
to be found in a formless object, so far as in it or by occasion of it boundlessness is
represented, and yet its totality is also present to thought” (Kant 1951: 82). Kant’s
analysis of the sublime has long been ignored because the sublime implies going beyond
the intersubjective validity of aesthetic judgment. Thus, modern interpreters of Kant’s
Critique of Judgment tended to equate the beautiful with the aesthetic. But contemporary
interpretations such as the deconstructionist, the psychoanalytic, and the ideological
emphasize the sublime over the beautiful (Guyer 1993: 187-192). These interpretations
all emphasize the sublime as something beyond representation. Following this line of
interpretation, I will equate the sublime with the aesthetic.

I believe that “the beautiful” and “the sublime” can be rephrased in Lacanian
psychoanalytic terms. Unlike other scientific discourses, psychoanalysis has
concentrated on the irrational and unconscious forces, which go beyond the limit of
discourses (rational orders of concepts). Freud associated the unconscious with the
primary process in which drives strive to discharge their energy freely. In this
explanation, the unconscious is somewhat mystical. In this respect, Lacan is impressive.
Lacan robbed Freud of mystical biological determinism by introducing (post)structuralist
linguistics into psychoanalysis: the unconscious is structured like a language (Lacan
1977). In this new definition, both the conscious and the unconscious can be explained in
terms of (post)structuralist linguistics. From this, I become to believe that both the
beautiful and the sublime can be explained in terms of (post)structuralist linguistics.
Kant’s notion of the sublime implies a mystical implication because it cannot be grasped
through rational concepts. Lacan erased this mystical implication of the sublime.
According to Lacan’s scheme, the beautiful and the sublime are not two separate entities
but instances in a signifying chain of signifiers. The sublime is a matrix of signification
as well as residing at the points of impasse in language. In this sense, the rigid boundary
between the beautiful and the sublime imploded (see Fink 1995).

The beautiful follows the pleasure principle, which prohibits incest (oneness with the
mOther) and thus, regulates the distance between the subject and the thing in itself.
Pleasure is the safeguard of a state of homeostasis and constancy: “The function of the
pleasure principle is, in effect, to lead the subject from signifier to signifier, by generating
as many signifiers as are required to maintain at as low a level as possible the tension that
regulates the whole functioning of the psychic apparatus” (Lacan 1992: 119). Thus, we
can say that the beautiful is about pleasures that are socially allowed because the
prohibition of incest is a symbolic law. If the distance between the subject and the thing
in itself is violated, *jouissance*, not pleasure, is evoked. *Jouissance* is an excessive
quantity of excitation which the pleasure principle attempts to prevent. The sublime is
related to *jouissance*, and to Lacan’ notion of the real. The real has two features. First of
all, the real is a world of undifferentiated wholeness: “The real is absolutely without
fissure” (Lacan 1988: 97). The real is “concrete and already full, a brute pre-symbolic
reality” (Ragland-Sullivan 1996: 192). Second, the real resides at points of impasse in
language exchange, functioning to make signification possible. The real does not exist
outside of signification, and thus, is not *das Ding* in the phenomenological sense that can never be reached. Rather, the real is the precondition that makes the chain of signification possible as a function of the link of the chain. The real always tries to return as a subversive force and reminds of trauma in language.

Ontologically, the aesthetic defies any existence of an objectively persistent reality, let alone the universals. What is existent is natural forces that manifest themselves in the multiplicity of phenomena in variegated ways in the process of their free flowing. Thus, the distinction between being and non-being is blurred and the aesthetic is oneness in flux. The aesthetic defies any endeavor to freeze natural forces.

Epistemologically, the aesthetic defies the equation of thought (logos, language) and being (thing, nature). There is no correspondence between language and thing. The thing in itself is always more than language. Thus, any effort to freeze the thing itself in a form of language is useless. As a result, it is futile to seek a vantage point from which the truth of thing is grasped. Methodologically, the aesthetic aims to have “the real” symbolized as erupting the symbolic. In this sense, the aesthetic tries to express the inexpressible. Transgression is the most intellectual activity which tries to express the inexpressible; to transgress is to pass beyond any limit or boundary of discrete form and identity. Transgression demands the complete overthrow of any vestige of order, because order itself constrains and dictates only certain possibilities for human action.

The aesthetic does not believe that there is any specific direction in time. There is no differentiation between the past, the present, and the future. Thus, traditional morality, which seeks future rewards by controlling present bodily desire, loses its significance.
The ideal of ethics is to free oneself from all kinds of constraints. Anything goes. The ideal of politics is anarchism, in which no hierarchical organization exists.

Definition of the Modern as Scientization and Moralization

From this reformulation, what I mean by “scientization,” “moralization,” and “aestheticization” may be better understood. It is commonly accepted that the modern refers to the historical period from the 17th century the early 1960s, which is intellectually associated with the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment. Intellectually, the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment are considered the two pillars of the modern. These two intellectual pillars stemmed, directly or indirectly, from Renaissance humanism (Grafton 1991; Tarnas 1991; Toulmin 1990).

In my scheme, the Enlightenment embraced science (the theoretical and the technically practical) as the primary model of knowledge. The ideal of the Enlightenment was the scientization (scientific reorganization) of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. It conceived of universalistic laws as being similar to natural laws that are true across space and time. Based on foundational knowledge, the Enlightenment tried to clear away uncertainty and ambiguity that might trigger and intensify social conflict, and to construct an ideal society, i.e., a conflict-free society in which completely harmonious relationships among individuals could be established. In different words, the Enlightenment tried to rationally organize ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics according to universal and eternal laws that are universally valid.

By contrast, the Counter-Enlightenment adopted morality (the morally practical) as the primary model of knowledge. The ideal of the Counter-Enlightenment was the
moralization (moral reorganization) of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics according to pluralist laws. The Counter-Enlightenment saw pluralist laws as human-made laws bound to specific contexts of space and time, and aimed to embrace uncertainty and ambiguity as they are even though they might trigger and intensify social conflict. According to the Counter-Enlightenment, uncertainty and ambiguity make it clear that some values are incompatible with each other. In other words, the Counter-Enlightenment argued that the elimination of uncertainty and ambiguity would lead to extreme dogmatism in which everything is evaluated according to one rigid standard. Instead, the Counter-Enlightenment believed that proper values for organizing ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics varies from context to context.

As the two intellectual pillars of the modern are the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment, I define the modern as the scientization and moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which proceeded from the 17th century to the early 1960s in Western societies. In what follows, I will discuss each of these aspects in turn.

1. The Enlightenment as the Scientization of Ontology, Epistemology, and Ethics/politics

The Enlightenment contains a variety of ideas that sometimes contradict each other, mainly due to its synthesis of seventeenth century rationalism and eighteenth century empiricism. In fact, the most important feature of the Enlightenment in the Western intellectual history might be its synthesis of rationalism and empiricism (Zeitlin 1990); before the Enlightenment, rational philosophy had been antagonistic to empiricism. "Reason guided by experience" is the achievement of the Enlightenment. Newton (1642-
is one of the first who achieved this synthesis, and the Enlightenment philosophers are followers of Newton. Newton found the mathematical method that would describe mechanical motion, and he applied it universally. Through his overarching laws—the three laws of motion (of inertia, force, and equal reaction) and the theory of universal gravitation—Newton explained both the celestial and the terrestrial realms. Just as both the celestial and the terrestrial realms are composed of material substances, so are their motions impelled by natural mechanical forces. Newton arrived at some fundamental principles by the analysis of observed facts and then deduced the mathematical consequences of these principles. Finally by observation and experiment, Newton proved that what follows logically from the principle is in agreement with experience. In this way, Newton gave evidence to the fact that reason and experience do not contradict each other; the universal law (the law of gravity) is supported by empirical data. Newton not only explained the material world by means of relatively few fundamental laws, but also made it possible to determine the properties and behaviors of every particle of every material body in the universe with precision and simplicity.

The Enlightenment tried to apply this Newtonian science to man and society. Condorcet, one of the representatives of the Enlightenment, illustrated this basic project in his famous book of 1793, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*: "The sole foundation for belief in the natural sciences is this idea, that the general laws directing the phenomena of the universe, known or unknown, are necessary and constant. Why should this principle be any less true for the development of the intellectual and moral faculties of man than for the other operations of nature?" (Condorcet 1976: 258). The core project of the Enlightenment thus was to eradicate all
conflicts prevalent during the times and to rationally reorganize the social world according to universal laws. As Berlin (1991: 5) summarized well: "The rational reorganization of society would put an end to spiritual and intellectual confusion, the reign of prejudice and superstition, blind obedience to unexamined dogmas, and the stupidities and cruelties of the oppressive regimes which such intellectual darkness bred and promoted." As I have argued, the Enlightenment was the synthesis of seventeenth century rationalism and eighteenth century empiricism. While this uncomfortable synthesis consistently manifested itself in the works of Enlightenment thinkers, subsequent history showed that this synthesis began to dissolve in the nineteenth century and was completely dissolved in the twentieth century. Thus, I will analytically divide the Enlightenment into two versions: the rationalist (or idealist) version, and the empiricist (or materialist) version.

1-1. The Rationalist Version of the Enlightenment:

The Theoretical (Theoretical Science)

The scientific revolution deprived the universe of its spiritual dimension; everything was explained in terms of matter and its movement. The hallmark of the rationalist version is that it tried to retain the spiritual dimension of human beings while simultaneously accepting the materialist implication of the scientific revolution. The rationalist version accomplished this dual task by relying on the notion of God. The notion of God was the real foundation of the rationalist version. There were two notions of God: the Cartesian notion of God and the Spinozian notion of God. If the Cartesian notion of God is similar to the Platonian notion of transcendental Form, then the Spinozian notion of God is similar to the Aristotelian notion of immanent form.
Descartes (1596-1650) refuted the Aristotelian God. According to Aristotle, God does not create, but moves the world. And God moves the world not as a mechanical force but as the total motive of all operations in the world. By contrast, Descartes held that God created the world, and since then He has been entirely removed from His creation. Thus the world is a fundamental reality that is liberated from the anthropomorphic God. God moves the world as a mechanical force with mathematical laws. Thus, all can be explained by mechanical and mathematical laws. In this sense, Descartes' God is transcendental. By contrast, Spinoza (1632-1677) borrowed the Aristotelian notion of God as the immanent cause of things. Spinoza held that there exists a Supreme Being, a most perfect or necessary being, which is called "substance." All phenomena necessarily derive their being from a Supreme Being. In this sense, all beings are necessarily connected to each other.

Relying on God as the foundation, the rationalist version tried to establish an abstract grand system of knowledge. In this grand system, just as all beings depend on God, so all propositions depend on the First Principle. In this sense, the rationalist version retained the medieval Thomistic and Aristotelian ideal of a body of knowledge that could be one great logical system of the deductive, the universal, and the infallible. The rationalist version held that both God and the First Principle could be known simply by means of a priori reasoning without any appeal to the senses, and aimed to construct a coherent and all-embracing account of the universe and man. But without a Supreme Being, this coherent and all-embracing system of knowledge would be jeopardized because it depends on the existence of a Supreme Being. In this sense, a Supreme Being functions as the foundation on which an all-embracing system of knowledge is built.
Many Enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire (1694-1778), Condillac (1715-1780), and D’Alembert (1717-1789) are, at least partly, indebted to the Cartesian version of the rationalist Enlightenment and the Spinozian version of the rationalist Enlightenment. I am convinced that these two versions of the Enlightenment are a revitalization of the ancient Greek model of the theoretical: Platonian transcendentalism and Aristotelian essentialism. But it is the Cartesian version rather than the Spinozian version that dominated this era. One of the most important reasons is that until the eighteenth century mathematical physics rather than biology was considered as the ideal of science. If the Cartesian version has a selective affinity with mathematical physics, the Spinozian version has a selective affinity with evolutionary biology. Thus, in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries the Cartesian version was easily integrated into the empiricist version of the Enlightenment that was associated with Newtonian mathematical physics. In what follows, I will discuss both versions in terms of three dimensions.

Ontologically, Descartes attacked the Aristotelian view of nature as the “Great Chain of Being” in which each being strives to fulfill its purpose of attaining perfection in its own way (see Lovejoy 1964). Instead, he substituted the mechanical view of nature as a great harmonious and mathematically ordered machine. According to Aristotle, there are many substances such as this man, this horse, and so on, each of which strives to fulfill its own substance. But Descartes argued that there are only two discrete substances, mind (thinking substance) and body (extended substance): “we can clearly perceive the mind, that is, a thinking substance, apart from the body, that is, apart from any extended substance. And conversely we can clearly perceive the body apart from the mind (as everyone readily admits). Therefore the mind can, at least through the power of God,
exist without the body; and similarly the body can exist apart from the mind. Now if one
substance can exist apart from another the two are really distinct. But the mind and the
body are substances which can exist apart from each other” (Descartes 1984b: 119-120).
According to this dualism, a homogeneous substance (extension) underlies all material
phenomena while another homogeneous substance (thought) underlies all mental
phenomena.

Descartes (1985c: 232) argued that the whole universe is composed of one matter
“whose nature consists simply in its being an extended substance.” Even though body
contains attributes other than extension, such as the sensual attributes of colors, tastes,
sounds, etc., only extension is special because body cannot exist without extension while
it can exist without sensual attributes.

[Ex]tension in length, breadth and depth constitutes the nature of corporeal
substance. . .Everything else which can be attributed to body presupposes
extension, and is merely a mode of an extended thing. . .Thus, for
example, shape is unintelligible except in an extended thing; and motion is
unintelligible except as motion in an extended space. . .By contrast, it is
possible to understand extension without shape or movement. . .(Descartes
1985c: 210-211).

Thus, an extended body contains the geometrical properties such as size, shape, and
motion. In this sense, empirically observable properties such as colors, tastes, sounds,
etc. are not essential. The real essence of the universe is composed of matter
characterized by geometrical properties. Since geometrical properties such as size, shape,
and motion are the qualities of nature, the qualities of nature can be known
mathematically. In this sense, nature is written in the language of mathematics, and its
characteristics are triangles, circles, and other geometrical figures. In this way, nature
becomes physical, quantitative, and mathematical. The mathematical laws of nature are
eternal because God created them. God’s own nature prevents Him from changing what He once freely created. If He changes the laws, He is not God because this change forces Him to recognize that His creation was imperfect: “God’s perfection involves not only his being immutable in himself, but also his operating in a manner that is always utterly constant and immutable” (Descartes 1985c: 240). In this sense, God is transcendental. After creating the universe, He stepped back to let it operate functionally: “[i]n the beginning <in his omnipotence> he created matter, along with its motion and rest; and now, merely by his regular concurrence, he preserves the same amount of motion and rest in the material universe as he put there in the beginning” (Descartes 1985c: 240). The universe is a self-operating machine according to eternal mathematical laws. This view is directly connected with the monistic nature of the universe: “the earth and the heavens are composed of one and the same matter; and there cannot be a plurality of worlds. . . .The matter whose nature consists simply in its being an extended substance already occupies absolutely all the imaginable space in which the alleged additional worlds would have to be located” (Descartes 1985c: 232). The universe is static, not dynamic because God “always preserves the same quantity of motion in the universe” (Descartes 1985c: 240).

By contrast, Spinoza tried to retain the Aristotelian view of nature as a “Great Chain of Being” while simultaneously accepting the mechanical implication of the Cartesian universe. For Spinoza, the universe or nature is the same as God, “an absolutely infinite entity, that is, a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence” (Spinoza 2000: 75). Spinoza defined substance as what exists in itself and is conceived through itself: “By substance I understand that which is in itself
and is conceived through itself; that is, that which does not need the concept of another thing, from which concept it must be formed” (Spinoza 2000: 75). According to this definition, there is only one substance, God. If there are two or more substances, then they would be understood in terms of each other. But this violates the definition of substance. Spinoza held that substance has an infinite number of attributes and that all attributes must necessarily follow from substance. If some attributes do not follow from substance, they are not substance because they must contain something other than themselves. Thus, substance or God has an infinite number of attributes. As Harris (1995: 23) explained it:

Spinoza was confident that he had shown conclusively why an absolutely infinite Substance must have an infinity of attributes. Because a thing has attributes in proportion to its reality or perfection, the more reality it has, the more attributes must belong to it. Its essence expresses what it is, and its attributes express its essence; therefore, the more it encompasses, the more attributes are needed to express its essence. If it is absolutely infinite it must have an infinity of attributes.

Concerning particular things, Spinoza, unlike Plato, did not hold that individual things are no more than illusory appearances of the one Supreme Being. Spinoza explained any particular thing in terms of “mode.”

A mode is any individual thing or event, any particular form or shape, which reality transiently assumes; you, your body, your thoughts, your group, your species, your planet, are modes; all these are forms, modes, almost literally fashions, of some eternal and invariable reality lying behind and beneath them (Durant 1935: 188).

This eternal and invariable reality is God. In this sense, God is immanent, not transcendent: “God is the immanent but not the transitive cause of all things” (Spinoza 2000: 93). God does not stand outside particular things; from God all things follow. In this sense, God is the organizing principle of the universe. Each mode has attributes in
proportion to its reality or perfection. Further, "[e]ach thing, in so far as it is in itself, endeavours to persevere in its being" (Spinoza 2000: 171). And through this endeavour, each thing also expresses the power of God in a certain way, because the power of God is expressed in and through each of its finite modifications. Thus, the universe is the hierarchical series of diversified finite modes that endeavour to persevere in their beings. What is at stake here is that "mere addition of finites does not produce the infinite, which is not an aggregate nor compounded of separable parts, each independently real" (Harris 1995: 32). The true infinite being, God or the universe, is a single and coherent whole.

Spinoza recognized that there is also a causal relationship among particular things themselves: "[e]very particular thing, or, any thing which is finite and has a determinate existence, cannot exist or be determined to operate unless it is determined to existence and operation by another cause, which is also finite and has a determinate existence" (Spinoza 2000: 98). All this causal activity takes place in God, a single and coherent whole. Thus, for Spinoza the universe is an enclosed and unified system in which the entire universe with all its complexities is a manifestation of one single reality, God: "In Nature there exists nothing contingent, but all things have been determined by the necessity of the divine nature to exist and operate in a certain way" (Spinoza 2000: 99). Thus, everything that exists exists of necessity. But this necessity is not a mechanical, causal necessity but a "logical" necessity. As God’s existence follows logically from the concept of God, the existence of all other things follows logically from God’s existence. To say that God causes all things is to say that all things are a "logical" consequence of God. Thus, a logically necessary relationship is a timeless relationship; it is not affected by time.
On the nature of man, Descartes as a Platonian critical philosopher wanted to retain the spiritual dimension of human beings by arguing that extension is the essence of body and thought is the essence of mind. According to Aristotle, soul and body are integral to each other. Soul is to body as form is to matter. But according to Descartes, soul and body are totally separated. Soul or mind is incorporeal because it is not extended. Put it differently, the mind does not occupy space, and can exist without body. The mind contains attributes other than thought, such as feeling and sensation, but only thought is special because mind cannot exist without thought while it can exist without feeling and sensation. The Cartesian mind is an active subject whose essence is thought. Since the senses are not always stimulated, the mind must produce thoughts itself. Thus the Cartesian mind is free from bondage to sense. The Cartesian mind is the rational, autonomous and self-contained subject; it needs nothing in order to think or generate ideas. Thus, Descartes proposed a dualistic worldview that categorically differentiates mental phenomena and material phenomena. What is at issue here is that Descartes argued that the human mind can grasp material reality consisting of matter without any sensory experience. This dualism posited a fundamental difficulty. As Randall (1954: 269) pointed out: “The picture that the mind perceives in experience and the real world that physics depicts seemed totally different; how, then, could the mind be certain that its physics was a genuine knowledge of the world in which man was really living?” Descartes answered this question by arguing that man is a “thinking thing.” In this sense, man is exceptional. Only man is a “thinking thing” whose thought is identical to his body: “I am, I exist—that is certain. But for how long? For as long as I am thinking”
(Descartes 1984a: 18). This axiom excludes dimensions of human beings other than pure reason and its identical body, such as the unconscious.

By contrast, Spinoza's concept of man is that of a living organism which endeavours to persevere in his own being. Like other finite modes, man is a finite mode of substance, a part of Nature. But man's essence is characterized by his ability to attain the intellectual knowledge of God. This argument seems to be self-contradictory because it assumes that finite man can know infinite God. Spinoza solved this problem by proposing that man is the unity of body and mind. Spinoza rejected Descartes' dualism because he believed that if this dualism were true there would be an arbitrary relationship between mind and body. According to Spinoza, mind and body are one and the same thing because they are two main attributes of God: "Thought is an attribute of God, or, God is a thinking thing" (Spinoza 2000: 114); "Extension is an attribute of God, or, God is an extended thing" (Spinoza 2000: 115). God expresses Himself in and through His attributes such as thought and extension. Thus, matter (extension) and mind (thought) are attributes of one substance that is God. The human mind is the idea of the human body. Thus, the nature of the human mind depends on the nature of the human body. Compared to other bodies, "The human body is composed of very many individuals of a diverse nature, each of which is highly composite" (Spinoza 2000: 130). Likewise, "The idea which constitutes the formal being of the human mind is not simple, but is composed of very many ideas" (Spinoza 2000: 131). "The human body is capable of perceiving very many things, and the more so, the more its body can be disposed in several ways" (Spinoza 2000: 131). And thus, "to the extent that some body is more capable than others of doing several things at the same time, or of being acted on at the same time, to that
extent its mind is more capable than others of perceiving several things at the same time” (Spinoza 2000: 125). Accordingly, the human body and the human mind are complex, and man can acquire knowledge of God’s eternal and infinite essence because God’s essence is best expressed in and through the most complex body and mind like human body and mind.

Epistemologically, Descartes as a Platonian critical philosopher revitalized Platonian apriorism that believes in the possibility of \textit{a priori} knowledge of the eternal truths. This belief presupposes that there are universal truths to be discovered and, furthermore, that all human beings are naturally equipped with the ability to gain access to the eternal truths because “God not only created the eternal truths, he also created our minds in such a way that we possess an innate capacity to understand them” (Osler 1994: 130). God guaranteed there is a necessary connection between eternal truths and rational human minds: “what I took just now as a rule, namely that everything we conceive very clearly and very distinctly is true, is assured only for the reasons that God is or exists, that he is a perfect being, and that everything in us comes from him. It follows that our ideas or notions, being real things and coming from God, cannot be anything but true, in every respect in which they are clear and distinct” (Descartes 1985b: 130). Descartes further held that the eternal truths are characterized by abstract or pure mathematics. In other words, physical reality itself is fundamentally mathematical because it consists of matter whose essence is “extension.” Mental reality itself is also fundamentally mathematical because God created human mind in such a way that the human being possesses an innate capacity to understand mathematical truths of the physical world. The necessary connection between eternal truths and the human mind is fundamentally mathematical.
Thus, other empirically observable attributes of things are not essential because they do not show mathematical essence of things.

As a method, mathematics is primarily characterized by deduction. Mathematics provides certainty and clarity because mathematics is concerned with subject matter so clear and distinct that it cannot be doubted. Thus mathematics starts with a subject matter (the First Principle), and by indubitably necessary steps develops an abstract grand system of knowledge that is absolutely certain. Like mathematics, any true science should start with the First Principle that is simple and certain. Systematic doubt is a first strategy that aims to achieve the First Principle. From this First Principle, other propositions should necessarily follow, which should finally establish an abstract grand system of knowledge. Thus, Descartes believed in unity of science, i.e., universal applicability of mathematics to all areas of human inquiry.

Epistemologically, Spinoza did not seem to be much different from Descartes. In his *Ethics*, Spinoza, like Euclid, began his work with definitions, axioms, and postulates. And from these he claimed to derive, by rigorous logical deduction, a number of propositions. Thus, many scholars have interpreted Spinoza’s method as mathematical deduction. But there is a fundamental difference between mathematical deduction and Spinoza’s deduction on the nature of the First Principle. If for Descartes the First Principle is the abstract universal, for Spinoza the First Principle is the concrete universal, God. Spinozian God is not an abstract transcendental entity but a concrete, immanent organizing principle of the universe. Thus, God as the First Principle is not a simple atomic axiom, but the infinite whole from which other propositions necessarily follow. Thus, Spinoza’s “conception of method is not the linear formal deduction of
traditional logic, but is a crypto-dialectical development of the structural implications of a systematic whole" (Harris 1995: 13). The whole development of deduction is implicit from the start because God as the First Principle is the whole one from which all others necessarily follow.

In this way, Spinoza believed that this deductive and infallible science would soon exhaust all experimentation and be able to dispense with every appeal to experience. This triumphant optimism is based on the core idea of rationalism, i.e., one that "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things, and conversely the order and connection of things is the same as the order and connection of ideas" (Spinoza 2000: 290). We can conceive of substance under the attribute of thought, or under the attribute of extension, but in both we shall find the same order because God expresses itself in and through both thought and extension. As Spinoza (2000: 118) explained:

[T]hinking substance and extended substance is one and the same substance, which is understood now under this and now under that attribute. So also a mode of extension and the idea of that mode is one and the same thing, but expressed in two ways. ..For example, a circle existing in Nature and the idea of the existing circle, which is also in God, is one and the same thing, which is explained through different attributes.

Thus, Spinoza did not try to analyze the truth of a proposition in terms of its correspondence with facts. Rather, he tried to analyze the truth of a proposition in terms of the coherence which it has with the total system of assertions within which it belongs. Just as any given action or reaction can be fully accounted for only in terms of its relation to the structure of the universe as a whole, so any given proposition can be fully accounted for only in terms of its relation to the total system of assertions as a whole. Thus, truth does not have to appeal to the fallible testimony of the sense experience.
On the direction of history, Descartes believed that history is a progressive process of mastering and possessing nature by means of instrumental knowledge. Descartes did not believe that the universe is moving toward some final end because the universe is perfect. Rather, the universe is rationally operating according to eternal mathematical laws. As such, Descartes believed that human society can be advanced only if human beings know the eternal mathematical truth of the universe, and then control it for the welfare of human beings.

Through this [practical] philosophy we could know the power and action of fire, water, air, the stars, the heavens and all the other bodies in our environment, as distinctly as we know the various crafts of our artisans; and we could use this knowledge—as the artisans use theirs—for all the purpose for which it is appropriate, and thus make ourselves, as it were, the lords and masters of nature (Descartes 1985b: 142-143).

Unlike Descartes, Spinoza retained the traditional view that conceived of the whole of history as the unfolding of God's plan to build up the heavenly city until its final triumph at the end of the world. But unlike the traditional view, it is human reason that writes the drama of history as the realization of human beings, because God is immanent in human reason. Unlike the traditional drama of salvation, this drama is "within" the reach of human reason because God as the organizing principle of the universe is immanent in human beings. In this sense, history is the self-realization of God.

One of the most important moral implications of the rationalist version of the Enlightenment is its monistic notion of ethics: there is a true universal ethics that is valid across time and space. According to Descartes, human beings can acquire universal ethics only when they complete the grand system of knowledge. Thus, Descartes (quoted in Morgan 1994: 2) defined morals as "the highest and most perfect moral system, which presupposes a complete knowledge of the other sciences and is the ultimate level of
wisdom.” If we want true knowledge, we should eliminate the physical dimension of knowledge because that is not certain. This necessarily leads to the control of the body by the mind. If we complete the grand system of knowledge through the mathematical deduction from the first self-evident axioms, then everyday moral problems would solve themselves.

Spinoza also proposed a monistic notion of ethics. “In so far as,” argued Spinoza (2000: 249), “men live in accordance with the guidance of reason, to that extent alone they always necessarily agree in nature.” But he also held that “The endeavour to preserve oneself is the first and unique basis of virtue” (Spinoza 2000: 242).

Synthesizing the two arguments, Spinoza (2000: 243) held that “In our case, to act absolutely in accordance with virtue is simply to act, live, and preserve one’s being (these three mean the same) in accordance with the guidance of reason, and on the basis of looking for what is useful to oneself” (Spinoza 2000: 243). This argument is based on his assumption that all men share a common nature and that, insofar as all men act to benefit themselves, their actions must be beneficial to other men.

A political implication of Cartesian rationalism is a kind of conservatism that tries to preserve the status quo forever. Just as the universe is a self-operating perfect system, so society should be a self-operating perfect system. Just as the eternal mathematical laws of nature regulate the parts so as to keep the total structural pattern constant, so the eternal mathematical laws of society should regulate individuals so as to keep the total structural patterns of society constant. For this constancy of society or perfection of society is possible only when a few scientists know perfectly the eternal law and apply it to society. In this way, elitism is immanent in Cartesian rationalism.
A political implication of Spinozian rationalism is a kind of centralized totalitarianism. Spinoza did not conceive of the whole merely as an aggregate of elements that are regarded as logically prior to and existentially independent of the whole. Rather, it is the whole that is regarded as logically prior to individuals. Just as the whole is prior to the part and the principle of its structure is immanent in every part, so society as the whole is prior to its individual members and the principle of its structure should be immanent in every individual. For this, the state as the representative of the whole should control individuals so as to make them contribute to the whole society: "For it comes first to be considered that just as in the state of nature that man is strongest and most his own master (sui juris) who is guided by reason, so also that state will be most powerful and most fully sui juris which is founded on and directed by reason. For the right of a state is determined by the power of a people (multitudo) which is led as if by one mind. And this union of minds could by no means be conceived, unless the state does all it can to aim at what sound reason shows to be good for all men" (Spinoza, quoted in Harris 1995: 122).

1-2. The Empiricist Version of the Enlightenment:

The Technically Practical (Empirical Science)

The empiricist version of the Enlightenment revitalized the ancient Greek tradition of the technically practical, which had been long forgotten with the rise of Christianity (see Vitzthum 1995). The empiricist version of the Enlightenment is rooted in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century empiricists such as Bacon (1561-1626), Hobbes (1588-1679), Locke (1632-1704), and the British and Scottish sensationalists. It also
flourished in France where French materialists such as Helvétius (1715-1771) and d’Holbach (1723-1789) revitalized the ancient Greek tradition of the technically practical. Concerning the problem of God, the empiricist version took a moderate atheist position. If God exists, it is not the anthropomorphic Christian God but the Cartesian efficient cause or the Newtonian mathematical God. The empiricist version did not want to push atheism to the extreme because if it does, the entire universe becomes absurd. It just put aside the problem of the First Cause while rejecting the Final cause. While the empiricist version believed that the universe is rationally operating, it rejected the very basis of the rationalist claim to achieve a priori knowledge on the nature of things because it did not believe in innatism, i.e., the doctrine that the mind can generate its own ideas out of nothing. Rather, it believed that all human knowledge derives ultimately from sensory experience. In this sense, the empiricist version of the Enlightenment might be said to be the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century version of the technically practical model of knowledge.

Ontologically, the empiricist version rejected the traditional dualism of spirit and matter, holding that only matter exists. D’Holbach represented this view. According to d’Holbach, the whole of reality is matter endowed motion. Matter is not created by the external agent but is self-existent. Matter has existed from the beginning and will never cease to exist. But even though matter is eternal, its manifestations and forms have their beginnings and endings. According to d’Holbach, matter is composed of primitive elements, which might be called atoms and which are specifically different from each other: air, fire, earth, and water. While human beings are incapable of directly knowing
the essence of these four elements, they can apprehend the properties of the elements only through their effects on human senses. As Pecharroman (1977: 31-32) put it:

These four elements are composed of discrete molecules which differ in volume, in position in space, and in specific properties. These properties of extension, mobility, divisibility, solidity, gravity and inert force make sensible experience possible.

In this sense, matter is all that affects our senses. Those objects of which man does not have sensible knowledge do not exist in this scheme. If those objects exist, they are material. Spirit does not exist. If spirit exists, it is material. Thus, everything can be explained in terms of diversified arrangement and combination of these four elements. There seems to be infinite ways of arranging and combining these four elements since the elements of matter are in a state of constant and reciprocal movement. But the elements of matter move mechanically according to the general law of attraction. Thus, d'Holbach (quoted in Vitzthum 1995: 69) held that “[n]ature is but an immense chain of causes and effects, which unceasingly flow from each other.”

Applying this ontology to society, the empiricist version saw society as a mechanistic machine governed by iron causality. It definitely broke with the Christian anthropomorphic view in which the universe and society are conceived as an organic whole that was created and operated by the personal supreme Intelligence. It did not need a force to set matter in motion because it believed that matter moves by its own peculiar energies that are inherent in itself. Concerning society, the empiricist version put aside the problem of the First Cause while rejecting the Final cause. Everything is mechanically determined through an uninterrupted succession of causes and effects. In this scheme, the universe is nothing more than an essentially rational and harmonious machine. As d’Holbach (quoted in Randall 1954: 274) put it:
The universe, that vast assemblage of everything that exists, presents only matter and motion: the whole offers to our contemplation nothing but an immense, an uninterrupted succession of causes and effects. . .Nature, therefore, in its most extended signification, is the great whole that results from the assemblage of matter, under its various combinations, with that contrariety of motions, which the universe offers to our view.

Applying this ontology to man, the empiricist version refuted the traditional dualism of mind and body, considering man as matter endowed with motion. It did not accept Descartes' belief that the mind can generate its own ideas, nor did it believe that innate structures can utilize sense-data in a peculiarly human fashion. Thus, the human being is not an exception in the natural world. It is Locke who first developed this view. For Locke the human mind is a blank and empty state at birth, and thus, it is mechanical and malleable; it can be molded by accumulation and recombination of the data of experience. "The senses at first let in particular ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet; and the mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the memory, and names got to them. Afterwards the mind, proceeding farther, abstracts them, and by degrees learns the use of general names" (Locke 1928: 99). Following and modifying Locke, the empiricist version reduced mental activity to the faculties of sensation and memory. According to this material psychology, "the judgment is a mechanical process of material organs, 'produced only by the meetings of all that has struck our senses'" (Crocker 1959: 117). As a result, it denied the existence of the soul. The soul is only an activity of the brain. Through experience, the soul is formed. Thus, body and soul form an indivisible material unity that ends in death. The empiricist version also rejected the rationalists' belief that human beings are born equipped with reason. It believed that reason is the most humane faculty, but that it is not given at birth. Rather, reason is formed through experience. Thus, D'Holbach (quoted in Randall 1954:
265) held that "the faculty we have of gaining experiences, of remembering them, of
calling to mind their effects, constitutes what we designate by the word reason. Without
experience there can be no reason."

The hallmark of methodology of the empiricist version is that it does not have to look
for the First Cause of motion of matter because it believes that motion forms an all-
embracing and eternal circle of generation and destruction, which has had no
beginning and will have no end. As Pecharroman (1977: 34-35) put it:

[T]here is no need for a Cartesian or external agent to explain motion in
matter since motion derives from the properties of matter as such. Since
motion derives from the properties inherent in matter, and properties
constitute the essence of a thing, we can construct mentally the essence of
things by apprehending their movements which affect our senses.

Instead, the empiricist version proposed reductionism: reductionism reduces complex
data or phenomena to simple terms. Just as all phenomena can be reduced step by step to
simpler phenomena and finally the simplest atoms, all propositions about empirical
phenomena can be reduced step by step the simplest propositions about atoms. The
empiricist version believed that sensations are the first source of knowledge. Truth
cannot be grasped except through direct experimentation. The empiricist version did not
favor deductive reasoning from the First Principle because it did not decide in advance
what course nature actually follows. It held that only by experimental reasoning can
matters of fact be determined.

Concerning the direction of history, the empiricist version proposed a secularized
version of progressivism. For the first time in Western history, it combined the three
different kinds of progress. This progressivism had some distinctive features. First is a
kind of technical determinism. Von Wright (1997: 7) called this the "Great Idea of
Progress": "We have distinguished three different kinds of progress. One is progress in science and technology. Another is the improvement of the material well-being of individuals and societies. A third is moral perfection. The Great Idea of Progress was the thought that the first type of progress has an instrumental role in promoting the other two types—the accumulative and linear nature of the first being a warrant of life becoming progressively easier and manners more civilized." In this technical determinism, the cumulative growth of technology and science was itself regarded as progress. Second is that it is this-world-oriented rather than other-world-oriented progressivism. The pivotal force that moves the world is human beings, not God. Paradise is not in the past world that God made, but will be in the future world human beings are now making. Third is that it is optimistic. The empiricist version believed that man could "control his own destiny, make his own laws as he pleases, build on indestructible foundations, and be free and wise and rational for ever" (Berlin 1976: 76). Last is that the Enlightenment view of progress believed that science has a transcultural (i.e., universal) character. Scientific knowledge is not the exclusive secret of the Western people but can be open to anybody who has the requisite training. Thus, the transcultural diffusion of scientific knowledge and of technology was considered to be progress.

One of the important moral implications of this view is a secular hedonism. In the empiricist version, the concept of immortality vanished because it believed that there is no spiritual soul. With the death of the body, the soul disappears because it is merely an activity of the brain. This resulted in a definite break with traditional Christian morality, in which man is supposed to expect postmortem rewards for his spiritual control over corporeal desires. Thus, the empiricist version confronted the following questions: "if
there was no heavenly reward after death, what was left? Why should any man deny himself? Why suffer persecution for truth and justice without compensation here or hereafter?” (Becker 1963: 148). It is not surprising that man seeks his happiness “within this world” where only matter exists. Man is supposed to follow the general law of motion of matter because man is also matter in motion. Just as every matter incessantly moves in order to maintain itself as matter, so is it natural for man to incessantly move in order to preserve itself as matter. In this sense, man’s desire to preserve himself is natural. Thus, D’Holbach identified self-interest or self-love with the good. Human self-interest is always material since man is simply matter. In this scheme, “the happiest man is the man with the fewest material needs and the ability to satisfy the needs he has” (Pecharroman 1977: 92).

This secular hedonism is directly connected with utilitarianism. Just as motion of matter keeps the mutual interdependence of bodies alive, so man’s activity keeps the mutual interdependence of other men alive. Just as motion of matter aligns itself with the general motion of other matter, so man’s activity should align itself with the general activities of other men. Even though utility suggests social way of attaining self-interest, the emphasis is put on self-interest. Utilitarian behaviorism is an eminent expression of this: all humans like pleasure and dislike pain, and consequently, human beings act to maximize their pleasure and minimize their pain. This descriptive law provides a basis from which a normative law, i.e., one that this law is the only objective that is morally worthy, derives.

One of the most significant political implications is a liberal (bourgeoisie) democracy in which every (bourgeois) individual will enjoy his/her natural right, freedom, which
was previously violated by medieval institutional arrangements. Democracy bases itself on an essentialist notion of a unitary and universal rational agent, the bearer of universal rights. The empiricist version justified this concept of human rights on the basis of natural law. Natural law was the law that nature imposed on all living creatures. For the human being, the natural right imposed by natural law was the utilitarian principle in which man acts to maximize his pleasure and minimize his pain. Every individual acts morally because s/he has universal reason, the capability of calculating utility. This individual is seen primarily like a merchant. On the social level, the concept of natural right also refers to “what must be done if political institutions were to survive, as well as to what ought to be done if justice were to be secured. If humans were not granted their natural rights, existing political institutions would inevitably be rent by discord and overthrown; they should be replaced by institutions that were in harmony with natural rights” (Schwendinger and Schwendinger 1974: 12). Social institutions provided opportunities for the merchant’s maximization of utility. Thus the primary social institution was the market: “Social relationships are therefore viewed as ‘opportunity structures’ or means which are rationally assessed by each and every individual. It is as if every member of the human race, possessing free will, is in the marketplace with freedom to choose between various institutions and institutional identities” (Schwendinger and Schwendinger 1974: 21).

In short, the Enlightenment was an effort at the scientization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. This effort largely dominated the imagination of modern thinkers who tried to realize this idea at the institutional level. The following
points summarize the basic ideas of the Enlightenment as the scientization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.

1) The Enlightenment as the scientization of ontology: Being and essence are universals that are true regardless of time and space. Non-being and appearance are particulars that are copies of being and essence. This ontology is directly applied to society and man. The rationalists saw society as the neatly ordered hierarchy of being, all leading up to one Supreme Being. The empiricists saw society as a mechanistic machine governed by iron causality. Society is nothing more than a rational and harmonious machine in which everything is mechanically determined through an uninterrupted succession of causes and effects. The rationalists saw man as a rational, autonomous, and unified subject. Man’s essence is mind, not body, which propels man to move towards God. The empiricists saw man as a pure, transparent matter that moves according to the general law of motion of matter.

2) The Enlightenment as the scientization of epistemology: The Enlightenment assumed that the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things. Scientific knowledge mirrors reality. For rationalists, it is the structure of mind that mirrors reality. For empiricists, it is the structure of reality that is mirrored in the receptive mind. Here, language is a transparent tool to reflect reality as it is. In this scheme, being, language, and knowledge are equated: “being, language, knowledge are self-evident, neutral and transparent terms. Being can be known and experienced in its intimacy; language transfers meaning neutrally without interfering in the underlying thoughts it ‘expresses’; knowledge undistortedly reflects reality in truthful representations” (Grosz 1989: 28). There is a vantage point from which reality is
faithfully represented. This vantage point is objective science in which subjective elements are totally erased for the equation of being, language, and knowledge.

3) The Enlightenment as the scientization of ethics/politics: The Enlightenment had a linear sense of temporality, according to which history is moving towards betterment. To rationalists, this movement is teleologically determined. To empiricists, this movement is mechanically determined. The Enlightenment believed that there is a true universal ethics that is valid across space and time. To rationalists, this ethics refers to the control of body by mind for the future rewards. To empiricists, this ethics refers to living according to the universal law of maximization of pleasure and minimization of pain. Thus, ethics is reduced to the capability of calculating utility. Politically, the Enlightenment proposed two positions. Rationalists proposed centralized totalitarianism in which all beings lead up to one Supreme Being. Empiricists proposed liberalism in which all individuals, whose nature is the same in regards to utilitarian principle, enjoy their natural rights. But both of them believed that all individuals should be totally integrated into society.

2. The Counter-Enlightenment as the Moralization of Ontology, Epistemology, and Ethics/Politics

The Counter-Enlightenment is the term that refers to the counter-forces against/alongside the Enlightenment in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries (Berlin 1979). Berlin, who coined the term Counter-Enlightenment, used it as a complement of dogmatic rationalism (see Berlin and Jahanbegloo 1992: 70). According to this definition, the Counter-Enlightenment complemented the extremity of the
Enlightenment by recovering the morally practical (morality) of the ancient Greeks and Renaissance humanism. In this scheme, the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment are partly complementary. The Counter-Enlightenment is rooted in Vico (1668-1744) and developed in the writings of Hamann (1730-1788) and Herder (1744-1803) (see Berlin 1976, 1979, 1993). Vico distinguished the realm of human society from the realm of nature, and thus was very critical of the application of Newtonian science to the realm of human society. Vico believed that human beings can not understand the world of external nature because they did not create it. Human beings can understand only what they create; mere observers can not understand what they did not create.

But in the night of thick darkness enveloping the earliest antiquity, so remote from ourselves, there shines the eternal and never failing light of a truth beyond all question: that the world of civil society has certainly been made by men, and that its principles are therefore to be found within the modifications of our own human mind. Whoever reflects on this cannot but marvel that the philosophers should have bent all their energies to the study of the world of nature, which, since God made it, He alone knows; and that they should have neglected the study of world of nations, or civil world, which, since men had made it, men could come to know (Vico 1968: 96).

All human beings could do then is to just observe and to interpret what they did not create. Only God can fully understand Nature because He made it. Concerning the existence and nature of God, Vico took an agnostic position: God is beyond the reach of human faculties. The nature of physical nature is also beyond the reach of human faculties because it is made by God. Human beings can only know the social world that they made. In this way, Vico shifted the focus from God and physical nature to human society. Like empiricists, Vico rejected the very basis of the rationalist claim to achieve a priori knowledge of the nature of things. But Vico also rejected the very basis of the
empiricist claim that all human knowledge derives ultimately from sensory experience. Rather, Vico situated epistemology in concrete historical situation.

On the nature of society, Vico tried to give balance to a mechanistic worldview, retaining and revising the traditional Aristotelian organicist view of the world in which society is conceived as a whole structure. Vico refuted divine Providence of the Creator and proposed a man-made cultural logic which assigned an appropriate function to every institution. Vico, in fact, did not desert the notion of Providence but rather revised it. Vico believed that we can not know the divine Providence of the Creator until we came to historically reconstruct historical facts, i.e., "the story of men’s daily lives and activities on earth, which alone revealed the pattern which determined what men were, had been and might have been, could and would be" (Berlin 1976: 73). Vico saw society as a man-made organism, not a transcendental entity. Society is a man-made cultural community, where people speak the same language, live on the same soil, and possess the same habits, a communal past and common memories. Thus, men do not create society from thin air; rather, men create society on a historical pattern that predecessors happened to make. This historical pattern is not always an invention of men’s intentional actions; rather, it is an "unintended result" because men freely act within narrow limits that predecessors happened to set up. Not everything is predictable, because there is space for choice even though limits exist. Vico felt that certain structural transformations were deconstructing the old man-made cultural logic without giving human beings sufficient time to make a new cultural logic. In this sense, Vico saw his time as a transient era from the old man-made cultural logic to a new one.
On the nature of man, Vico believed that man is a cultural being who participates in a cultural community. Vico emphasized the negative impact of the structural transformation of traditional institutions on people. Vico felt that human beings are becoming like atomic mechanical matter. Vico held that this does not mean a process of achieving freedom and autonomy of individuals but rather a process of dehumanization and alienation. This negative position came from the fact that Vico retained the Renaissance ideal of the human being as a whole being. Vico secularized this ideal of the whole being, arguing that man creates himself by way of creating society: “for him [Vico] human nature, in the course of seeking to satisfy its needs, cannot help transforming itself, and so constantly generates new characteristics, new needs, new categories of thought and action” (Berlin 1976: 37-38). Thus, the growth of man goes together with the growth of institutional life of society. The whole being who belongs to a cultural community is characterized by his/her wholeness within him/herself, uniqueness and freedom, which is possible only in the process of his/her communion with society. According to this tradition, human beings can not be reduced to a part of a machine that has only a specific function, because they are assumed to be like a self-sufficient cosmos. Human beings are also assumed to be an integral part of society; without society, human beings can not achieve self-sufficiency because it is human beings who made society. Vico lamented the situation in which human beings are reduced to atomic matter, robbed of their spirituality, and totally disconnected from the larger society, and in which they think and act in accordance with the seemingly universal law of utility maximization.
Although Vico also characterized man mainly as a rational being, he did not restrict the notion of reason to the universal law of utility maximization, which exists across time and space. Rather, Vico extended the notion of reason so as to imply a dynamic complexity situated in specific history and tradition in which human beings live, feel, desire, love, hate, eat, drink, create, worship, etc. In this new interpretation of reason, reason is seen as a historical product produced in specific historical, social, cultural, economic, and geographical contexts of each society. Vico was well aware that contemporary society tended to reduce human reason into a capacity of calculating utility and to change the nature of social interaction between people into a kind of exchange of utility. Against this, Vico wanted to use its notion of reason as the source of identity of human beings and to make interaction between individuals into rational as well as non-rational ones based on historically and socially shared values, customs, habits, memories, etc. Based on a re-evaluation of the medieval and the Renaissance order, Vico recognized how important tradition, culture, and history are when human beings live, feel, desire, love, hate, eat, drink, create, worship, etc. Thus, every society has its own reason, because every society has its own specific tradition, culture, and history. Every individual also has its own reason, but this reason is similar to other individuals' reasons, because every individual reason is constructed within the same community.

Epistemologically, Vico distinguished the humanities from the natural sciences. Human beings are primarily cultural; they feel, think, and act through their common language, culture, and tradition. Thus, Vico rejected the Enlightenment view of mathematical language that is assumed to be free of all contexts. Rather, Vico believed that "a particular type of locution, the use and structure of a language, has a necessary,
‘organic’ connection with particular types of political and social structure, of religion, of law, of economic life, of morality, of theology, of military organization, and so on” (Berlin 1976: 51). In place of rationalist or empiricist epistemology, Vico emphasized the poetic, artistic, intuitive, traditional, historical, and linguistic approaches to life and knowledge. In the New Science, Vico sought to discover the poetic logic (New Science) and set it up against the rational logic of the experimental-mathematical knowledge (natural sciences). For Vico, myth is neither fictional nor as irrational as the rationalists argue. It is the true narration that people made. As Vico (1968: 21-22) put it:

We find that the principle of these origins both of languages and of letters lies in the fact that the first gentile peoples, by a demonstrated necessity of nature, were poets who spoke in poetic characters. This discovery, which is the master key of this Science, has cost us the persistent research of almost all our literary life, because with our civilized natures we [moderns] cannot at all imagine and can understand only by great toil the poetic nature of these first men.

Thus, it can be said that Vico recognized that reality is poetically or discursively constructed. In this sense, Vico already took a linguistic turn: “Vico, like many modern interpretive social theorists, could establish his New Science only after he had taken a linguistic turn: he saw that inasmuch as the world in which men live is a world of institutions based on language, the task of the human sciences most resembles, and must be modelled on, the interpretation of texts” (Mali 1992: 4). Through reading the collective symbolic figures and myths, we can understand the lives of the people who made them.

Vico, who recognized the embeddedness of reason in culture and history, held that the diversity and multiplicity of life cannot be completely grasped by abstract and mathematical reasoning. Absolute objectivity and universal validity of knowledge that
the Enlightenment envisioned is impossible because the human subject is always situated in concrete culture and society. Human reason is not *a priori* but a historical capacity. In other words, human reason is part of life and history and, therefore, it is limited by its own historicity. Various non-rational approaches to knowledge and language shape consciousness of human beings, and they are in turn shaped by the structure of culture. Each culture has its own categories and definitions, and thus, it should be understood internally in terms of its own cultural categories, values, and standards. Vico, thus, preferred history to mathematics when he studied the social world. "The nature of institutions is," argued Vico (1968: 64), "nothing but their coming into being (*nascimento*) at certain times and in certain guises. Whenever the time and guise are thus and so, such and not otherwise are the institutions that come into being." Thus, Vico was very critical of all theorists who did not understand the systematically developing and altering succession of outlooks and motives, such as natural law theorists, social contract theorists, utilitarians, individualists, materialists, and rationalists. From this perspective, a comparative-historical method is preferred. The key to all truth and value lies in history, rather than in abstract rationality. Knowledge produced by human subjects situated in their concrete culture and society is always partial and relative.

In addition to this comparative-historical view, an interpretive or sympathetic method was welcomed for understanding real human beings. Berlin (1999: 44-45) summarized the doctrine of Hamann, who was one of the fathers of Romanticism as follows:

"If you really wish to enter into contact with human beings, if you really wish to understand what they think, what they feel and what they are, then you must understand every gesture, every nuance, you must watch their eyes, you must observe the movement of their lips, you must hear their words, you must understand their handwriting, and then you come to direct acquaintance with the actual sources of life. Anything less than..."
that, the attempt to translate a man's language into another language, to
classify all his various movements by some anatomical or physiognomical
means, to try to put him into a box with a lot of other people and produce a
learned volume which will simply classify him as one of a species, one of
a type, that is the way to miss all knowledge, that is the way to kill, that is
the way to apply concepts and categories, hollow baskets, to the
palpitating, unique, asymmetrical, unclassifiable flesh of living human
experience.

On the direction of history, Vico criticized the "Great Idea of Progress" by
revitalizing the Greek cyclic view of history. Vico saw history in terms of rise, growth,
decline, and fall of both the mental life of men and the institutional life of society.

Basing himself on his study of the Greek and Roman societies, Vico argued that all
societies pass through essentially the same stages of development: Age of the Gods, Age
of the Heroes, and Age of Men. But particular societies traverse this path in different
ways and with varying tempo because they have their own individualities. Vico thus
agreed with some arguments of the Enlightenment view on human progress, but he
recognized that achievement has a cost. The Age of Men is the most developed state, but
it also signifies decadence, which might in turn lead to a beginning of a new cycle. Vico
recognized the gradual progress of science and technology and the improvement of
material life of individual and society, but he lamented that these sorts of progress injured
the moral perfection of men and society. Thus, Vico explained the structural
transformation of the West in terms of the alienation and fragmentation of human beings.
In Vico's eyes, this transformation tended to reduce the whole individual into a mere
function as well as to detach the individual from his/her community with which s/he has
to be in harmony. But Vico was not totally pessimistic; Vico believed that a new cycle
would start again. This new and upcoming society or civilization might be totally
different from the old one. It will have its own life cycle of rise, growth, decline, and fall.
of both the mental life of men and the institutional life of society, operating according to
to its own law. Nevertheless, Vico did not believe that the history of mankind showed the
total diversity of man. It is rather Herder who argued this: “Only in Herder’s early work
of 1774 do we find the historicist position formulated in its radical form: the conception
that every age must be viewed in terms of its own immediate values; that there is no
progress or decline in history, but only value-filled diversity” (Iggers 1983: 30).

The moral implications of this view are partly antithetical and partly complementary
to the Enlightenment view. Unlike the Enlightenment philosophers who tried to compose
universal ethics, Vico, who was well acquainted with anthropological and historical
works, recognized that there is no natural man whose substance is given once and for all.
Rather, there are social men who belong to a variety of cultural communities, and thus,
there are different ethics based on each specific community. Accordingly, there is no
universal right of the human being and universal ethics valid across time and space;
rather, there are specific morals and ethics which are bound to their specific contexts.
Vico, for instance, severely attacked the seventeenth century natural law theorists who
assumed “a fixed, universal human nature, from the needs of which it is possible to
deduce a single set of principles of conduct, identical everywhere, for everyone, at all
times, and constituting therefore the perennial basis of all human laws, whatever special
modifications and adjustments might be required by changing times and circumstances.
For Vico there is no static nucleus, no unalterable minimum of this kind” (Berlin 1976:
84).

Thus, Vico was strongly against the Enlightenment utilitarianism in which morality is
equated with utility. Instead, following the Aristotelian and Christian view of human
beings, Vico envisioned that human beings have their potential capacities as a whole microcosm. These potential capacities can be differently achieved according to the development of a whole society as a macrocosm. In a decadent age when men lose their wholeness and when hedonistic, utilitarian, and nihilistic trends prevail, morality will be equated with utility. As critical of this utilitarian morality of the Age of Men, Vico also criticized the slave morality of the Age of Gods. Frightened by terror and fear of the uncontrollable nature, primitive men imagined and created external entities of mysterious authority and gave their absolute obedience to them. In a word, man is ruled by his self-made, mysterious Gods. In this age, morality is equated with absolute obedience.

Although recognizing that any morals and ethics are possible according to their contexts, Vico tended to prefer a kind of pietism that emphasizes spiritual rather than material life. Vico worried about situations where the technological and scientific achievements rob individuals of their spiritual interests. This spiritual life is possible only in a community in which every individual fully participates: “the spiritual activity of men—expressed in art and literature, religion and philosophy, laws and sciences, play and work—consists not in the creation of objects, of commodities or artifacts, the value of which resides in themselves, and is independent of their creators and their characters and their purposes—but in forms of communication with other men” (Berlin 1976: xxii).

Translated into political terms, Vico envisioned the most desirable state as being a pluralist democracy. Vico believed that the growth of men comes together with the growth of society. Every individual has his/her own purpose in life and s/he simultaneously shares the same purpose as the community s/he belongs to. “Unity in diversity” is Vico’s motto; necessity and freedom do not contradict each other. Vico
projected as ideal society a spiritually unified, communal, and group-centered order. What is at stake here is that people are spiritually unified. This does not just mean that individuals are unified by common sense or a collective sense, but also that every individual is pious. This pietism does not mean a passive one: "If you cannot obtain from the world that which you really desire, you must teach yourself not to want it. If you cannot get what you want, you must teach yourself to want what you can get" (Berlin 1999: 37). Rather, it means active pietism: Even though I can obtain from the world that which I really desire, I will teach myself not to want it. In this sense, the individuals in a spiritually unified, communal, and group-centered order are the pious artists who have their own inner lives. This argument seems to be self-contradictory, but it is possible because a spiritually unified, communal, and group-centered order is not an object detached from its makers, i.e., the pious artists who have their own inner lives, but is part of a living process of communication between its makers. Pietism is possible only when the individual has his own "inner" life. Moreover, self-expression is possible only for the pious individual. In this sense self-expression is part of the essence of the human being as such. Thus, a spiritually unified, communal, and group-centered order is the self-expression of a living process of communication between its makers. In this way, Vico presented a new communal order in which every individual will realize his/her potential capacities as a whole microcosm who recognizes the purpose of the public as his/her own.

In this society, freedom (voluntary activities of the individual) and necessity (restrictions of the social institutions) do not contradict each other any more. But Vico believed that every society might achieve this goal in its own way. Vico thus did not
encourage imperialism which aims to eliminate the diversity of culture over the world, but rather a pluralism which allows all kinds of culture to flower; Vico believed that every culture has its own inner life which would be expressed in a variety of cultural forms: "Every culture expresses itself in works of art, of thought, in ways of living and action, each of which possesses its own character which can neither be combined nor necessarily form stages of a single progress towards a single universal goal" (Berlin 1991: 65).

In short, the Counter-Enlightenment, represented most systematically by Vico, tried to moralize ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics against what it saw as the extreme Enlightenment version as the scientization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. These ideas of the Counter-Enlightenment thus criticized the dark side of the Enlightenment. The following are the basic ideas of the Counter-Enlightenment as the moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.

1) The Counter-Enlightenment as the moralization of ontology: The distinction between being and non-being, and between universals and particulars is historically made by men. Thus, there are many constellations of distinctions among being and non-being, and universals and particulars. This ontology is applied to society and man. The Counter-Enlightenment saw society as a man-made cultural community, where people speak the same language, live on the same soil, and possess the same habits, a communal past, and common memories. In this sense, every society has its own values because it has its own specific tradition, culture and history. An ideal society is characterized by a spiritually unified, communal, group-centered order. The Counter-Enlightenment saw man as a historical being who creates himself by way of creating society. Humans create
society on the basis of historical patterns that predecessors happened to make. Humans behave in similarly patterned ways because they share values, customs, habits, memories, etc. within communities. Simultaneously, human beings are expressive subjects because they preserve their own inner life, which is not contradictory to communal life. Rather, each individual's inner life is made in the course of communicating with other individuals in the community.

2) The Counter-Enlightenment as the moralization of epistemology: The Counter-Enlightenment also assumed that the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things. Although the Counter-Enlightenment believed the equation of being, language, and knowledge, it claimed that there are many constellations of equation of being, language, and knowledge in the human world. Thus, the form of the equation of being, language, and knowledge differs from one to another culture. It is the practice of human subjects that construct the equation of being, language, and knowledge. What is important here is the contextual nature of the human subject. The human subject is always situated in and limited by his own culture and society. The human subject as an epistemological subject is the carrier of the lived experience which is mediated by his/her specific cultural categories, values, and standards. The Counter-Enlightenment claimed that the diversity and multiplicity of life could not be completely grasped by abstract and mathematical reasoning only. According to the Counter-Enlightenment, absolute objectivity of and universal validity of knowledge are impossible because each society has its own categories and definitions, and thus, it should be understood internally and in terms of its own cultural categories, values, and standards.
3) The Counter-Enlightenment as the moralization of ethics/politics: The Counter-Enlightenment has a cyclical notion of temporality, according to which history moves from rise, growth, decline, and fall of both mental life of men and institutional life of society. The Counter-Enlightenment believed that there is a variety of cultural communities, each of which has its own ethics that is bound to its specific contexts. There is no universal ethics, but the ideal of ethics is still to live spiritually. This spiritual life refers to the control of body by the spiritual life of the community. Politically, the Counter-Enlightenment presented a pluralist democracy, in which freedom (voluntary activities of the individual) and necessity (restrictions of the social institutions) do not contradict each other because all members are pious artists who have their own inner lives. In this sense, all individuals should be socialized enough to voluntarily adjust their individualities to spiritual commonalities of society.
CHAPTER 3

THE POSTMODERN AS THE AESTHETICIZATION OF ONTOLOGY,

EPISTEMOLOGY, AND ETHICS/POLITICS

I define the postmodern as the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which has proceeded from the early 1960s to the present in advanced Western societies. Nevertheless, I do not claim that the moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics is not important in defining the postmodern. What I really referring to is that the moral challenge to science is not new; there was the moral challenge from the start of the modern. What is new in the postmodern is the aesthetic challenge to the modern. The following is a philosophical rephrasing of the postmodern.

(1) The postmodern as the aestheticization of ontology: The traditional ontological distinction between “being” and “non-being” is blurred. The ontological privilege of “what is” over “what is not” is overturned. As a result, there is no original. Everything is a copy of a copy of a copy, ad infinitum.

(2) The postmodern as the aestheticization of epistemology: The traditional epistemological equation of being, language, and knowledge is blurred. As “being” is a copy of a copy of a copy, ad infinitum, so are language and knowledge. The distinction between reality and discourse is also blurred. As there is no vantage point from which “being” is grasped, “non-being,” which has not been represented in thought, begins to be represented.
(3) The postmodern as the aestheticization of ethics/politics: The traditional notion of temporality as a linear progress toward betterment is lost. As a result, the traditional moral ideal of self-sufficiency which is based on the control of the body by reason for future rewards is senseless because there is no future. The traditional politics of inclusion/exclusion based on negation: x = x = not y (I = I = not You), is senseless because "I" and "you" are entangled in multiple ways.

Postmodern Social Theory

In order to grasp postmodern social theory, I will categorize it into two: poststructuralist postmodern social theory and critical postmodern social theory. Poststructuralist postmodern social theory utilizes poststructuralist linguistics for theorizing the postmodern. Poststructuralist postmodern social theory considers society as language (an indefinite signifying chain), and argues that society can be best studied through linguistics. Critical postmodern social theory utilizes post-Marxist political economy for theorizing the postmodern. It sees society in general in Marxist terms of base and superstructure, and characterizes contemporary Western advanced societies as the most developed form of capital. Critical postmodern social theory connects the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics with the restless transformative activity of capital accumulation, and tries to see the postmodern within a given historical framework as related to one another as to a totality.

1. Poststructuralist Postmodern Social Theory

The term poststructuralism always comes together with the term structuralism.
According to Sarup (1993), structuralism and poststructuralism have many similarities: a critique of the human subject, historicism, meaning, and philosophy. But there is a fundamental difference between structuralism and poststructuralism. Intellectually, structuralism belongs to the rationalist version of the Enlightenment. Structuralism tries to discover the truth, a deep structure lying behind appearances. This structure is linguistically organized, a system of groups of binary opposition of the signified and the signifier. In this structure, there is a master code that determines others within the system. By contrast, poststructuralism intellectually belongs to the tradition of the aesthetic, especially the anti-Enlightenment tradition. Poststructuralism developed out of a disillusionment with structuralism. Poststructuralism is anti-scientific; it does not believe that there is a deep structure lying behind appearances. Binary opposition between the signified and the signifier is deconstructed. Poststructuralism criticizes structuralism which sees language as closed structures of oppositions by giving primacy to the signifier over the signified. According to poststructuralism, the signifiers do not rest in the signified. The signified is only a moment of a never-ending process of the infinite, intertextual play of the signifiers. Thus, language is approached as a self-referential system of differences. There is no "being," but only "becoming." Therefore, poststructuralism denies the existence of a master code.

Structuralism developed in post-WW II France. Many parts of France were destroyed during the war, and its people were weary of change and destruction. They wanted to rebuild social stability through applying scientific knowledge to their country. Marxism, existentialism, and phenomenology dominated the intellectual scene in the post-WW II France, but by 1960s they were superseded by structuralism (Poster 1975). There might
be many reasons for this change, but two seems to be decisive. Intellectually, most French intellectuals sought for scientificity and “structuralism promised a rigorous method and some hope for making decisive progress toward scientificity” (Dosse 1997a: xix). Structuralism adopted modern structural linguistics as a primary model of science and applied it to social phenomena. During those days, “linguistics was a pilot science guiding the steps of the social sciences as a whole toward scientificity” (Dosse 1997a: xx). Institutionally, the boom of structuralism was related to the continuous growth of French capitalism, in which wages and profits steadily increased in parallel. In fact, this was not a unique French phenomenon; from the late 1940s, Western capitalism in general enjoyed continuous economic growth. The age of ideology seemed to end. Structuralism fitted this ambience because it focused on stability and synchrony rather than change and diachrony.

In post-World War II France, Ferdinand de Saussure was revitalized as the founder of modern linguistics. Saussure established “the arbitrariness of the sign, showing that language is a system of values established neither by content nor by experience, but by pure difference” (Dosse 1997a: 44). The linguistic sign joins a concept (a signified) with an acoustic image (a signifier) whose link is arbitrary. Saussure was only interested in the relationship between the signified and the signifier and excluded the referent. The meaning of a sign does not lie in the connection between the sign and the referent, but in the connection between the sign and the overall system of language. In this sense, language creates rather than conveys meaning; it is language that constructs reference. Language is a system of signs whose meanings lie in relations of difference: “in language there are only differences. Even more important: a difference generally implies positive
terms between which the difference is set up; but in language there are only differences without positive terms. Whether we take the signified or the signifier, language has neither ideas nor sounds that existed before the linguistic system, but only conceptual and phonic differences that have issued from the system" (Saussure 1966: 120). Saussure argued that the oppositional or binary relation of sign in a specific language system generates the meaning of the sign. In this sense, the oppositional or binary relation of sign is the fundamental structure which determines the meaning of the sign in a specific language system. Saussure also conceived of language mainly as a synchronic system. When a person is born, this system is given as a synchronic system. As a result, the meaning that language produces is stable; a sign is the inseparable union between the signified and the signifier within language. In this sense, language acquires autonomy. In this formalistic notion of language, the speaking subject is eliminated.

Through Jakobson's structural linguistics, Claude Lévi-Strauss applied this Saussurean linguistics to anthropology. Lévi-Strauss' structuralism embraced the positivistic tradition in two ways: first is "Comte's idea that knowledge is only interesting if it borrows from a scientific model or manages to transform itself into a science or a theory"; and second is Comte's inspiration "toward 'holism,' his desire to totalize" (Dosse 1997a: 13). Lévi-Strauss believed that structural linguistics would satisfy this positivistic project. Lévi-Strauss saw the social as a language: "[l]ike language, the social is an autonomous reality (the same one, moreover); symbols are more real than what they symbolise, the signifier precedes and determines the signified" (Lévi-Strauss, quoted in Dosse 1997a: 29). Thus, the social can be studied by linguistic methods in which phonemes play a decisive role: "[l]ike phonemes, kinship terms are elements of
meaning; like phonemes, they acquire meaning only if they are integrated into systems” (Lévi-Strauss, quoted in Dosse 1997a: 22). According to Jakobson, structural phonology is the model of models, whose code is binary. Following Jakobson, Lévi-Strauss believed that the social is structured according to a binary code. According to him, kinship relationships are like linguistic systems; just as signs stand in a binary relationship of opposition and correlation to each other, so do members of society to one another. The binary code is constants belying the multitude of identifiable variations. These constants are universal structures that manifest themselves in appearances. What is important here is that these universal structures are characterized by the unconscious. It is not the conscious subjects but the signifiers that are autonomous. Studying the reciprocal combination of discrete signifiers will reveal the internal laws regulating language. In this sense, Lévi-Strauss emphasized synchrony over diachrony.

This structuralist project for a science of human societies took off with Roland Barthes. In _Mythologies_ (first published in 1957), Barthes analyzed petit-bourgeois culture as a myth that functions to eliminate reality by utilizing a linguistic model. Barthes worked within the binary opposition of ideology and science. Using the linguistic model as a true scientific method, Barthes aimed to demonstrate how a myth functions in contemporary society. Here, the agent is myths, not human subjects. Barthes contributed to the success of the linguistic model in social sciences.

In the 1950s, Jacques Lacan also applied the linguistic model to the unconscious. Rereading Freud through structural linguistics, Lacan embraced Lévi-Strauss’s notion of the unconscious as the site of structures, not Freud’s notion of the unconscious as being composed of primary processes. By connecting Freud’s condensation and displacement
with Jakobsonian metaphor and metonymy, Lacan showed how the unconscious is structured like a language. Language is composed of phonemes and of groups of phonemes. In this sense, "Lacan reversed Freud; the symbolic governed the structure whereas the id, which Lacan assigned to the Real, was at the core of drives for Freud" (Dosse 1997a: 119). The human subject is the product or effect of language. As a structuralist, Lacan gave priority to synchrony over diachrony. Lacan considered the Oedipal structure to be universal and autonomous with respect to all temporal and spatial contingencies. The Oedipal structure is characterized by the symbolic.

In the early 60s, other figures joined this poststructuralist project. In *Madness and Civilization* (first published in 1961), Michel Foucault demonstrated how madness was historically constituted as the other of reason by discourses. In *The Order of Things* (first published in 1966), he claimed that the agents of knowledge and history are what he called "episteme," not modern Man. According to Foucault, modern Man, who was considered as an autonomous agent, was a discursive effect.

Similarly in *For Marx* (first published in 1965) and *Reading Capital* (with Balibar, first published in 1965), Louis Althusser applied the structuralist method to Marxism. Althusser worked within the binary opposition of ideology and science. Althusser considered the late Marx as the real scientific Marx who presented a scientific theory of history utilizing structural categories such as social formation, the forces of production, relationships of production, etc.

In short, structuralism can be summarized as follows: 1) structuralism is a French version of the scientific project, which aims to discover the truth, a deep structure lying behind appearances; 2) structuralism sees the social and the subject to be structured like a
language as a system of signs whose meanings are determined by the binary opposition of signs within itself; and 3) structural linguistics can be used to investigate the social and the subject.

In the 1970s, structuralism was superseded by poststructuralism even though “[w]hat American call poststructuralism existed even before the structural paradigm waned” (Dosse 1997b: 17). There might be many reasons for this change, but intellectual and institutional reasons should be pointed out. Intellectually, poststructuralism followed the Anti-Enlightenment tradition, especially Nietzsche’s attacks on Western philosophy and Heidegger’s critique of metaphysics: “Building on the legacy of Nietzsche and Heidegger, poststructuralists stressed the importance of differences over unities and identities while championing the dissemination of meaning in opposition to its closure in totalizing, centered theories and systems” (Best and Kellner 1991: 22-23). Informed by the Anti-Enlightenment, poststructuralism challenged the scientific project of structuralism, radicalizing Saussure’s linguistics in which structure is assumed to be stable. Poststructuralists gave primacy to the signifier over the signified and thus opened the dynamic productivity of language. Institutionally, the decline of scientific project was related to the dynamic change of capitalism, which was often termed as the postindustrial society, the consumer society, the society of spectacle, etc. Post-war France saw a rapid development of (monopoly) capitalism, mass communication technologies, and mass consumption (Best and Kellner 1991: 16-18). This challenged the post-war bureaucracy, which was represented by the events of May 1968 and the turbulent politics of the period. The subject of this challenge did not come from the working class as traditional Marxism predicted. Rather, radical students and social
minorities played an important role in protesting against bureaucracy. Influenced by the Situationists who demanded the overthrow of all bureaucratic regimes, radical students and social minorities were not after reconstruction; they wanted to deconstruct existing rules, codes, structures, etc. “The events of May appeared as a sort of cultural upheaval/street theater/happening/performance art as much as a political protest. Wall posters and leaflets put into question not only capitalism, representative democracy, and bureaucracy, but the parties of the Left, the star system of radical intellectuals, and the culture of daily life in advanced industrial society” (Poster 1990: 131). Structuralism lost support, because it contained a stable notion of structure: “In May, the mythology of a return to Eden with its (anti)rules, (anti)structure, and anti(law) was expressed in a hostility toward the dominant, structuralist intellectual methodology” (Turkle 1992: 70).

In this social ambience poststructuralism emerged.

Most scholars agree that one of the chief figures of poststructuralism is Jacques Derrida. In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, Derrida clearly proposed a new notion of language that is different from the structuralist one, radicalizing Saussure’s notion of language. Saussure saw sign as an inseparable union of the signified and the signifier, excluding the referent from a linguistic concern. Lacan considered the signifier and the signified as two distinct and separate orders. Lacan contended that the two realms of signifier and signified are never unified and the signifier is superior to the signified because the signified is the secondary and passive effect of the signifier. The final, fixed meaning is impossible because of “an incessant sliding of the signified under the signifier” (Lacan 1977: 154). Thus, there are not some opaque signified hidden behind signifiers, a deep structure. Derrida went further; he eliminated the signified “in favor of
an indefinite signifying chain without any site at which it could be perceived" (Dosse 1997b: 23). Derrida claimed that meaning is in a state of infinite regress by way of a continual deferral of signs to others: “The meaning of meaning is infinite implication, the indefinite referral of signifier to signified. . . . Its force is a certain pure and indefinite equivocality which gives signified meaning no respite, no rest. . . . it always signifies again and differs” (Derrida, quoted in Best and Kellner 1991: 21). Language always entails a process of deferral and delay. There is no fixed stable structure. In this way, Derrida deconstructed the binary opposition between the signified and the signifier. According to Derrida, Western philosophy is structured in terms of binary oppositions such as good/bad, presence/absence, mind/matter, being/non-being, identity/difference, nature/culture, speech/writing, meaning/form, masculine/feminine, man/women, literal/metaphorical, positive/negative, reason/madness, etc. Further, there is a hierarchy; the first term is given privilege. The first positive term disavows its intimate dependence on its negative term and masquerades itself as self-present truth. According to Derrida, Western philosophy has been obsessed with this knowledge. Thus, Derrida called Western philosophy “metaphysics of presence” which identifies knowledge with self-present truth (Norris 1987). But it is impossibly ideal because it in fact depends on its negative terms. In this sense, Derrida refuted traditional ontology which has been based on binary opposition of being and non-being: “Derrida renounced all ontology. The trace he perceived always eluded itself by a continuous veiling making it impossible to establish any meaning” (Dosse 1997b: 27).

Other major structuralists also began to depart from structuralism to poststructuralism. Mainly using Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of text as being polyphonic
within the text itself, Kristeva introduced a historical dimension to structuralism. In *S/Z* (1970), Barthes distanced himself from what he later considered to be the illusory reduction of all the stories “to a single structure” (Dosse 1997b: 57). Lacan also took a similar step. This might be seen as the first phase of poststructuralism, which was characterized by the “imperialism of the signifier” (Dews 1987: 110). Even though language was conceptualized as a decentered dynamic, its all-embracing feature was not challenged. Rather, everything became textualized. This textual poststructuralism conceived that there is nothing outside of language.

But there was a second phase in poststructuralism, which was characterized by the deconstruction of the textual and non-textual. “It is precisely against this ‘imperialism of the signifier,’ however, that the second phase of post-structuralism turns. Attention begins to shift from language as all-embracing medium to the determinations which bear upon language; discourse starts to be seen as patterned and disturbed by non-discursive forces” (Dews 1987: 110). The referent of language began to become an important issue. Language was no longer considered to be a self-perpetuating system which does not need the referent for signification. Poststructuralism brought the referent back. But this referent is not positivistic or phenomenological; rather, it is similar to what I defined as “the aesthetic.” The referent as the aesthetic resides at points of impasse in language exchange, functioning to make signification possible. The referent as the aesthetic always tries to return as a subversive force. Many poststructuralists began to challenge the monolithic notion of language by reintroducing the non-discursive referent. Lacan’s notion of the real, Foucault’s notion of power, Lyotard’s notion of the figural, Deluze and
Guattari’s notion of desire were some examples. Thus, textual poststructuralism was challenged by more materialist poststructuralism.

In short, poststructuralism can be seen as an anti-scientific project which deconstructs an invariant structure by making it an infinite game of differences. This project was highly philosophical or literary. Its main figures were relatively less interested in the social than the textual. But through the late 1960s and the 1970s, poststructuralism began to permeate other areas. Especially, poststructuralism began to be associated with postmodernism, from which poststructuralist postmodern social theory emerged.

Poststructuralist postmodern social theory utilized poststructuralism for explaining and investigating ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics in Western societies since World War II. In this sense, poststructuralist postmodern social theory situated poststructuralism within institutional change in the advanced Western societies. What is distinct is that poststructuralist postmodern social theory understood this institutional change in terms of postindustrial society or information society, a non-capitalist society based on the production, ownership, and exchange of knowledge. Poststructuralist postmodern social theory replaced the category of class as the operative unit of social analysis or relegated it to historical utility only. In different words, poststructuralist postmodern social theory denied that there are “structured” contradictions in advanced Western societies. According to poststructuralist postmodern social theory, the most spectacular feature in institutional change is the textualization of the social institutions, in which multiple types of linguistic experiences bombard individuals so as to change them into masses. The main point is that the social has become an indefinite signifying chain, in which traditional binary oppositions are deconstructed. Poststructuralist postmodern
social theory tried to understand this aestheticized world from the perspective of the aesthetic. It replaced the relations of production with the relations of consumption as the key dimension of advanced Western societies, and claimed that the relations of consumption exist outside the relations of production in postmodern Western societies and, thus, are exempt from political economy. The relations of consumption operate according to the poststructuralist notion of language (the play of differences). In this sense, poststructuralist postmodern social theory embraced the aesthetic as the primary model of knowledge.

Foucault presented poststructuralist thoughts which many postmodernists utilized for their purpose, but he himself did not situate his thoughts within the institutional change of Western societies since World War II. Foucault's main target lied in the critique of modernity, not an analysis of postmodernity. Derrida and Lacan are similar. They are poststructuralists but not poststructuralist postmodern social theorists. It was later postmodernists who utilized Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan when discussing postmodernism (for instance, see Poster 1989, 1990; Best and Kellner 1991). Derrida, Foucault, and Lacan did not develop analysis of postmodern forms of society or culture. Their works concentrated mainly on epistemological issues.

In this respect, Lyotard, Deleuze and Guattari, and Baudrillard are different. First of all, they linked poststructuralism with the institutional changes of Western societies since World War II. In The Postmodern Condition, Lyotard concentrated on conditions of postmodern knowledge and challenged modern knowledge with postmodern knowledge. Lyotard, even though implicitly, situated his critique of modern knowledge within the institutional change of Western societies since World War II. He understood this change
in terms of the discourse of postindustrial society. Deleuze and Guattari, and Baudrillard linked poststructuralism more explicitly with the institutional changes of Western societies since World War II. Deleuze and Guattari (1983: 33) situated the forms of subjectivity within their social structures: "schizophrenia is the product of the capitalist machine, as manic-depression and paranoia are the product of the despotic manic, and hysteria the product of the territorial machine." Deleuze and Guattari (1983: 33) argued that "[c]apitalism is in fact born of the encounter of two sorts of flows: the decoded flows of production in the form of money-capital, and the decoded flows of labor in the forms of the 'free worker.'" In this sense, the most characteristic and the most important tendency of capitalism is the decoding of flows and the deterritorialization of the socius. Capitalism "continually draws near to its limit, which is a genuinely schizophrenic limit" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 34). This tendency produces the condition in which the schizophrenia is massively produced: "As for the schizo, continually wandering about, migrating here, there, and everywhere as best he can, he plunges further and further into the realm of deterritorialization, reaching the further limits of the decomposition of the socius on the surface of his own body without organs." Baudrillard utilized some semiotic versions of information society theory when explaining the historical change. Baudrillard (1994: 121) distinguished three orders of simulacra: "simulacra that are natural, naturalist, founded on the image, on imitation and counterfeit, that are harmonious, optimistic, and that aim for the restitution or the ideal institution of nature made in God’s image; simulacra that are productive, productivist, founded on energy, force, its materialization by the machine and in the whole system of reproduction—a Promethean aim of a continuous globalization and expansion, of an indefinite liberation
of energy (desire belongs to the utopias related to this order of simulacra); simulacra of simulation, founded on information, the model, the cybernetic game—total operationality, hyperreality, aim of total control.” Baudrillard situated poststructuralism within the age of simulacra of simulation which has no referent or ground in any reality except its own. In the age of simulacra of simulation, a hyperreality, a world of self-referential signs, that electronically-mediated media generate, replaces reality.

In addition, Lyotard, Deleuze and Guattari, and Baudrillard all agreed that the social has become like a language, but had slightly different positions about the nature of language. Lyotard, and Deleuze and Guattari had similar view on the nature of language: they all embraced the second phase of poststructuralism, a more materialist poststructuralism. They all emphasized that there is an asignifying element, the aesthetic that resides at points of impasse in language exchange, functioning to make signification possible. From his early intellectual career, Lyotard contrasted the figural with the discursive. If the discursive is the condition of representation to consciousness by a rational order of concepts, the figural is an unspeakable other necessarily at work within and against discourse, disrupting the rule of representation. With these two terms, Lyotard invented a more materialist poststructuralist notion of language. The critical discourse Lyotard valorized “seeks to make possible meanings that cannot be produced or presented directly or immediately within the linguistic code: meanings that are not extra-linguistic in nature, but not entirely linguistics or discursive in nature either” (Carroll 1987: 33). Deleuze and Guattari are similar. They rejected representation itself because they considered “representation to be not just a distortion of desire but the principal means of repressing desire and of betraying its authentic schizophrenic form” (Holland
1999: 22). By contrast, Baudrillard accepted the first phase of poststructuralism, a textual poststructuralism which emphasizes merely the multiplication and dispersion of signification (see Kellner 1989a). This position appears more clearly in his later works such as Simulations, In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities, Simulacra and Simulation, and Fatal Strategies, which I take as the primary postmodern texts of Baudrillard’s postmodern social theory.

Poststructuralism was actively imported to, and soon began to influence, American academe, especially the humanities. But it was the first phase of poststructuralism that influenced American academe during these days. Textual poststructuralism gained power especially in literary criticism. The Yale School represented this; it considered language as an autonomous system of purely internal relations. From the mid-1980s, social sciences began to investigate the social implications of poststructuralism. What is important here is that social sciences paid more attention to the second phase of poststructuralism which reintroduced the referent as the aesthetic.

In short, poststructuralist postmodern social theory can be summarized as follows: 1) it is an anti-scientific project, which aims to deconstruct any rigid hierarchical organization structured according to binary oppositions; 2) it sees the social as an indefinite signifying chain, in which traditional binary oppositions are deconstructed; 3) to investigate the social, it utilizes poststructuralist discourse theory, in which discourse is seen as being already heteronomous, complicated by absences and impasses.

In a nutshell, poststructuralist postmodern social theory characterized the postmodern by the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.
1) Ontology

a. The Nature of the Social

Lyotard argued that there were two basic representational models for society in the modern era: the functional model and the conflictual model. The functional model saw society as a unified totality, a "unicity," in which the principle of performativity prevails. By contrast, the conflictual model saw society as being divided in two, in which the principle of dualism resists the principle of performativity. Lyotard claimed that the functional model in fact happened to dominate advanced Western societies. Even the conflictual model has been absorbed into the functional model. Further, Lyotard argued that these two models are no longer appropriate for the postmodern condition. The reason is that the functional model (also the functionalized conflictual model) is based on the instrumental notion of knowledge. The instrumental notion of knowledge is valid only when society is considered as a giant machine in which one big language functions as the social bond. According to Lyotard, society has changed so as that the social bond becomes a fabric formed by the intersection of an indeterminate number of language games. Lyotard argued that the nature of the social bond in the postmodern condition increasingly relied on language games which are "heteromorphous, subject to heterogeneous sets of pragmatic rules" (Lyotard 1984: 65). Lyotard understood the social in terms of flexible networks of language games in which displacement or unexpected new moves are important. Thus, the precondition of the instrumental knowledge changed. Lyotard refuted an overly reifying view of what is institutionalized even though he acknowledged the constraints of institutions that "function to filter discursive potentials, interrupting possible connections in the communication networks"
Lyotard (1984: 17) emphasized the flexible nature of institutions: “We know today that the limits the institution imposes on potential language ‘moves’ are never established once and for all (even if they have been formally defined). Rather, the limits are themselves the stakes and provisional results of language strategies, within the institution and without.” In this sense, Lyotard saw society as consisting of diversified groups equipped with their own language game. This pluralist notion of society is, however, different from traditional one. Lyotard’s pluralist society emphasizes the incommensurability among language games.

Deleuze and Guattari claimed that capitalism subverts Being through its incessant cycles of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, and criticized traditional ontology such as “the root-book” and “the fascicular root,” and presented their alternative ontology, rhizome. The law of the root-book is “the law of reflection, the One that becomes two” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 5). In the fascicular root, “the principal root has aborted, or its tip has been destroyed; and immediate, indefinite multiplicity of secondary roots grafts onto it and undergoes a flourishing development. This time, natural reality is what aborts the principal root, but the root’s unity subsists, as past or yet to come, as possible” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 5). The rhizome is characterized by several principles. First and second are “principles of connection and heterogeneity” in which “any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 7). Third is the principle of multiplicity: “A multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature (the laws of combinations therefore increase in number as the multiplicity grows)” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 8).
Last is the principle of asignifying rupture: “against the oversignifying breaks separating structures or cutting across a single structure. A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 9). In short, Deleuze and Guattari considered the social as a complex of bodily intensities in a state of continuous nonlinear movement, which is characterized by multidimensional and discontinuous logic. In this sense, they presented an aesthetic ontology, “a new ontology of the social, of social being, grounded in a philosophical ontology of Being as pure difference or Becoming” (Bogard 1998: 54).

Embracing a semiological view on society, Baudrillard claimed that signs and codes are the primary constituents of the social in the postmodern world. From his early works such as The Mirror of Production and Critique of Political Economy of the Sign, Baudrillard claimed that under capitalism the commodity has become a sign in the Saussurean sense. The meaning of a sign is arbitrarily determined by its position in a self-referential system of signifiers. Consumer culture produces a surfeit of images and signs that gives rise to a simulational world. Consumer society saturated with images and signs effaces the distinction between the real and the imaginary. In his later work In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities, Baudrillard (1983: 67) claimed that the social is disintegrated into a mass of individual atoms thrown into the absurdity of Brownian motion: “our ‘society’ is perhaps in the process of putting an end to the social, of burying the social beneath a simulation of the social.” The system continues to produce the social through polling, voting, etc., but the masses “don’t express themselves, they are surveyed. They don’t reflect upon themselves, they are tested” (Baudrillard 1983: 20). Thus, the effort of the system at producing the social does not belong to a dimension of
representing the masses, but to one of simulation of the masses. In his later work *Fatal Strategies*, Baudrillard (1990: 150) presented a kind of Sadean view of the world: “this is a world where there is no such thing as chance. Nothing is dead, nothing is inert, nothing is disconnected, uncorrelated or aleatory. Everything, on the contrary, is fatally, admirably connected—not at all according to rational relations (which are neither fatal nor admirable), but according to an incessant cycle of metamorphoses.” In this aesthetic world, traditional dichotomies between appearance and reality, surface and depth, subject and object collapse into a flattened universe of simulacra controlled by simulation models and codes.

b. The Nature of Man

Lyotard claimed that postmodern man is exposed to a lot of language games, occupying nodal points of specific communication circuits: “A self does not amount to much, but no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. Young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at ‘nodal points’ of specific communication circuits, however tiny these may be. Or better: one is always located at a post through which various kinds of messages pass” (Lyotard 1984: 15). The social subject dissolves in the dissemination of language games. But the social subject is not a total passivity. By contrast, an unexpected “move” by the social subject is important because of the agonistic nature of language game. As a result, social interaction becomes temporary and fragile: “the temporary contract is in practice supplanting permanent institutions in the professional,
sexual, cultural, family, and international domains, as well as in political affairs”
(Lyotard 1984: 66).

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari claimed that capitalism fosters schizophrenia. “creative semiosis unlimited by fixed meaning” (Holland 1999: 21). “because the quantitative calculations of the market replace meaning and belief-systems as the foundation of society” (Holland 1999: 2). In this sense, the schizophrenic, not the neurotic, is the dominant subject under capitalism. The schizophrenic refers to the historical category which developed under capitalism. Capitalism as the social-production fosters the appearance of the body-without-organs, which “might be actively dis-organ-ized so as to enable the production of other forms of organ-ization—or no fixed organ-ization at all” (Holland 1999: 28). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari also valorized schizos, nomads, rhizomes, all of whom favors difference and multiplicity over identity and dichotomy: “Schizos withdraw from repressive social reality into disjointed desiring states, nomads roam freely across open planes in small bands, and rhizomes are deterritorialized lined of desire linking desiring bodies with one another and the field of partial objects” (Best and Kellner 1991: 103). Deleuze and Guattari situated the schizophrenia within the limits of capitalism. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the schizophrenia is constituted through their place in the circuit of information flows: “one is enslaved by TV as a human machine insofar as the television viewers are no longer consumers or users, nor even subjects who supposedly ‘make’ it, but intrinsic components pieces, ‘input’ and ‘output,’ feedback or recurrences that are no longer connected to the machine in such a way as to produce or use it” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 458). The schizophrenia “passes from one code to the other” and “he deliberately
scrambles all the codes, by quickly shifting from one to another, according to the
questions asked him, never giving the same explanation from one day to the next, never
invoking the same genealogy, never recording the same event in the same way” (Deleuze
and Guattari 1983: 15). What is at stake here is that the human subject loses his/her self:
“the self and the non-self, outside and inside, no longer have any meaning whatsoever”
(Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 2). As a result, the human subject can simulate other
simulators, which is antithetical to the traditional subject who plays social roles: “The
schizo has no principles: he is something only by being something else. He is Mahood
only by being Worm, and Worm only by being Jones. He is a girl only by being an old
man who is miming or simulating the girl. Or rather, by being someone who is
simulating an old man simulating a girl. Or rather, by simulating someone. . . , etc”
(Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 87).

Baudrillard claimed that the electronically-mediated media such as TV transformed
the subject into a pure screen, a switching center for all the networks of influence.
Embracing McLuhan’s media theory, Baudrillard saw the media as cybernetic noise in
which all content implodes into form. The media obliterates meaning through
neutralizing and dissolving all content. There is no more meaningful communication in
the media because the hyperreality the media produces undermines the solid basis for
meaningful communication. Saturated with information, images, events and ecstasies,
the individual becomes more and more like terminals of media: “media have a chilling
effect. . .which freezes individuals into functioning as terminals of media and
communication networks who become involved as part and parcel of the very apparatus
of communication. The subject, then, becomes transformed into an object as part of a
nexus of information and communication networks” (Kellner 1989b: 71). Individuals become the silent masses who passively consume the media. Thus, stable and persistent interaction between silent mass is difficult because “the mass is what remains when the social has been completely removed” (Baudrillard 1983: 6-7).

2) Epistemology

Lyotard refuted the totalizing experience which covers science, morality, and ethics. Instead, Lyotard accepted Kant’s notion of the sublime. According to Kant, taste refers to the form of pleasure, which is achieved in an accord between the capacity to conceive and the capacity to present an object corresponding to the concept. By contrast, the sublime comes from the contradiction between the faculty to conceive of something and the faculty to present something. In other words, the sublime takes place “when the imagination fails to present an object which might, if only in principle, come to match a concept” (Lyotard 1984: 78). Lyotard argued that modern art found its impetus from the aesthetic of the sublime, but that it had a nostalgia for a reconciliation of the concept and the sensible. Lyotard saw the postmodern as part of the modern, but he wanted to put forward “the unpresentable in presentation itself” in order to “impart a stronger sense of the unpresentable” (Lyotard 1984: 81). He argued that the effort to totalize all human faculties into a real unity led to terror. According to Him, each human faculty has its own language game. It is impossible to make one true language which cover all human faculties. Lyotard (1984: 82), thus, announced that “Let us wage a war on totality; let us be witness to the unpresentable; let us activate the differences and save the honor of the name.” Lyotard argued that modern scientific knowledge wanted to totalize all human
faculties into a real unity, relying on the two grand narratives: the idea of progress and the idea of education as promoting the health of the nation. But these grand narratives have lost its credibility in postindustrial society and postmodern culture in which science separates itself from these grand narratives. Science itself has become a kind of language game: "science plays its own game; it is incapable of legitimating the other language games" (Lyotard 1984: 40). Science lost its own legitimate narrative, and thus, it repeats within itself. This new situation opens up the discursive field to the proliferation of new languages which do not need to be legitimated by a grand narrative. As a result, a variety of little narratives generate their own knowledge whose legitimation "can only spring from their own linguistic practice and communication interaction" (Lyotard 1984: 41). In this sense, the postmodern condition is characterized by infinitely proliferating language games.

Deleuze and Guattari criticized traditional epistemology, what they called "arborescent," that tried to build systematic knowledge from the first principles. Traditional epistemology distorts the real mode of the unconscious, posing fixed meaning on it. The unconscious operates without meaning: "The unconscious poses no problems of meaning, solely problems of use. The question posed by desire is not 'What does it mean?' but 'How does it work?'" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 109). Against foundationalism, they proposed rhizomatic epistemology that aims to uproot arborescent epistemology: "The concept has no subject or object other than itself. It is an act. Nomad thought replaces the closed equation of representation, \( x = x = \text{not } y (I = I = \text{not you}) \) with an open equation: \( \ldots + y + z + a + \ldots + \text{arm} + \text{brick} + \text{window} + \ldots \). Rather than analyzing the world into discrete components, reducing their manyness to the
One (=Two) of self-reflection, and ordering them by rank, it sums up a set of disparate circumstances in a shattering blow. It synthesizes a multiplicity of elements without effacing their heterogeneity or hindering their potential for future rearranging" (Massumi 1996: 6).

Baudrillard (1983: 19) argued that signs “no longer represent anything and no longer have their equivalent in reality” because the boundary between representation and reality implodes. Baudrillard situated this crisis of representation within the era of simulacra of simulation. According to Baudrillard, the era of representation is over by the wide spread of simulated reality that electronically-mediated media generate. Simulation replaces representation. The hyperreality or simulated reality loses its referent, ground, or source. In this era, the traditional distinction between the subject and the object is obsolete, and so are traditional disciplines based on them. Sociology is one of them: “sociology can only depict the expansion of the social and its vicissitudes. It survives only on the positive and definitive hypothesis of the social. The reabsorption, the implosion of the social, escapes it. The hypothesis of the death of the social is also that of its own death” (Baudrillard 1983: 4).

3) Ethics/Politics

Lyotard (1993: 24) asked, “can we today continue to organize the mass of events coming from the human and nonhuman world by referring them to the Idea of a universal history of humanity?” Lyotard said, “No.” The reason is that Lyotard considered the event as “the fact or case that something happens, after which nothing will ever the same again. The event disrupts any pre-existing referential frame within which it might be
represented or understood” (Readings 1990: xxxi). In this sense, the event disrupts the discourse, the process of representation by concepts, and it could not narrated by a universal subject of history. Lyotard criticized the moral ideal of self-sufficiency. He distinguished between two notion of desire: “desire as a longing for the lost object represented in phantasy, as ‘forbidden in its very depths,’ as negativity, and desire as the positive energy which disrupts discourse in order to embody the figurality of phantasy” (Dews 1987: 131). Unlike Freud and Lacan who defined desire as negativity or lack, Lyotard embraced desire as positivity. Desire disorients, disrupts, transgress, and transforms everything it touches. Desire also continually reverses directions and invests itself elsewhere and otherwise. By the same token, desire disrupts the moral ideal of self-sufficiency, which aims to control desire by concept. Lyotard is perhaps one of the most radical postmodernists who attack the ideal of identity politics. He did not believe that there should just resolution between the two sides of a conflict. Rather, he argued for the differend, “a case of conflict, between (at least) two parties, that cannot be equitably resolved for lack of a rule of judgement applicable to both argument” (Lyotard 1992: xi). Politics should not aim to bridge between absolute differences because “applying a single rule of judgment to both in order to settle their differend as though it were merely a litigation would wrong (at least) one of them (and both of them if neither side admits this rule)” (Lyotard 1992: xi). Rather, politics should evoke or testify to differends so as to resist the injustice which silences those who cannot speak the same language (see Williams 2000).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 25) attacked the temporal order: “A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo.”
Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading for? These are totally useless questions.” They criticized the ideal of self-sufficiency as internalizing self-denial and submitting to Oedipal authority. For them, the ideal of self-sufficiency means the desire of the people for their own repression. According to them, men have come to want fascism through Oedipalization. What is needed is to schizophrenize the individual unconscious: “Destroy, destroy. The task of schizoanalysis goes by way of destruction—a whole scouring of the unconscious, a complete curettage. Destroy Oedipus, the illusion of the ego, the puppet of the superego, guilt, the law, castration” (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 311). Deleuze and Guattari criticized identity politics for being based on negation: \( x = x = \text{not} \ y \) (I = I = not You). They proposed pre- or a-social arrangement of the social, in which no hierarchy exists: “The space of nomad thought is qualitatively different from State space. . .Nomad space or ‘smooth,’ or open-ended. One can rise up at any point and move to any other” (Massumi 1996: 6).

Baudrillard also argued that the linear notion of temporality disappeared in contemporary society: “there are no longer any stable structures, nexuses of causality, events with consequences, or forms of determination through which one could delineate historical trajectories or lines of development. Everything instead is subject to indeterminism and an unpredictable aleatory confluence that produces vertigo” (Best and Kellner 1991: 133). Baudrillard made the moral ideal of self-sufficiency nonsense by way of giving the agency to objects, not subjects. The moral ideal of self-sufficiency evaporates in the system of objects. Masses are obliged to strive for happiness and pleasure in consuming the sign value of objects. Fun morality replaces the moral ideal of the self-sufficient. Baudrillard’s fatal strategies challenged identity politics that aims to
include all members in the social system. Baudrillard saw identity politics as subordinating to the hyperconformity. Rather, Baudrillard argued that the ironic power of the masses is dangerous to the social, "the ironic power of withdrawal, of non-desire, non-knowledge, silence, absorption then expulsion of all powers, wills, of all enlightenment and depths of meaning" (Baudrillard 1990: 99). Indifference and inertia of the masses are their true, their only practice to refuse to participate in the recommended ideals, a form of resistance. In this sense, staying outside of the social is a new politics: "A fatal strategy pursues a course of action or trajectory to its extreme, attempting to surpass its limits, to go beyond its boundaries" (Best and Kellner 1991: 131).

2. Critical Postmodern Social Theory

Critical postmodern social theory has a dubious relationship with poststructuralism. On the one hand, critical postmodern social theory agree to some extent with poststructuralism that language does not represent the referent. On the other hand, critical postmodern social theory argued that language represents more than itself. Critical postmodern social theory concentrated on something more than language. For critical postmodern social theory, this "something more than language" is the restless movement of capital. Critical postmodern social theory is poststructuralist insofar as it sees the restless transformative activity of capital accumulation to be disseminated like Derrida's meaning. Critical postmodern social theory is critical insofar as it nevertheless does not stop tracking the movement of capital and its effects on the social. In this sense, critical postmodern social theory, unlike poststructuralist postmodern social theory, does not give up Marxist political economy. Like poststructuralist postmodern social theory,
critical postmodern social theory documented that the social has become fragmented or textualized to an extent that there doesn’t seem to be structuring principles in society any more. But critical postmodern social theory believed that the seemingly fragmented particles are in fact related to each other. Thus, it is too early to give up the possibility of a totalizing theory. The main force to arrange or disarrange the seemingly fragmented particles is the movement of capital. But critical postmodern social theory did not see the movement of capital as a mechanical, subjectless process, and wanted to preserve the notion of the subject when theorizing postmodernism. Like poststructuralist postmodern social theory, critical postmodern social theory acknowledged that the human subjects have become flexible, fluid, decentered, dispersed, etc. Nevertheless, critical postmodern social theory did not give up the agency of human subjects, who can connect their private petty affairs with the public grand structures. For this, critical postmodern social theory tried to ground critical analysis in historical and social contexts. In this sense, critical postmodern social theory preserved the morally practical as the primary model of knowledge. Critical postmodern social theory tried to interpret and change the world of aestheticized commodification from the perspective of the morally practical.

Roughly, critical postmodern social theory has two versions: Hegelian-Marxist postmodern social theory and post-Fordist postmodern social theory. Hegelian-Marxist postmodern social theory is developed out of the Hegelian Marxism associated with the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt School articulated the transition from the stage of market capitalism to the stage of organized, or state, capitalism. The Frankfurt School tried to theorize the new relationship between economy and the state in the totalitarian and democratic forms of state capitalism. In this process, the Frankfurt School proposed new
theories of consumerism and the development of the consumer society (see Held 1980; Jay 1973; Kellner 1989a). Hegelian-Marxist postmodern social theory followed this tradition, theorizing new relationships between base and superstructure in postmodern period of late capitalism. Hegelian-Marxist postmodern social theory is represented by Fredric Jameson. Jameson proposed a unique synthesis of Hegelian-Marxist tradition and French poststructuralism. But in this synthesis, Jameson relatively ignored the movement of capital itself while concentrating on the cultural logic of late capitalism. This feature is an inevitable result of one-sided acceptance of the Frankfurt School. Early Frankfurt thinkers such as Pollock and Horkheimer who developed Marxist political economy in the 1930s were relatively forgotten in the Frankfurt School. Rather, cultural analyses of reification and commodification were accepted as a main theoretical contribution of the Frankfurt School to critical theory. Jameson, a literary critic, was not an exception. His analysis of postmodernism concentrated on the new forms of reification and commodification in postmodern period of late capitalism.

Post-Fordist postmodern social theory developed out of Marxist political economy. Unlike Hegelian-Marxist postmodern social theory, post-Fordist postmodern social theory directly dealt with the movement of capital itself and its impact on society in general. Post-Fordist postmodern social theory is represented by David Harvey. Modifying Marx's political economy, Harvey paid attention to the change of the mode of regulation and its impact on other spheres of society.

These two critical postmodern social theories agreed with poststructuralist postmodern social theory in that ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics in contemporary Western societies have become aestheticized. However, neither abandon
the effort to discern the main force for this aestheticization. According to both, the main force is capital: it is the totalizing force underlying the process of aestheticization of the social and the individual. But they emphasized different aspects of capital. Following the Frankfurt School tradition, Jameson emphasized the expanding power of capital to all spheres. The commodifying logic of capital penetrates into all spheres including nature and the unconscious. Jameson implicitly suggested that capitalist commodity relations extend in an inexorably "smooth" way. By contrast, Harvey emphasized the inherent instability and morbidity of the structures of capitalist accumulation. For Harvey, the notion of "crisis" is important.

Before presenting his unique position about postmodernism, Jameson was famous for being a Marxist literary critic. In his early career, Jameson turned to the tradition of European Hegelian Marxism through the works of Sartre, Lukács, and the Frankfurt School. *Marxism and Form* (1971) represented this period. But in *The Prison-House of Language* (1972), Jameson also tried to incorporate theories of Barthes, Althusser, Derrida, and other poststructuralists in his literary theory while criticizing their ahistorical and synchronic features. In this sense, Jameson synthesized Hegelian Marxism and New French Theory. In this synthesis, Jameson as a Hegelian Marxist favored a dialectical criticism, a double hermeneutic of ideological and utopian analysis: "thinking which contextualizes the object of study in its historical environment; utopian thinking which finds utopian hope in literature, philosophy, and other cultural texts and which draws attention to these hopes as a vital source of critique and struggle" (Kellner 1989c: 13).

From the outset, Jameson did not abandon a totalizing theory which is characterized by inclusive and comprehensive framework. Following Lukács, Jameson considered
“totality” to be a hallmark of Marxist literary theory. Speaking in sociological terms, Jameson paid attention to both macro and micro levels. For instance, in *The Political Unconscious* (1981) Jameson investigated the complex relationship between modes of literary forms, bourgeois subjectivity, and various stages of capitalism. Jameson basically embraced Marx’s model of base and superstructure, but he rejected a certain orthodox Marxist interpretation of base/superstructure, according to which culture is an ephenomenon of economy. Rather, Jameson proposed a dialectical view about the relation between base and superstructure, utilizing Althusser and Freud. Althusser and Freud provided categories such as overdetermination, uneven development, semi-autonomy, reciprocal interaction, condensation, displacement, repression, etc., which enabled Jameson to overcome a deterministic interpretation of the relationship between base and superstructure. Jameson’s dialectic utilized imagination to make connections and to discern gaps, breaks, discontinuities, and contradictions between base and superstructure. “In this way, Jameson is faithful to the Marxian dialectic which relates all cultural and superstructural phenomena to the socio-economic foundation and which interprets stages of cultural and superstructural development in culture as part of the trajectory of the history of capitalism” (Kellner 1989c: 18). This totalizing theory does not presuppose the preexistence of reified, hypostatized totality. Rather, it aims to historically contextualize all subjects in order to properly explain, interpret, and change them.

Jameson soon turned from specialized literary theory and analysis to a more cultural theory and interpretation, which means the extension of the totalizing theory to contemporary culture, and further, contemporary society in general. Jameson first
presented his position about postmodernism in “Postmodernism and Consumer Society” (1983), in which he linked consumer culture with postmodernism. But here, Jameson merely attempted to distinguish some traits of postmodernist from modernist culture. In the follower year, Jameson published “Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” the expanded version of “Postmodernism and Consumer Society,” in the *New Left Review*. As a response to poststructuralist postmodernists’ attacks of Marxism as an outmoded totalizing, productivist, and reductionist discourse, Jameson held onto Marxism and presented postmodernism as a new cultural totality and cultural dominant corresponding to a new stage of late capitalism. Jameson basically agreed with poststructuralist postmodernism in that the social and the subject have become textualized, that a new methodology for investigating the social and the subject is needed, and that traditional ethics/politics based on the traditional notion of subject should be abandoned. But Jameson did not accept that there is no structural force to (re)produce structured inequality. Thus, Jameson believed that a postmodern condition could be theorized within the framework of a neo-Marxist social theory. Following a Marxist totalizing theory, Jameson tried to theorize postmodernism as a wide range of cultural, social, economic, and political phenomena, not just as an aesthetic phenomenon. For Jameson, postmodernism must refer to cultural and aesthetic style, philosophical and political position as well as modes of social and economic organization. Thus, for Jameson postmodernism is much more than a purely cultural affair. For this, Jameson situated postmodern culture in the neo-Marxist model of stages of capitalist development. Following and modifying Mandel’s *Late Capitalism* (first published in Germany in 1972), Jameson distinguished three periods within the history of capitalism with their
correspondences in the cultural forms: market capitalism and realism, monopoly or
imperialist capitalism and modernism, and late capitalism and postmodernism. Late
capitalism is capitalism in its late phase, which is in fact a purer, more developed, more
realized form of capitalism. Postmodernism is a new stage of “cultural development of
the logic of late capitalism” (Jameson 1984a: 85).

Even though acknowledging the determining force of economic base, Jameson spent
little time analyzing it in this article and subsequent articles. In fact, Jameson devoted
virtually all of his attention to culture. This is the weakest point in Jameson’s analysis of
postmodernism: Jameson did not “adequately provide a foundation for his theory in a
systematic analysis of the political economy of the present age” (Kellner 1989c: 28).
This weakness is perhaps a logical consequence when Jameson embraced the totally
administered society thesis of the Frankfurt school. In the postmodern era, even culture,
which used to resist the commodifying logic of capital, is totally colonized by capital,
serving a socioeconomic function to reproduce capitalism itself. Everything has become
cultural, and thus, we don’t have to study the economic base separately.

Harvey’s postmodern social theory filled this gap, working within the horizon of
post-Fordism. Post-Fordism emerged out of the economic downturn of the 1970s
onwards. If information society theory emphasized the possibility of rebirth of the
advanced society, post-Fordist society theory paid attention to the nature and causes of
the economic downturn. From the late 1940s onwards, the economies of industrialized
countries enjoyed continuous growth, with wages and profits steadily increasing in
parallel. However, in the early-1970s, the rate of growth suddenly declined. At the same
time, a rapid rise in the price of oil and other raw materials substantially increased the
costs of production. As in previous decades, national governments responded to the crisis by adopting reflationary policies. But, unlike in earlier recessions, this strategy didn’t work. Instead, the economies of advanced societies entered a period of persistent inflation, currency instability, and growing unemployment.

In the course of explaining these phenomena, the Regulation School emanated from a group of French intellectuals who were influenced by Marxist economic tradition. The Regulation School began with a critique of scientific Marxism of the inter-years, which argued general, eternal laws applicable to all socioeconomic systems. The Regulation School rejected simple economism, and recognized the complexity and multidimensionality of modern capitalism (Boyer 1990; Brenner and Glick 1991). The Regulation School also objected to the pure neoclassical model of the economy in which all markets, including labor markets, tend toward equilibrium, and thus, ensure full employment. In fact, the Regulation School grew mainly out of Althusserian Marxism and a simultaneous critical distantiation from it. Althusser showed the contradictory character of social relations of production. But many felt that Althusser’s notion of reproduction as a subjectless process was too static to explain economic crisis at the time: “Althusser had upset economist determinism, and advancing the concept of the mode of production as a structure articulated by three instances made it possible to complexify the analytical grid, and, advantageously, to leave the vulgate behind. But Althusserism was not satisfying for the regulationists when it described an essentially static reality and when, in the name of combating historicism and evolutionism, it ignored transitions and changes” (Dosse 1997b: 289). The Regulation School did not take for granted “smooth” reproduction of capitalism, and conceded the point that instability is part and parcel of
capitalist relations. The fundamental question asked by the Regulation School is: how
does capitalism ensure its perpetuation in spite of this instability? As a response to this
question, the Regulation School answered that there is the "mode of regulation" which
manages instabilities. This argument was important in relation to structuralism: it not
only conceived of instability of capitalism, but also brought the subject back. The
Regulation School reintroduced "actors in terms of groups and social categories, actors
who were to become central to the analysis, particularly by inflecting the relationship of
salaried workers, which became the most important instance in the long-term
transformation of modes of development" (Dosse 1997b: 294).

One of the first works to present Regulation School theory to the United States is
Michel Aglietta's *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: The U.S. Experience* (1979). In this
historical study of transformation of American capitalism, Aglietta argued that Fordist
regime of accumulation, "a type of intensive accumulation based on mass production and
consumption and on the accession of salaried workers to the American Way of Life"
(Dosse 1997b: 294), produced a post-War boom. In Fordist regime of accumulation, "the
wage relation"—the point at which workers exchange their labour for cash payment with
which they must purchase the goods and services necessary to their maintenance—
becomes the fulcrum of capitalist development" (Heffernan 2000: 25). But this post-War
boom was only provisional, depending primarily on the ability of capital to stave off the
"tendency for the rate of profit to fall." As this tendency reasserted itself from the late
1960s, the Fordist regime of accumulation began to break down, from which a neo-
Fordist or post-Fordist regime might emerge. However, Aglietta did not see this
breakdown as a mechanical breakdown in the system of capitalist accumulation, but the
exposure of the limits of a particular social formation. According to Aglietta, this exposure is expressed through struggles over the meanings of work, leisure and consumption:

[T]he crisis of Fordism is first of all the crisis of a mode of labor organisation. It is expressed above all in the intensification of class struggles at the point of production. By challenging conditions of work bound up with the fragmentation of tasks and intensification of effort, these struggle showed the limits to the increase in the rate of surplus-value that were inherent in the relations of production organized in this type of labour process. This was the root of the crisis. It can be seen in the halt to the fall in real social wage costs that occurred simultaneously with the outbreak of sporadic conflicts and endemic confrontations challenging work disciplines of the kind Fordism had established. But it is clear enough that the crisis extends to the sum total of relations of production and exchange, and is upsetting the regime of intensive accumulation” (Aglietta 1979:162).

Since Aglietta proposed his theme, the Regulation School has begun to attract some attention in both America and Europe. In the United States, Michael Piore and Charles Sabel’s The Second Industrial Divide (1987) popularized the theme of post-Fordism. In this book, they traced the origin of the crises in advanced societies since the 1970s. Piore and Sabel were very against both neoclassical view and neo-Marxist view because both of them considered mass production as the unique path of technical progress. They argued that there is another tradition in the production system: a Proudhonist small-scale cooperative artisanal production (craft system). In the nineteenth century, Western societies stood on the way of the first industrial divide, and finally chose mass-production technologies, limiting craft system. Mass-production technologies entailed two decisive regulation crises in the late nineteenth century and in the 1930s. In the late nineteenth century, the large corporations emerged in order to deal with the first regulation crisis. In the 1930s, the Fordist-Keynesian welfare state appeared in order to deal with the second
regulation crisis. But since the 1970s, the Fordist-Keynesian welfare state began to show its limit in regulating crisis. According to Piore and Sabel, this was due to the limitation of mass-production technologies. As an alternative to Fordism, they proposed “flexible specialization.” The saturation of mass markets led to a growing differentiation of products, with a new emphasis on style and quality. More differentiated products required shorter runs and thus, smaller and more flexible production units. This flexible specialization depended on new information technologies such as the computer. Flexible technology gave rise to flexible specialization and more highly skilled polyvalent workers to operate flexible technology. These highly skilled polyvalent workers did not need any more monolithic and bureaucratic Fordist trade-unions and political parties. Thus, the model of flexible specialization appeared more coherent in postulating a relationship between new technologies, new patterns of demand, and new forms of social organization of production.

These debates on the nature of economic change in the United States since the end of World War II developed independently of postmodern debates. But by the 1980s, debates on economic change and on cultural change began to intertwine with each other. A more comprehensive theory was needed. British sociologists were the first social scientists who began to see postmodernism as something worthy of serious attention (Bertens 1995: 209). These British sociologists were primarily Marxist-oriented scholars, especially post-Fordism-related scholars. In England, a variety of post-Fordist society theory was presented by Marxists under the banner of “New Times.” This perspective was first stated in a series of articles in Marxism Today (the official journal of the Communist Party of Great Britain) and then collections of these articles were published
by the executive of the British Community Party as the Manifesto for New Times (June 1989). And in the same year, some critical articles in the Manifesto for New Times and other critical responses to it were brought together in a book, New Times (Kumar 1995: 50). Following Gramsci's article “Americanism and Fordism,” the New Times School, unlike Piore and Sabel, defined Fordism in the broadest possible terms. As Hall and Jacques (1990: 12) put it: “Just as Fordism represented, not simply a form of economic organization but a whole culture...so post-Fordism is also shorthand for a much wider and deeper social and cultural development.” The British version of post-Fordism tried to connect post-Fordist development with cultural phenomena.

Roughly, David Harvey, an American Marxist geographer, belonged to the New Times version of post-Fordism. In The Condition of Postmodernity: An Inquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change (1989), Harvey generally identified Fordism with institutionalization of modernist precepts and experiences in culture and social life and connected the breakdown of Fordism and the turn towards “flexible specialization” with the rise to cultural dominance of postmodernist features in social and cultural life. In short, Harvey focused on the socio-economic factors responsible for the transition from modernity to postmodernity.

In a nutshell, critical postmodern social theory can be summarized as the following: 1) critical postmodern social theory is a project of de-essentializing Marx; 2) critical postmodern social theory sees the social and the subject to be constituted by both the movement of capital and human praxis; and 3) critical postmodern social theory utilizes political economy for investigating the social and the human subject.
Critical postmodern social theory shared with poststructuralist postmodern social theory, to a greater or lesser extent, at least one argument that ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics have been aestheticized since World War II. But the response of critical postmodern social theory to the process of aestheticization was very different from one of poststructuralist postmodern social theory: critical postmodern social theory tried to retain a totalizing view on ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. From my perspective, this difference comes from the model of knowledge that each postmodern social theory adopted. Poststructuralist postmodern social theory embraced the aesthetic and critical postmodern social theory adopted the morally practical.

1) Ontology

a. The Nature of the Social

Following Mandel, Jameson (1984a: 78) distinguished “three fundamental moments in capitalism, each one marking a dialectical expansion over the previous stage: these are market capitalism, the monopoly stage or the stage of imperialism, and our own—wrongly called postindustrial, but what might better be termed multinational capital.” Late capitalism is the purest form of capitalism in which capital expands into hitherto uncommodified areas including Nature and the Unconscious: “This purer capitalism of our own time thus eliminates the enclaves of precapitalist organization it had hitherto tolerated and exploited in a tributary way: one is tempted to speak in this connection of a new and historically original penetration and colonization of Nature and the Unconscious: that is, the destruction of precapitalist third world agriculture by the Green Revolution, and the rise of the media and the advertising industry” (Jameson 1984a: 78).
This colonialization of nature and the unconscious by commodifying logic of capital corresponds to the radical separation of the signifier from the signified. This is part of the liberation of words and all other signifiers from signification, which results in the breakdown of all syntactic order and meaningful relationships in time. Jameson characterized the social in the postmodern space by the aesthetic: "The break-up of the Sign in mid-air determines a fall back into a now absolutely fragmented and anarchic social reality" (Jameson 1985: 201). In this sense, Jameson argued that the social has become cultural: "Culture itself falls into the world, and the result is not its disappearance but its prodigious expansion, to the point where culture becomes coterminous with social life in general: now all the levels become 'acculturated,' and in the society of the spectacle, the image, or the simulacrum, everything has at length become cultural, from the superstructures down into the mechanisms of the infrastructure itself" (Jameson 1985: 201). Everything is mediated by culture saturated with images and signs. As a result, the distinction between the real and the imaginary disappears, which gives rise to a depthless aestheticized hallucination of reality. But Jameson went further, claiming that aestheticization of the social is governed by commodification. Jameson identified the main force of aestheticization of the social with the expanding logic of capital: "the frantic economic urgency of producing fresh waves of ever more novel-seeming goods (from clothing to airplanes), at ever greater rates of turnover, now assigns an increasingly essential structural function and position to aesthetic innovation and experimentation" (Jameson 1984a: 56).

Post-Fordism observed that the social has become dispersed, mobile, flexible, etc. Following Marx, Harvey (1989: 181) argued that "the tendency towards
overaccumulation can never be eliminated under capitalism.” Harvey (1989: 180)
defined the problem of overaccumulation of capital as “a condition in which idle capital
and idle labour supply could exist side by side with no apparent way to bring these idle
resources together to accomplish socially useful tasks.” According to Harvey, there are
three options to deal with this problem. First is “[d]evelopment of commodities, of
productive capacity, of money value, perhaps coupled with outright destruction” (Harvey
1989: 181). Second is “[m]acro-economic control, through institutionalization of some
system of regulation” (Harvey 1989: 181). Last is “[a]bsorption of overaccumulation
through temporal and spatial displacement” (Harvey 1989: 182). According to Harvey,
Fordism utilized these three options, among them the temporal and spatial displacement
“within” countries was the main strategy to give the advanced Western societies the post-
War prosperity. But during the period of 1973-1975 or 1980-1982, Fordism was in crisis
and superior regime of capitalist production which “would assure a solid basis for further
accumulation on a global scale” (Harvey 1989: 186) was needed. Flexible accumulation
emerged as a response to the rigidities of Fordism. Flexible accumulation

rests on flexibility with respect to labour processes, labour markets,
products, and patterns of consumption. It is characterized by the
emergence of entirely new sectors of production, new ways of providing
financial services, new markets, and, above all, greatly intensified rates of
commercial, technological, and organizational innovation (Harvey 1989:
147).

Just as the success of Fordism came mainly from absorption of overaccumulation of
temporal and spatial displacement, so “the crisis of Fordism was in large part a crisis of
temporal and spatial form” (Harvey 1989: 196). Flexible accumulation entailed two
shifts: new patterning of uneven development both between sectors and between
geographical regions; a new round of time-space compression, “the time horizons of both

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
private and public decision-making have shrunk, while satellite communication and declining transport costs have made it increasingly possible to spread those decisions immediately over an ever wider and variegated space” (Harvey 1989: 147). Among them, the second shift is crucial because it has changed the meaning of time and space. The speed-up in the turnover times of capital is the determining force in changing the meaning of time and space. The major consequence of the speed-up in the turnover times of capital is to accelerate “volatility and ephemerality of fashions, products, production techniques, labour processes, ideas and ideologies, values and established practices” (Harvey 1989: 285). As Marx said, “all that is solid melts into air.”

b. The Nature of Man

Jameson accepted that the subject itself is dead. But Jameson adopted the historicist position rather than the poststructuralist position. For Jameson the subject who is dead is the autonomous bourgeois monad or individual, “a once-existing centered subject, in the period of classical capitalism and the nuclear family” (Jameson 1984a: 63). Jameson portrayed Edvard Munch’s expressionist painting *The Scream* as depicting the autonomous bourgeois monad or individual: “The very concept of expression presupposes indeed some separation within the subject, and along with that a whole metaphysics of the inside and the outside, of the wordless pain within the monad and the moment in which, often cathartically, that ‘emotion’ is then projected out and externalized, as gesture or cry, as desperate communication and the outward dramatization of inward feeling” (Jameson 1984a: 61). But in the postmodern period of late capitalism, the subject becomes aestheticized: “the alienation of the subject is
displaced by the fragmentation of the subject” (Jameson 1984a: 63). Jameson (1984a: 71) said that Lacan’s account of schizophrenia “seems to me to offer a suggestive aesthetic model.” Following Lacan, Jameson argued that schizophrenia represented the postmodern condition of subjective fragmentation. Under the postmodern condition, the subject becomes the schizophrenic who is unable to link signifiers together in a temporal order. To the schizophrenic, signifiers are experienced as a series of pure and unrelated presents in time. Jameson (1984a: 72) said that “[i]f we are unable to unify the past, present, and future of the sentence, then we are similarly unable to unify the past, present, and future of our own biographical experience or psychic life.” Jameson explained the affective outcome of this fragmentation of subjectivity in terms of Lyotard’s “intensities.” Intensities are asignifying particles that “are now free-floating and impersonal, and tend to be dominated by a peculiar kind of euphoria” (Jameson 1984a: 64).

Post-Fordist postmodern social theory argued that people do not exist as a homogeneous group who has identical interests. The general speed-up in the turnover times of capital influences the human subject as both producer and consumer. The human subject as a producer is exposed to “vertical disintegration” (sub-contracting, outsourcing, etc.) and “an increasing roundaboutness in production even in the face of increasing financial centralization” (Harvey 1989: 284). For this, the new technologies of electronic control, small-batch production, etc. played an important role. “For the labourers this all implied an intensification (speed-up) in labour processes and an acceleration in the de-skilling and re-skilling required to meet new labor needs” (Harvey 1989: 285). Thus, the human subject as a producer is not stable, which results in undermining the collective interest. The human subject as a consumer is also exposed to
the paralleling speed-up in exchange and consumption: “Improved systems of
communication and information flow, coupled with rationalizations in techniques of
distribution (packaging, inventory control, containerization, market feedback, etc.).
made it possible to circulate commodities through the market system with greater speed.
Electronic banking and plastic money were some of the innovations that improved the
speed of the inverse flow of money. Financial services and markets (aided by
computerized trading) likewise speeded up, so as to make, as the saying has it, ‘twenty-
four hours a very long time’ in global markets” (Harvey 1989: 285). What is more
important than this acceleration of the pace of exchange and consumption is that the
content of consumption has changed from goods to services not only personal, business,
educational, and health services but also entertainments, spectacles, happenings, and
distractions. Consumers are exposed to the “image production industry” which tried to
manipulate “desires and tastes through images that may or may not have anything to do
with the product to be sold” (Harvey 1989: 287). Consumers “are living in a world of
ephemeral created images” (Harvey 1989: 289).

2) Epistemology

Jameson pointed out that the traditional epistemology that favored “depth models”
was in crisis because depth is replaced by surface or multiple surfaces. Jameson (1984a:
62) enumerated four depth models: “the dialectical one of essence and appearance (along
with a whole range of concepts of ideology or false consciousness which tend to
accompany it); the Freudian model of latent and manifest, or of repression...; the
existential model of authenticity and inauthenticity, whose heroic or tragic thematics are
closely related to that other great opposition between alienation and disalienation. . . . and finally, latest in time, the great semiotic opposition between signifier and signified.” In postmodern culture in which there are no longer depths, traditional methodology which aimed to “represent” the deep truths is obsolete. But Jameson did not fully accept the poststructuralist position that representation is impossible. Jameson accepted Althusser’s definition of ideology as “the Imaginary representation of the subject’s relationship to his or her Real conditions of existence.” Following Althusser, Jameson argued that ideology is a necessary function in any form of social life, telling a story of future that grips the masses. By contrast, Jameson (1988: 358) defined science as “a discourse (which is ultimately impossible) without a subject” like a mathematical equation. Science as an ideal discourse deals with the real with abstract conceptions independent of individual subjects. Thus, science does not teach people how to relate their own individual lives with the abstract larger structure. Science can do this only if it becomes an ideology. Then, “we are back to aesthetics. Aesthetics is something that addresses individual experience rather than something that conceptualizes the real in a more abstract way” (Jameson 1988: 358). In this sense, Jameson challenged the sharp division between ideology and science. For Jameson, representation is the synonym of figuration itself: “all forms of aesthetic production consists in one way or another in the struggle with and for representation” (Jameson 1988: 348). The representation as figuration is similar to cognitively mapping social space. Jameson historicized social space, claiming that social space has its different forms according to the three historical stages of capital. In classical or market capitalism, some older sacred and heterogeneous space was reorganized into geometrical and Cartesian homogeneity by a logic of the grid. In this
new emerging space, figuration would not be a big problem because “the immediate and limited experience of individuals is still able to encompass and coincide with the true economic and social form that governs that experience” (Jameson 1988: 349). In a sense, in this space essence and appearance, structure and lived experience do not contradict. Realism is a strategy to cognitively map this social space. But in the next stage, “the passage from market to monopoly capital, or what Lenin called the ‘stage of imperialism,’” the problems of figuration “may be conveyed by way of growing contradiction between lived experience and structure, or between a phenomenological description of the life of an individual and a more properly structural model of the conditions of existence of that experience” (Jameson 1988: 349). Modernism is a strategy to overcome this dilemma. In the third stage referred to the moment of the multinational network, not only the older city but even the nation-state itself lost its former power due to multinational capitalism. This new stage produced a new postmodern space involving the suppression of distance and the saturation of capital into nature and the unconscious, to the point where the postmodern subject is exposed to “a perceptual barrage of immediacy from which all sheltering layers and intervening mediations have been removed” (Jameson 1988: 351). In this sense, traditional forms of representation are obsolete. But the need to represent this space is still alive in order to get about in the world. Postmodernism is a strategy to cognitively map postmodern space. But this is not easy because of the complex space of multinational or late capitalism and the fragmentation of the subject. Jameson claimed that we need to use the strategies, techniques, and elements of postmodernism against postmodernism itself: “To undo postmodernism homeopathically by the methods of postmodernism: to work at
dissolving the pastiche by using all the instruments of pastiche itself, to reconquer some genuine historical sense by using the instruments of what I have called substitutes for history” (Jameson in Stephanson1989: 59). An aesthetic of postmodern cognitive mapping “seeks to endow the individual subject with some new heightened sense of its place in the global system” (Jameson 1984a: 92).

Post-Fordist postmodern social theory also recognized the crisis of representation, but it believed that Marxist tradition could overcome it. To post-Fordist postmodern social theory, the core methodology of Marxism is political economy, which aims to historically trace the development of capital. Capital is the essence or form that manifests itself in a variety of matters. In this sense, post-Fordist postmodern social theory responded to the crisis of representation with the aid of the essentialist version of the theoretical. Harvey claimed that the nature of space and time, which were basic categories of human existence, has changed since modernism served to compress both time and space. Harvey historically traced how this compression of time and space has occurred from European feudalism to the postmodern era. Harvey argued that the acceleration of compression of time-space in the postmodern era challenged human capacity to grapple with the realities because traditional notion of realities was based on the epistemology based on fixed and stable notion of time and space. But Harvey still believed that “It is possible to write the historical geography of the experience of space and time in social life, and to understand the transformations that both have undergone, by reference to material and social conditions” (Harvey 1989: 327). To Harvey, material and social conditions refer first of all to the law of capital accumulation and speculative change: “There are laws of process at work under capitalism capable of generating a seemingly
infinite range of outcomes out of the slightest variation in initial conditions or of human activity and imagination. In the same way that the laws of fluid dynamics are invariant in every river in the world, so the laws of capital circulation are consistent from one supermarket to another, from one labour market to another, from one commodity production system to another, from one country to another and from one household to another” (Harvey 1989: 343). But unlike orthodox Marxists, Harvey recognized that the future cannot be predicted in advance because the restless transformative activity of capital accumulation and speculative change is bound to context: “the degree of Fordism and modernism, or of flexibility and postmodernism, is bound to vary from time to time and from place to place, depending on which configuration is profitable and which is not” (Harvey 1989: 344). In this sense, post-Fordist postmodern social theory has a much more agnostic position on the outcome of postmodernization.

3) Ethics/Politics

Jameson (Stephanson 1989: 46) argued that “[t]ime has become a perpetual present and thus spatial.” Mainly due to this new depthlessness, historicity has weakened both in our relationship to public history and in the new forms of our private temporality. In this situation, traditional morality/politics seems to be obsolete because fragmented individuals are dominated by a peculiar kind of euphoria. But Jameson believed that this is a transitional phenomenon which appears when people don’t yet invent inclusive and totalizing stories which can endow the individual subject with some new heightened sense of its place in the global system. Thus, what is needed is to invent new inclusive and totalizing stories: “I am far from suggesting that no politics at all is possible in this
new post-Marxian Nietzschean world of micropolitics—that is observably untrue. But I do want to argue that without a conception of the social totality (and the possibility of transforming a whole social system), no properly socialist politics is possible” (Jameson 1988: 355). These totalizing stories do not cease to imagine how a society without hierarchy, a society of free people, can possibly cohere.

Harvey also recognized that the traditional notion of temporality has fundamentally changed mainly due to the accelerating turnover time in production, exchange, and consumption. Volatility and ephemerality has replaced linear, accumulative, progressive notion of temporality, making it hard to maintain any firm sense of continuity. As a result, aesthetics of instant ecstasy in a world of ephemerally created world makes obsolete traditional morality based on the promise of future rewards. As a Marxist, Harvey wanted to overcome the crisis of historical materialism. But unlike some post-Marxists who totally abandoned class politics, Harvey tried to retain the importance of class in postmodern condition while embracing postmodernist concern about difference and otherness. For this, difference and otherness should not be treated as “something to be added on to more fundamental Marxist categories (like class and productive forces), but as something that should be omni-present from the very beginning in any attempt to grasp the dialectics of social change” (Harvey 1989: 355).

Some Historical Parallels of the Aesthetic Moment

I have argued that the postmodern might be understood as the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/morality, which has proceeded from early 1960s to the present in advanced Western societies. As postmodern social theories have
witnessed, the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics includes both intellectual and institutional processes. In fact, what is peculiar in postmodern debates is that postmodern social theories have documented that there are "substantive institutional" changes associated with the process of aestheticization. But if we take only the intellectual or philosophical dimension and leave the institutional level aside, we can easily find some historical parallels in Western intellectual history.

Gorgias, Sade, and Nietzsche might be some exemplars. Gorgias lived in ancient Greece around the fourth century B.C., Sade in the seventeenth century, and Nietzsche in the second half of the nineteenth century. They all presented similar views that might be characterized by the aesthetic model of knowledge. But their arguments did not gain popularity during their days. One of the main reasons for that is, I believe, that there was no or little "substantive institutional" process of aestheticization. Society in general was not yet substantively differentiated. As Durkheim showed in The Division of Labour, the aesthetic argument could not attract people in a society in which the degree of division of labor is low. In the postmodern era in which the degree of division of labor is high enough to be called de-differentiation in which everything is saturated by images and signs, the aesthetic model of knowledge could be resonant in people. In this sense, we might say that the aesthetic model of knowledge was latent and dominated in the whole Western history, but in postmodern era it becomes explicit and dominant.

In what follows I will show how Gorgias, Sade and Nietzsche presented their views on ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which were very similar to the aesthetic. I do not aim to present these thinkers as postmodern social theorists. I believe that the "philosophical" distinction between these thinkers and postmodern social theorists is
highly superficial unless we situate each within its institutional contexts. We could even find some philosophical similarities between ancient Asian philosophies and postmodern philosophies. We need to situate ideas within the institutional contexts in which they are inscribed. Postmodern social theories are meaningful only when they are situated within the institutional change in society, which were often expressed in terms of consumer society, post-industrial society, information society, postmodern society, late capitalist society, fast capitalist society, etc. Nevertheless, this section is not totally useless because it will inform us that the aesthetic model of knowledge is not entirely new in the Western intellectual history. It will also hint to us that what is new in the postmodern is certain institutional changes in which the aesthetic model of knowledge gained power. Finally, it will reaffirm that sociological analysis of institutional contexts in which the aesthetic bloomed is still needed.

1. Ancient Greek Sophist: Gorgias

Rejecting Protagoras, Gorgias, and all their followers as relativistic nihilists whose ideas would lead to social decay, sexual perversity, and anarchy creates a comfortable certainty for Western thought. By rejecting sophistry, Western thought can play itself out as a history in which truth, after much tribulation, triumphs through its own self-righteous virtue and then remains available in the West forever (Neel 1988: 205).

Gorgias was one of the Greek sophists who lived in the age of transition from mythology to a kind of humanism. Before the fifth century B.C., Greek thought was profoundly influenced by traditional patriarchal mythologies represented by Homer, Hesiod, and the so-called Orphic poems, in which the wills of gods or of superhuman heroes presided over the world. Gorgias was one of the Greek sophists who changed this traditional worldview into a humanistic worldview. This transition of worldview...
occurred in an era of crisis. Politically, Athens grew enough to challenge the hegemony of Sparta: "[i]t was not until Athens had risen to power and had come into conflict with Sparta, especially during the long Peloponnesian War (430-400 B.C.), that social thought independent of religious tradition began to manifest itself" (Ellwood 1971: 9). But when Athens was defeated by Sparta, the sense of crisis spread wide: "Now, a major crisis in Greek institutions and social life occurred when Sparta overthrew Athens in the Peloponnesian War. Athens had built up a great empire after the Persian wars, and it must have been indeed a shock to the Athenians to see the imperial power of Athens overthrown by Sparta and her allies" (Ellwood 1971: 10). Socially, Greece of the fifth century B.C. was experiencing rapid growth of democracy and expansion of scientific knowledge, which brought out a sense of crisis (Barrett 1987: 6). Confronting this crisis, the Athenians began to ask what was wrong. In this respect, Ellwood’s remark is suggestive: “social thinking arises when the institutions and customs of the past no longer work well, perhaps break down, and have to be replaced by new adjustments, new values, which result in new customs and institutions” (Ellwood 1971: 9). The Athenians increasingly did not find adequate solutions in their existing mythologies. Therefore, they began to shift their attention from the universe to man himself, and from cosmogony to morality and politics. The sophists were the first who represented this shift. Thus, the fifth century was often referred to as the “Age of Sophists” (Burnet 1914: 109), the “Age of Illumination” (Bury 1958: 376-397), the “Age of Enlightenment” (Guthrie 1971: 48), or the “Greek Enlightenment” (Tarnas 1991: 25). Socrates was one of these sophists, and it was Plato who distinctly separated the true philosopher (Socrates) from the sophists.
The sophists did not form schools, and most of their works have been lost. Most information about the sophists, in fact, came from Plato who disliked them. Plato negatively defined and grouped the sophists mainly into two terms: first is that the sophists were merchants, retailers, and manufacturing traders of learning; and second is that the sophists were imitators of the wise (see Notomi 1999: 44-48). The sophists have been long forgotten partly due to this negative image long dominating the Western intellectual history: "Until the nineteenth century, the first sophists had been buried under two millennia of neglect, and outcome of the passionate condemnation they provoked from two of their contemporaries who have fared better in the histories, Plato and Aristotle" (Jarratt 1991: 1). But since Hegel revived the sophists as relativists in the 19th century, many revisionist interpretations began to pour out. What the sophists did was to voice their objection to the ideal of the theoretical, which was then represented by Parmenides who argued that "Being has no coming-into-being and no destruction, for it is whole of limb, without motion and without end" (quoted in Romilly 1992: 95). Thus for Parmenides, the rigorous philosophical or scientific inquiry should rest on this ultimate and immutable foundation of being. The sophists in general refuted this view.

From my perspective, Gorgias lived in an aesthetic moment. In the opening of his treatise On the Nonexistent, Gorgias expressed the archetype of the aesthetic: "first and foremost that nothing exists; second, that even if it exists it is inapprehensible to man; third, that even if it is apprehensible, still it is without a doubt incapable of being expressed or explained to the next man" (Sprague 1972: 42).
Ontologically, Gorgias proposed a position of philosophical nihilism, according to which neither the existent nor the nonexistent exists. As Sextus (Sprague 1972: 43-44) put it:

[T]he nonexistent does not exist, for if the nonexistent exists, it will both exist and not exist at the same time, for insofar as it is understood as nonexistent, it will not exist, but insofar as it is nonexistent it will, on the other hand, exist. It would, however, be entirely absurd for something to exist and at the same time not to exist. The nonexistent, therefore, does not exist. And to state another argument, if the nonexistent exists, the existent will not exist, for these are opposites to each other, and if existence is an attribute of the nonexistent, nonexistence will be an attribute of the existent. But it is not, in fact, true that the existent does not exist. <Accordingly>, neither will the non-existent exist. Moreover, the existent does not exist either. For if the existent exists, it is either eternal or generated, or at the same time eternal and generated. But it is neither eternal nor generated nor both, as we shall show. The existent therefore does not exist. . .So that if the existent is eternal it is unlimited, and if it is unlimited it is nowhere, and if it is nowhere it does not exist. Accordingly, if the existence is eternal, it is not existent at all. Moreover, neither can the existent be generated. For if it has come into being, it has come either from the existent or the nonexistent. But it has not come from the existent. For if it is existent, it has not come to be, but already exists. Nor from the nonexistent. For the nonexistent cannot generate anything, because what is generative of something of necessity ought to partake of positive existence. It is not true either, therefore, that the existent is generated. In the same way it is not jointly at the same time eternal and generated. For these qualities are mutually exclusive of each other, and if the existent is eternal it has not been generated, and if it has been generated it is not eternal. Accordingly, if the existent is neither eternal nor generated nor both at once, the existent should not exist.

This argument reverses Parmenides’ argument that “What is, is; what is not, is not.” According to Parmenides, “what is” is the absolute unity and permanence of the One. “What is” excludes motion, change, and becoming because they necessarily harm the absolute unity and permanence of the One. By contrast, “what is not” is something other than “is.” In other words, “what is not” is any alteration of “what is” and thus “what is not” is not. In this way, Parmenides sharply divided “what is” and “what is not” and
gave ontological privilege to "what is" over "what is not." Thus, anything that moves, changes, and becomes into being is not real. Gorgias disrupted Parmenides by arguing that nothing exists.

This argument has been interpreted in several ways (see Kerferd 1997: 7), but I would like to interpret it as the archetype of the aesthetic. Gorgias denied the dichotomy of being (the absolute unity and permanence of the One) and becoming (the modification of being). In this dichotomy, being and becoming is in fact one, because becoming is some modification of "being." In this sense, being is original and becoming is a copy of the original. Gorgias deconstructed this dichotomy. Nothing exists. In other words, "some more" exists. Some more follows the convention of pastiche. As Vitanza (1997: 261) put it:

One of the primary conventions of pastiche is that there is no origin, original, that is, no No. Pastiche is a paragone that denegates a grand narrative founded on cause-effect, or on any other negative topos or e/utopos. Pastiche is informed by the post-ontology and post-epistemology that a copy is a copy of a copy of a copy, and infinitum.

This ontology might be applied to man even though Gorgias did not present a systematic view on man. If Protagoras is an agnostic, Gorgias is an atheist. Gorgias did not believe in the existence of God or the soul. In this sense, man is not a fixed substance whose essence is God-given reason but a ceaseless flux. Man refutes the binary opposition of Being and not-Being, and resides somewhere in between the two. Temporary "stop" of this flux depends on changing contexts in which many competing, contradictory voices are deployed. In this sense, man is a historical process in which many competing, contradictory voices open up fixed binary positions, active and passive, and thus provide partial, multiple positions for man, which promotes an activity of
endless desiring metamorphosis. These partial, multiple positions lead man to the irrational or nonrational states because they are beyond representation based on the binary opposition of "what is" and "what is not." In this sense, man defies any fixed category which is necessarily based on negation of, or exclusion of, something which is beyond the category. In a sense, man is a pre-socialized flux or a socialized neurotic who is haunted by something that is negated or excluded. This notion of man is very radical when we think of the Greek ideal of man, a self-sufficient being. Self-sufficiency not only demands perfection of being that calls for realization of being, but also excludes all limits, generating a positive infinity which refuses all determination. Gorgias directly opposed this view by deconstructing the binary logic of self-sufficiency, "is" versus "is-not."

Methodologically, Gorgias reversed Parmenides. Parmenides argued that one can validly think only about what really exists. In this sense, Thought and Being are one and the same. By contrast, Parmenides argued that the non-existent cannot be known because it does not exist. We might perceive, not think, something that moves, changes, and comes into being, but its is not "what is." Thus Parmenides sharply divided thinking and perceiving, and gave epistemological privilege to thinking over perceiving. As Parmenides put it:

Come now, I shall speak, and you must hear and receive my word. These are the only roads of enquiry that exist for the thinking mind: one road, that 'IT IS,' and that 'IT CANNOT NOT BE' is the path of Persuasion, for Truth attends it. Another road, that 'IT IS NOT,' and 'IT [i.e. what is not] MUST BE NON-EXISTENT' is a road that I declare to be totally indiscernible. For you could neither know [or recognise?] what is non-existent, for that is unattainable, nor could you describe it. For it is the same thing which is for thinking and for being (Luce 1992: 51).
For Parmenides, thought is equated with *logos*, i.e., word and speech, and *logos* is further equated with being. Gorgias argued that “*logos* is not evocative of the external” (Sprague 1972: 46). In other words, Gorgias argued that there is always the gap between word and thing. In this way, Gorgias deconstructed the equation of *logos* and being. As Crowley (1979: 281) put it:

[H]e [Gorgias] wants to free language from any ties to objective reality, in order that language may be exploited to its fullest potential as a medium for creating illusions and exciting the emotions...What Gorgias does here is to release *logos* from adherence to any other reality; the word has no necessary correlation to the world of Being.

This detachment of language from reality leads to a new notion of the rhetoric, i.e., “an art which employs words not to find truth, but...to mold or impress the psyche, to create beautiful illusions, to ‘stop fear and banish grief and create joy and natural pity’” (Crowley 1979: 282). In this sense, “the function of an orator is not logical demonstration so much as emotional presentation what will stir the audience’s will to believe. Thus, the power of persuasion involves deceiving ‘the emotional and mental state of listeners by artificially stimulating sensory reactions through words’” (Kennedy 1999: 36).

As a result, Gorgias will not “confine reality within a dogmatic scheme but allow it to rage in all its contradictions, in all its tragic intensity” (Untersteiner 1954: xvi). Thus, Gorgias leaves audiences confused. But for Gorgias, unlike for Protagoras, antithesis does not necessarily entail parataxis. The connection between antithesis and parataxis does not depend on the necessary correlation of language and being, but on the mental participation of the audiences. If they are “deceived” by language, parataxis for actions would be followed. But this is only a possibility. Playing with words is the cornerstone
of Gorgias' methodology, in which any kind of temporal copula between words, not between words and beings, goes if it succeeds in persuading the audiences. In this sense, some compare Gorgias' rhetoric to advertising in the contemporary world: "Following the analogy, one might assign to rhetoric the place now occupied by advertising" (Guthrie 1969: 50); "it is clear that we have already the elements of a theory of rhetoric which can stand comparison with modern accounts of the technique of advertising" (Kerferd 1984: 82).

On the direction of history, Gorgias did not propose a systematic view. But we can draw some hints from his general view. Gorgias might argue that there is no direction of history because there is no design by the Supreme Being. History is subject to contingency, not to determinism.

The moral implication of Gorgias's argument is nihilism or playfulness. In the *Encomium of Helen*, Gorgias exempted Helen from responsibility for her actions. To defend Helen against blame for her part in the fall of Troy, Gorgias advanced four arguments: 1) she was fated by the gods; 2) she was raped; 3) she was seduced by discourse; or 4) she acted out of love. In any case, Helen is not blamed for actions because she was not the master of her own actions. In the first case, "it is right for the responsible one to be held responsible; for god's predetermination cannot be hindered by human premeditation" (Sprague 1972: 51). In the second case, Helen should not be blamed: "if she was raped by violence and illegally assaulted and unjustly insulted, it is clear that the raper, as the insulter, did the wronging, and the raped, as the insulted, did the suffering. It is right, then, for the barbarian who undertook a barbaric undertaking in word and law and deed to meet with blame in word, exclusion in law, and punishment in
deed" (Sprague 1972: 51). In the third case, Helen should not be blamed because language has the power to impress the psyche: “Speech is a powerful lord, which by means of the finest and most invisible body effects the divinest works: it can stop fear and banish grief and create joy and nurture pity” (Sprague 1972: 52). In the last case, Helen is not responsible for her actions: “For if it was love which did all these things, there will be no difficulty in escaping the charge of the sin which is alleged to have taken place” (Sprague 1972: 53). Thus, Helen is not responsible for her actions; she was not the master of her actions. As Neel (1988:205) argued: “Those persuaded by the clever, he [Gorgias] contends, should be held blameless for their actions because the bewitching, hypnotic power of persuasion overcomes everyone sometime. By like token, those seduced by the passion of love, because they have fallen under the power of the god of love and because the need to love is a human frailty, should at worst be pitied; they are the victims of fate merely obeying the compulsion of love, not free individuals with the strength of will to make a choice.” Then what man can do is to do what he has to do or what he is doing. There is no moral code, because man has no power to control his actions. This is very nihilistic, which Plato and his followers hated extremely. Playfulness is directly connected with nihilism. Man can play with words without any restriction because language does not have any necessary relation to being or truth or reality. In a sense that human beings are not responsible for their actions, anything may go. No law is allowed.

The political implication is anarchy. No hierarchical organization is allowed because it would exclude “others” who threaten its fixed identity.
2. The Anti-Enlightenment: Sade

[D]o everything you fancy, anything; to act, to riot, to react at your ease, without interference from anybody... to say to yourself, here is an object Nature surrenders into my hands to do with absolutely whatever I please. I can smash it, I can burn it, I can maim it, I can dismantle it, I can torment it, I can fondle and annihilate it as I like, it is mine, nothing can deprive me of it, nothing save it from its fate (Sade, quoted in Sawhney 1999:91).

What I call “anti-Enlightenment” is in fact one extremity of the Counter-Enlightenment. Berlin considered Romanticism to be the main force of the Counter-Enlightenment. According to Berlin (1999), the Romantic movement has two main features. One is the morally practical, whose core idea is that society is constructed through the rhetorical and political activities of man who changes with change of society. In addition to this, Berlin characterized the other feature of the Romantic movement as the aesthetic, whose core idea is that any kind of social, political, or religious organization of society and man is unnatural. Nature does not have any universal law except for the law of permanent fluidity of creation and destruction.

The second position—connected with the first—is that there is no structure of things. There is no pattern to which you must adapt yourself. There is only, if not the flow, the endless self-creativity of the universe. The universe must not be conceived of as a set of facts, as a pattern of events, as a collection of lumps in space, three-dimensional entities bound together by certain unbreakable relations, as taught to us by physics, chemistry and other natural sciences; the universe is a process of perpetual forward self-thrusting, perpetual self-creation... (Berlin 1999: 119-120).

In fact, the second feature of the Romantic movement is significantly different from the main force of the Counter-Enlightenment. Even before Schopenhauer (1788-1860) and Nietzsche (1844-1900), this view is found in one of the eighteenth-century figures, Marquis de Sade (1740-1814). I am very convinced that it is Sade who revitalized the aesthetic model of knowledge that had been repressed since the Greek sophists,
especially Gorgias. Sade attacked the Enlightenment and, moreover, the entire structure of Western culture; he disrupted the traditional notion of the universe, seeing the universe as absurd and meaningless. Sade also disrupted the traditional notion of man, freeing the body from the confines of social, political, religious, and ethical constructions. If there is a law, it is the law of permanent fluidity of creation and destruction.

Sade was enormously influenced by materialists such as La Mettrie and D’Holbach, and pushed their materialist implication to the extreme. On the problem of God, Sade took an extreme atheist position. God does not exist: neither the anthropomorphic Christian God nor the Cartesian efficient cause nor the Newtonian mathematic God exists. Sade attacked the anthropomorphism of such doctrines as final causes which assume God’s province. In this sense, Sade went hand in hand with the empiricist version of the Enlightenment. But Sade did not embrace the Cartesian efficient cause. Unlike the empiricist version, Sade did not assume any universally ordered law that governs universe and man. Nature does not have any universal law except for the law of permanent fluid of creation and destruction. Thus, Sade attacked all core ideas of the Enlightenment about the universe and man: both the First Cause and the Final Cause are rejected. Also Sade was differentiated from the main force of the Counter-Enlightenment as far as it defied any kind of social, political, and religious organization of society and man. Bureaucratic hierarchy is the main enemy of the aesthetic version because it betrays nature which is characterized by the laws of perpetual creation and destruction. In this sense, Sade might be seen to be the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century version of the aesthetic.
Ontologically, Sade, like the empiricist version of the Enlightenment, held that there exists only nature which is matter in motion. But unlike the empiricist version of the Enlightenment, Sade emphasized "motion" over "matter." Nature is neither the created nor the substance. Rather, "Nature is a perpetuating force, a turbulent system, which casts organisms upon the surface of the earth. The *cast* of Nature is a temporal suspension of material forces on a cosmic scale" (Sawhney 1999: 83). There is neither the First Cause nor the Final Cause. There is only the perpetual twin processes of creation and destruction of nature, through which infinite unlike entities are made and disappeared. In this scheme, the traditional notion of being, self-same entity, disappears. Applying this ontology to the universe, Sade (quoted in Sawhney 1999: 79) argued as follows:

The universe is an assemblage of unlike entities which act and react mutually and successively with and against each other; I discern no start, no finish, no fixed boundaries, this universe I can see only as an incessant passing from one state into another, and within it only particular beings which forever change shape and form.

For Sade, the universe is a perpetually revolutionizing system that creates diverse levels of interaction through acts of destruction. Destruction is a basis of creation; without destruction, creation cannot be. Destruction, by nature, is amoral; it is beyond humane morality. Enormously influenced by materialists such as La Mettrie and D’Holbach, Sade opposed to the then dominant concept of a rationally ordered universe (Crocker 1959: 8-11). Sade argued that disorder is the only order of the world. For Sade, disorder means that the world is full of tyranny and injustice, because the strong always oppress and exploit the weak. Thus Sade held that evil is a universal law of nature. As Sade (quoted in Crocker 1959: 42) put it in one of the characters in his novel:
I raise my eyes over the universe, I see evil, disorder and crime ruling everywhere as despots. . .what ideas result from this examination? that what we improperly term evil really is not evil, and that this mode is so necessary to the designs of the being who created us that he would cease being the master of his own work if evil did not exist universally over the earth. . .[God’s hand] has created [the world] only for evil, it takes pleasure only in evil, evil is its essence. . .It is in evil that he created world, it is by evil that he maintains it, it is for evil that he perpetuates it. it is impregnated with evil that the creature must exist. . .the mode being the soul of the Creator as it is that of the creature.

In these sentences, Sade seemed to believe in God, but he just pretended to do so purely for the sake of argument. Sade, an extreme atheist, deprived the world of meanings and morals. As a result, the world becomes meaningless, absurd, and cruel, because “in the world of nature and men, the good (or synonymously, the weak) are destined to be the wretched victims of the vicious (or the strong)” (Crocker 1959: 41).

For Sade, the social world is not a discrete world different from the natural world. The cruel law of disorder dominates the natural world as well as the social world. Everything becomes permissible because there is no God nor morals. In this sense, the Sadean world is a world of beasts that act instinctively without knowing God or morals. Thus, Sade proposed an anarchistic view on society, which is against the Enlightenment view in general as well as one of the Vichian version of the Counter-Enlightenment. This anarchistic view on society is significant under the historical context of the rising bourgeois capitalism which is characterized by a ceaseless struggle for profit.

Applying this ontology to man, Sade robbed man of his privileged position in the “Great Chain of Being” by deconstructing it. Man is not an exceptional being any more. Man is just one of many kinds of organism that nature casts upon the surface of the earth.

What is man? and what difference is there between him and other plants, between him and all the other animals of the world? None, obviously. Fortuitously placed, like them, upon this globe, he is born like them; like
them, he reproduces, rises, and falls; like them he arrives at old age and
sinks like them into nothingness at the close of the life span Nature assigns
each species of animal, in accordance with its organic construction (Sade,

Thus, to place man in a privileged position in the universe is illogical because the cast
of nature is only a temporal suspension of material forces. Man also follows a law of
nature, a law of permanent twin processes of creation and destruction. Like plants and
beasts, man follows the supreme law of egoism. “There is,” thus, “only one law, the law
of instinct, which makes us seek pleasure and happiness. No other law obtains, despite
our self-delusion” (Crocker 1959: 99).

In this sense, the dualism of body and soul is meaningless. Soul was conceived as the
core place in which morals such as pity, social duties, love of neighbor reside. But Sade
argued that this notion of the soul is our self-delusion. Because there is only the supreme
law of egoism in nature. Man is the body which follows the law of nature. Thus, Sade
wanted to criticize man’s pretensions that a sphere of reason and morals exists apart from
men. As Crocker (1959: 101-102) put it:

Sade conceived one of his main goals to be stripping the idol of love of all
its false attractions, restoring it to its true status as animal pleasure in
which we have the desire and right to wallow, to any excess. In Sade’s
mind, this was one way of uncovering the true man, man the animal,
underneath the pretentious self-imposed halo of a being made in the image
of God. Sade’s writings respond to the desire he expressed, in an essay on
the novel, to reveal man not only as he shows himself, “but such as he
may be, such as the modifications and all the shocks of the passions may
possibly make him.” It is this exploration which leads Sade to the great
discovery that the vitalities in human life are destructive as well as
creative, and in fact are essentially destructive when they are not chained
and diverted into other channels. Sade, then, destroys the notion of love as
something pure and lovely; it is, rather, much worse than merely bestial; it
is cruel, and its freest and fullest expression is in torture and death. . .he
was the first to present sex as necessarily, inherently and essentially evil.
Methodologically, Sade tried to subvert the traditional epistemology in which language (thought) is supposed to represent reality (being). Thus, in traditional epistemology, only being is supposed to be represented and non-being is not supposed to be represented. Against this, Sade held that everything, including being and non-being, is exposed and seen. As Sawhney (1999: 86) put it:

Sade, most passionately, aspires to document all that is forbidden to thought, to categorize all that lies outside the realm of reason, a strategy that is entirely compatible with his philosophy that everything must be exposed, however monstrous and inhumane it may be.

Sade tried to express the inexpressible. Transgression is the most intellectual activity which tries to express the inexpressible; to transgress is to pass beyond any limit or boundary which has discrete form and discrete identity. Transgression demands the complete overthrow of any vestige of order, because order itself constrains and dictates only certain possibilities of personal action. Transgression takes place, in each case, according to the particular type of restriction that is imposed on his freedom. Thus, “Sade variously proposes blasphemy, immorality, crime, incest, murder, violation, lies, slander, theft, rapacity, irrationality, sodomy, hate, and every other kind of violence, perversion, or aberration conceivable—each of these a specific and considered tactical operation to serve the strategic movement of the libertine’s transgressive itinerary” (Allison 1999: 211).

On the direction of change, Sade argued that there is no direction in history because there is only the twin permanent processes of destruction and creation in the world. Sade argued that there is neither start (the First Cause) nor end (the Final Cause). One of the most important moral implications in this is the extremist secular hedonism. He could not but negate the transcendental imperative of universal Christian morality. He denied
the concept of immortality because he did not believe in the existence of spiritual soul. Thus, the hope of the postmortem rewards for the spiritual control over corporeal desires vanishes. The spiritual control over the corporeal desires or the subordination to any kind of supernatural authority is illogical because "Nature, when she cast us into the world, created us free and atheists" (Sade, quoted in Sawhney 1999: 84). Man is completely free of moral constraints because he is living in an absurd and meaningless universe, utterly deprived of purposes and moral values. In this way, Sade tried to free man from the confines of social, political, religious, and ethical constructions. Morality is experienced only in a form of induced illusion or habituation. Thus, true morality is desire in cosmic flows. From this follows the extremist position that it is natural that the strong tries to despoil the weak and obtain pleasure at his expense. Even crime is celebrated because it's the extreme form of self-love or egoism.

Crime is not but the means Nature employs to attain her ends in regard to us and to preserve the equilibrium so indispensable to the maintenance of her workings. This explication alone suffices to make clear that it is not for man to punish crime, because crime belongs to the Nature that possesses every right over us and over which we dispose of none (Sade, quoted in Sawhney 1999: 83).

Crime is the instrument by which social, political, ethical assemblages are destroyed and recreated in order to (re)integrate desire back into the flux of Nature.

One of the most important political implications is extremist anarchism. Sade criticized state interventions that "embody desire into homogeneous realms, that is, instances of state institutions suspending the material forces of desire in order that desire serve a higher purpose, such as God, church, or government. Sade argued that this suspension of desire is a mechanism of control that lies outside the flux of Nature" (Sawhney 1999: 80). The state plays the role in stabilizing and suspending desire
through hierarchical stratification. The state interventions change the temporal suspension of matters to a higher transcendent purpose. By so doing, the state interventions eliminate desire's incessant passing from one state into another. This elimination betrays the law of nature because it suspends the regenerative (creative and destructive) materiality of Nature. Sade aimed to restore desire to cosmic fluxes. As Sawhney (1999: 85) excellently put it:

Sade asks: Why then should the individual follow the laws, rules, norms, dictates, and values of society when it is evident that social systems are in direct conflict with the laws of perpetual destruction within Nature? However much the human race attempts to harness and manipulate Nature, "she" always acts according to "her" own laws. Why, asks Sade, does the state machinery thwart the impulses of Nature by institutionalizing desire, a process that imprisons desire through inhibition, prohibition, and taboo, even though Nature's laws state that desire is always in "a perpetual variation, a perpetual permutation...a perpetual movement?"

3. Nietzsche

Everything is false! Everything is permitted (Nietzsche 1968: 326).

Nietzsche (1844-1900) lived in the second half of the 1800s, when positivistic belief in progress was offset by the dark sides of industrialization, urbanization, technical advances, etc. New developments in the physical and biological sciences informed people that contingency was important when explaining society and man. The aesthetic model of knowledge, which lost its power in the first half of the century, began to attract some intellectuals. Schopenhauer was one of them. Schopenhauer claimed that human beings have not only ideas, the categories through which human beings see the world, but also the will to life, a categoryless force that pushes toward certain ends. Schopenhauer conceptualized the will to life as a kind of energy or force which expresses itself through
the multiplicity of phenomena in variegated ways. In fact, the notion of will to life is a philosophical version of biological and physical notion of force which was then prevalent. Schopenhauer exerted a powerful influence on Nietzsche, who developed a more materialist version of will as a virtual asocial biological force. Nietzsche presented the will to power as a weapon against philosophy, religion, and morality, all of which submitted to herd instincts. What Nietzsche hated is the homogenizing and leveling effect of philosophy, religion, and morality. Nietzsche (1968: 175) wanted to rescue “the charm of rareness, inimitableness, exceptionalness and unaverageness” from traditional philosophy, religion, and morality. For Nietzsche, art can do this task: “Art reminds us of states of animal vigor; it is on the one hand an excess and overflow of blooming physicality into the world of images and desires; on the other, an excitation of the animal functions through the images and desires of intensified life;—an enhancement of the feeling of life, a stimulant to it” (Nietzsche 1968: 422). In this sense, it would be argued that Nietzsche adopted the aesthetic as the primary model of ontology and epistemology. What have been repressed, silenced, marginalized, etc. should be expressed.

Ontologically, Nietzsche refuted the traditional ontology, which is based on dualism of being and non-being. Nietzsche wanted to abolish the world of being as the real world: “The apparent world and the world invented by a lie—this is the antithesis. The latter has hitherto been called the ‘real world,’ ‘truth,’ ‘God.’ This is what we have to abolish” (Nietzsche 1968: 254). For Nietzsche, what is existent is a kind of natural force, the will to power, which Nietzsche borrowed from the physical science’s energy-flow model. The will to power denies the existence of being as being opposed to becoming. Nietzsche tried to reverse the hierarchy of being and becoming by deconstructing the
binary opposition of being and becoming: “To impose upon becoming the character of
being—that is the supreme will to power” (Nietzsche 1968: 330). Being does not exist;
rather, it is humans who invented it. For Nietzsche, the will to power is a basic instinct of
all organisms or bodies for their own expanded reproduction. As Nietzsche (1968: 550)
put it:

This world: a monster of energy, without beginning, without end; ... a
play of forces and waves of forces, at the same time one and many.
increasing here and at the same time decreasing there; a sea of forces
flowing and rushing together, eternally changing, eternally flooding back,
with tremendous years of recurrence, with an ebb and a flood of its forms;
... a becoming that knows no satiety, no disgust, no weariness: this, my
Dionysian world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-
destroying, this mystery world of the twofold voluptuous delight, my
“beyond good and evil,” without goal, unless the joy of the circle is itself a
goal. ... The world is the will to power—and nothing besides! And you
yourselves are also this will to power—and nothing besides!

On the nature of man, Nietzsche identified individuality with bodily intelligence and
multiplicity. The genuine self is a nonsocial, irreducible, individual particularity. This
genuine self is contradictory to the herd-like ego, the social self. For Nietzsche, human
beings and their societies are in an endless struggle between the principles of
instrumental rationalism and the necessity for sensual satisfaction in the lives of human
beings. Superior cultures nurture particularity by providing resources to express bodily
drives. But the culture of Western society have repressed bodily drives so severely that
the herd instinct of obedience and consequent guilt, illness, and nihilism prevail.
Nietzsche saw how new modes of communication and technologies began to destroy
individuality and community while producing homogenized herd conformity (Best and
Kellner 1997: 57). In this sense, Nietzsche criticized the Enlightenment notion of the
rational subject, which portrays reason or mind as a higher faculty governing the body.
Nietzsche rejected the positive evaluation of reason, rationality, and the rationalization processes. Nietzsche emphasized the body instead of subjectivity, the soul and the mind:

The awakened and knowing say: body am I entirely, and nothing else; and soul is only a word for something about the body. The body is a great reason, plurality with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd. An instrument of your body is also your little reason, my brother, which you call "spirit"—a little instrument and toy of your great reason. . . . Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage—whose name is self. In your body he dwells; he is your body (Nietzsche, quoted in Love 1986: 29).

Epistemologically, Nietzsche refuted the traditional epistemology which has been based on the dualism of the subject and the object. "If we give up the effective subject, we also give up the object upon which effects are produced. Duration, identity with itself, being are inherent neither in that which is called subject nor in that which is called object: they are complexes of events apparently durable in comparison with other complexes—e.g., through the difference in tempo of the event" (Nietzsche 1968: 298).

There exists neither the subject nor the object. Thus, traditional epistemology based on the dualism of the subject (doer, cause) and the object (deed, effect) is senseless. For Nietzsche, the distinction between cause and effect is achieved as an effect of language in which the grammatical subject (I) is believed to "do something, suffer something, 'have' something, 'have' a quality" (Nietzsche 1968: 294). Thus, the dualism of the subject (cause) and the object (effect) is fictitious. The problem is not in the relationship between cause and effect; rather, it is in the difference of power between the two:

Two successive states, the one "cause," the other "effect": this is false. The first has nothing to effect, the second has been effected by nothing. It is a question of a struggle between two elements of unequal power: a new arrangement of forces is achieved according to the measure of power of each of them. The second condition is something fundamentally different from the first (not its effect): the essential thing is that the factions in struggle emerge with different quanta of power (Nietzsche 1968: 337).
In this sense, Nietzsche nullified the traditional epistemology which saw science as the autonomous pursuit of truth. Nietzsche connected the scientific pursuit of truth with the "will to power." As Nietzsche (1968: 298) put it:

Will to truth is a making firm, a making true and durable, an abolition of the false character of things, a reinterpretation of it into beings. "Truth" is therefore not something there, that might be found or discovered—but something that must be created and that gives a name to a process, or rather to a will to overcome that has in itself no end—introducing truth, as a processus in infinitum, an active determining—not a becoming-conscious of something that is in itself firm and determined. It is a world for the "will to power."

Our belief in science has no objective validity; we hold this belief insofar as it functions towards the expanded reproductions of bodies. The genealogy of knowledge is an inquiry into the self-deception that Western reason has succumbed to in its quest for power. Nietzsche also criticized the empiricist epistemology then represented by positivism. He criticized positivism in general and positivistic sociology in particular.

According to Nietzsche, nobody has privileged position which enables him/her to grasp the "facts," because there are no facts. Everything is in flux, incomprehensible, and elusive, which opens up the possibility of plural interpretations.

Against positivism, which halts at phenomena—"There are only facts"—I would say: No, facts is precisely what there is not, only interpretations. We cannot establish any fact "in itself": perhaps it is folly to want to do such a thing. . .In so far as the word "knowledge" has many meaning, the world is knowable; but it is interpretable otherwise, it has no meaning behind it, but countless meanings.—"Perspectivism" (Nietzsche 1968: 267).

On the direction of change, the aesthetic did not believe any specific direction of history. It would be irrelevant to ask whether societies or the various forms of objectification of the will succeed one another temporarily or not, because the will does
not know time. Therefore, we could not adequately explain history through tracing a
sequence of developmental stages. Nietzsche did not accept the Enlightenment argument
that the modern society brings human beings happiness and welfare: “Progress.—Let us
not be deceived! Time marches forward; we’d like to believe that everything that is in it
also marches forward—that the development is one that moves forward. . . ‘Mankind’
does not advance, it does not even exist. . . Man represents no progress over the animal”
(Nietzsche 1968: 55). While Enlightenment thinkers argued that modernity is
characterized by individual freedom and welfare, Nietzsche insisted that nearly identical
“useful, industrious, handy multipurpose head animals” prosper in modern society rather
than genuine diversity. According to Nietzsche, modern Western culture is characterized
by “slave morality” that promises salvation for the obedient and punishment for the
dissolute. Nietzsche saw Christianity as the prototypical slave morality: “The promise of
equality and salvation to all the ‘subjugated and oppressed’ and of eternal damnation to
all nonbelievers demanded unparalleled denial of the body, absolute obedience, ‘mortal
hostility,’ and ‘hatred of those who think differently’ and of ‘multiplicity’” (Antonio
1995: 8). The Enlightenment and bourgeois revolutions made the process even more
extensive and inclusive. Thus, Nietzsche argued that the modern age has developed
ethics of utility that was destroying the sovereign individual. Antonio (1995: 6) said,
“Nietzsche equated rationalization with cultural homogenization and liquidation of
particularity.”

Nietzsche criticized universalist morality because he believed that one has no rational
foundation for choosing one mode of behavior over another. Nietzsche refuted
traditional grounds for universalist morality such as God and nature. Nietzsche (1966:
argued that “[t]here are no moral phenomena at all, but only a moral interpretation of phenomena.” Then, isn’t there any morality? Nietzsche argued that one should create his own morality. The aesthetic is decisive in creating morality. The one who creates his own morality is “[h]e who can command, he who is by nature ‘master,’ he who is violent in act and bearing” (Nietzsche 1989: 86). This man is one of the conquerors whose natures “come like fate, without reason, consideration, or pretext; they appear as lightning appears, too terrible, too sudden, too convincing, too ‘different’ even to be hated. Their work is an instinctive creation and imposition of forms; they are the most involuntary, unconscious artists there are” (Nietzsche 1989: 86). In this sense, Nietzsche attributed to “art an ontogenetic, that is, a world-making significance” (Megill 1987: 31). A slave does not create his/her own morality; rather, s/he dogmatically follows a master morality. What Nietzsche hated is the normalizing effect of slave morality: “To accommodate oneself, to live as the ‘common man’ lives, to hold right and good what he holds right; this is to submit to the herd instinct. One must take one’s courage and severity so far as to feel such a submission as a disgrace” (Nietzsche 1968: 252). In this sense, Nietzsche saw socialization in a negative light.

Politically, Nietzsche was opposed to both socialism and democracy. He believed that they aimed to make man mediocre and lower his value: “I am opposed to 1. socialism, because it dreams quite naively of “the good, true, and beautiful” and of “equal rights” (—anarchism also desires the same ideal, but in a more brutal fashion); 2. parliamentary government and the press, because these are the means by which the herd animal becomes master” (Nietzsche 1968: 397). Nietzsche wanted to liberate life from philosophy, religion, and morality and he wished to make a society in which only quanta
of power determine ranks. The strongest man equipped with the strongest will to power should rule society. This man will be "artist-tyrants" who will work like artists. Unlike the herd, artists create new values. They are commanders and legislators who say how things are to be.
CHAPTER 4

VULNERABILITY OF SOCIOLOGY TO THE AESTHETIC CHALLENGE

I have argued that the postmodern might be understood as the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics, which has proceeded from early 1960s to the present in advanced Western societies. I have also claimed that postmodern social theory documented that 1) there emerged a qualitatively new form of aesthetic society entangled with the emergence of a qualitatively new form of aesthetic subject, that 2) the aestheticization of the social and the subject undermined traditional epistemology/methodology based on the traditional subject-object distinction, proposing trans- or multi-disciplinary methods, and that 3) the aestheticization of the social and the subject produced new morality/politics based on difference rather than identity.

This argument of postmodern social theory challenged fundamental assumptions of sociology about ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. Classical European sociology emerged out of the complex mixture of the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment, but modern American sociology mainly followed the Enlightenment vision of science, especially positivism, in the course of its development. In this sense, sociology was a product of modernity associated with the Enlightenment. In fact, from the outset sociology was hostile to the aesthetic. Sociology saw the aesthetic as being pre- and/or anti-social.

141

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
In what follows, I will show how sociology happened to exclude the aesthetic, and will present some fundamental assumptions of classical European sociology and modern American sociology, which are vulnerable to the aesthetic challenge.

Classical European Sociology as the Exclusion of the Aesthetic

Most sociologists considered Comte, Marx, Spencer, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel as “fathers” of sociology who built a new discipline called sociology. Many sociologists also recognized that these classical European sociologists tried to synthesize the Enlightenment tradition and the Counter-Enlightenment tradition (Saiedi 1993; Seidman 1983). This effort at synthesis was not a new phenomenon that first appeared in the nineteenth century. The so-called “forerunners” of sociology in the eighteenth century all tried to complement the extremity of the Enlightenment with the Counter-Enlightenment: Montesquieu (1689-1755), Rousseau (1712-1778), the Scottish Enlightenment thinkers such as Hume (1711-1776), Adam Smith (1723-1790), Adam Ferguson (1723-1816), John Millar (1735-1801), etc. The so-called “fathers” of sociology such as Comte (1798-1857), Marx (1818-1857), Spencer (1820-1903), Durkheim (1858-1917), Weber (1864-1920), and Simmel were similar. The Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment traditions were two common tacit intellectual references on which the “fathers” of the classical European sociology relied. All of them tried to synthesize the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment traditions in their own ways.

But when we look more closely, we can find a very important fact with regard to the emergence of classical European sociology: the so-called “fathers” of classical European
sociology criticized the individualist approaches to man and society. To them, the most representative of the individualist approaches were the technically practical and the aesthetic. But ways to deal with these two individual approaches were very different. For the technically practical, classical European sociologists tried to complement the extremity of the technically practical with the theoretical and/or the morally practical. By contrast, classical European sociologists rejected the aesthetic as a model of knowledge for investigating the social.

In the early nineteenth century, classical political economy and utilitarianism were social versions of Newtonian physics. The most representative of classical political economy were Malthus (1776-1834) and Ricardo (1772-1823), both of whom followed and modified Adam Smith’s (1723-1790) claim that man’s self-interest is the counterpart of Newton’s principle of gravitational attraction. The most representative of utilitarianism were James Mill (1773-1836) and his son John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), both of whom followed and modified Bentham (1748-1832)’s psychological proposition that man is by nature a being whose behavior is governed by desire for pleasure and aversion to pain. Classical political economy and utilitarianism were more popular in the early nineteenth-century England. For classical political economy and utilitarianism, “natural” means “physical.” But by the mid-century, this position was challenged by Darwin’s theory of natural selection. For Darwin’s theory, “natural” means “biological” rather than “physical.” But the technically practical soon realized that this difference was not essential because both “physical” and “biological” were materialistic. Gordon (1991: 494-495) explained it well:

From the standpoint of man’s conception of himself and his relation to the cosmos, the development of the theory of evolution in the nineteenth
century was no less than a second scientific revolution, but in terms of the philosophy of science it was a continuation or extension of the first, applying to organic phenomena the same conception of the world as governed by laws that are essentially ‘materialistic’ in nature and thereby reducing still further the significance of spiritual, and indeed mental, factors in the explanation of reality.

Darwin’s theory of natural selection was easily combined with classical political economy and utilitarianism: “Social Darwinism represented a biologized form of classical economics, ‘an attempt to modernize and refurbish the social ethic of competitive individualism by appealing to the authority of Darwin’s version of natural selection’” (Fine 1979: 23-24). The technically practical interpreted Darwinian evolutionism in terms of the struggle for survival among atomistic individuals. As Darwin said in *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*:

> In October 1838...I happened to read for amusement Malthus on Population, and being well prepared to appreciate the struggle for existence which everywhere goes on from long-continued observation of the habits of animals and plants, it at once struck me that under these circumstances favourable variations would tend to be preserved and unfavourable ones to be destroyed. The result of this would be the formation of new species. Here, then, I had at last got a theory by which to work... (quoted in Gordon 1991: 505).

A hallmark of all three (classical political economy, utlitarianism, and Darwin’s theory of natural selection) is reductionism, in which the social is reduced to the individual. All kinds of human behaviors are reduced to a simple law of natural selection or the survival of the fittest.

In the late nineteenth century, the technically practical saw another development: statistics. Even though the Belgian statistician Adolphe Quetelet (1796-1874) presented his first work in 1835 and a huge interest in the collection of social statistics occurred in England in the 1830s, it was in the late nineteenth century that statistics began to become
the most important alternative to other models of the technically practical. In fact, statistics was revolutionary as far as the nature of the technically practical was concerned. The technically practical used to believe that social phenomena, like natural phenomena, are law-governed. This law is essentially a mechanical law that does not allow any variation. But the substantive findings of sciences betrayed this view. Statistics resolved this problem by construing social phenomena as statistical in nature. The governing laws of social phenomena are probabilistic. Thus, the term "positivism" gained new meaning, that social sciences can be reduced to just collecting the facts and formulating them as general laws.

Classical European sociologists criticized this individualistic view, but they did not totally devaluate it. Rather, they tried to complement it with the theoretical and the morally practical. In this nineteenth century there were mainly two forms of the theoretical: positivistic organicism¹ and Hegelian essentialism. A hallmark of two versions is that they attacked the Newtonian mechanical world characterized by its inability to explain "the change, the temporality, the novelty, in a word, the progressiveness, of the human world" (Kumar 1978: 18) and that they retained the spiritual or divine nature of man and society.

For the explanation of change, positivistic organicism depended on Platonian transcendentalism and more directly on French Enlightenment tradition and evolutionary biology. Positivistic organicism "arose as an integration of two formerly discrete strands of Western thought: the idealistic theory of society, and a positivistic program of social

¹. The nineteenth century positivism may be designated as "positivistic organicism" as distinguished from the 20th century logical positivism or logical empiricism represented by the Vienna School of 1920s (Martindale 1981: 68).
reform" (Martindale 1966: 4). Positivistic organicism as the idealistic theory of society was a modern version of the idealism that developed since Plato. This tradition relied on an organic analogy: "Society is considered to be a living entity, at least, as similar thereto—perhaps organic, perhaps spiritual" (Martindale 1966: 5). Some version of the French Enlightenment followed this tradition. French Enlightenment thinkers such as Turgot and Condorect created an entity, mankind, whose essence is ideas, conceptually or by a priori reasoning about human nature, that was supposed to have undergone continuous development through time (Bock 1978). In France, the concept of organism developed as a vital independent unity without any specific reference to biology. French organistic school followed the Platonian transcendentalism inasmuch as they believed that the change of things must come through the change of ideas. For them, ideas, not matters (appearances), are real (Maus 1962: 36-43). Positivistic organicism as a positivistic program of social reform relied on the empiricist version of the Enlightenment, which wanted to apply the methods of natural sciences to the realm of human society in order to reform peacefully and organize rationally human society.

It was the achievement of evolutionary biology that made it possible to combine these two different thoughts. Pre-Darwinian positivists such as Saint-Simon (1760-1825) argued that the principles of order and change in the biological evolution could be applied to ones in the social evolution because social evolution was conceived as a special case of biological evolution. But there is a fundamental difference between them: for the social evolution it is "ideas" that maintain society as an organic whole or equilibrium.

In fact, the term "positivistic organicism" is self-contradictory as Martindale (1981: 68) defined it as the following:
Organicism refers to that tendency in thought that constructs its picture of the world on an organic model. By an organismic metaphysics is meant the attempt to explain reality, or the world, or the universe, or the totality of everything as if it were a kind of organism or had properties like an organism such as being “alive,” having a “vital principle,” or displaying relations between parts like those between the organs of a living body. Positivism, on the other hand, refers to that tendency in thought which rigorously restricts all explanation of phenomena purely to phenomena themselves, preferring explanation strictly on the model of exact scientific procedure, and rejecting all tendencies, assumptions, and ideas that exceed the limits of scientific technique.

As a theory of being, organicism refers to the “metaphysical” ontology, which argued that there exist some metaphysical beings beyond the limit of physical beings. But as a theory of knowledge, positivism designates a positive or phenomenological epistemology that can be defined as the following:

[T]he thesis, which can be expressed in various ways, that “reality” consists of sense impressions; an aversion to metaphysics, the latter being condemned as sophistry or illusion; the representation of philosophy as a method of analysis, clearly separable from, yet at the same time parasitic upon, the findings of science; the duality of fact and value—the thesis that empirical knowledge is logically discrepant from the pursuit of moral aims or the implementation of ethical standards; and the notion of the “unity of science”—the idea that the natural and social sciences share a common logical and perhaps even methodological foundation (Giddens 1978: 237).

Evolutionary social theory had already emerged quite independently of Darwin (Burrow 1970). But pre-Darwinian organicism or biological metaphor was fundamentally different from Darwin’s theory of natural selection concerning the nature of evolution: for the former biological evolution meant the evolution of distinct organs, the wing, the hand and so one while for the latter the evolution of species as such. Pre-Darwinian evolutionary theory conceived of evolution as gradual, peaceful, piecemeal adaptation of some organs of a specific organism to its environment while Darwin’s evolution theory saw evolution as radical breaching transformation of species as such.
Even since Darwin's impact, positivistic organicism interpreted Darwin's theory of natural selection through the eyes of more traditional idealism.

By contrast, Hegelian essentialism relied on Aristotelian notion of change and more directly on Spinozian version of the Enlightenment. Spinoza influenced the Romantic movement in general, and its later movement in particular. For Spinoza, the only one substance or God is an absolutely infinite totality the essence of which is infinitely expressed in infinite attributes. Likewise, for Hegel (1770-1831) the only one substance or absolute Spirit is an absolute infinite totality, whose essence is reason, the activity of absolute Spirit. As Hegel put it in his Lectures on the Philosophy of World History:

[R]eason . . . is substance and infinite power; it is itself the infinite material of all natural and spiritual life, and the infinite form which activates this material content. It is substance, i.e., that through which all reality has its being and subsistence; it is infinite power, . . . and it is the infinite content, the essence and truth of everything, itself constituting the material on which it operates through its own activity (quoted in Harris 1995: 201).

As the Spinozian God is the organizing principle of the universe, the Hegelian absolute Spirit is the organizing principle of society. Hegelian essentialism believed that society as an organism has its essence and that its growth or development is the realization of its essence. In this sense, society develops of necessity from its essence. For Hegel, this essence is ideas called Geist, Spirit or God. But unlike Platonian transcendentalism, ideas are not transcendental ideals that exist beyond this world, but an immanent force that determines the structure and development of the universe. Thus, the essence of society objectifies itself in all customs, habits, institutions. Hegelian essentialism also conceived man as a living organism, not mechanical matter. Man has his own essence and his growth or development is the realization of his essence. The Hegelian subject does not have fixed transcendental essential nature. Rather, through
expressing his purpose in life, he achieves his essence as a finite spirit. He is always in
the process of movement in order to acquire the True. This implies that the Hegelian
subject moves towards a certain direction, the True. The reason why the Hegelian subject
can move is that he is a living substance: “the living Substance is being which in truth
*Subject*, or, what is the same, is in truth actual only in so far as it is the movement of
positing itself, or is the mediation of its self-othering with itself” (Hegel 1977: 10). Only
the living substance can move because it has its own contradiction. “This Substance”,
says Hegel, “is, as Subject, pure, simple negativity, and is for this very reason the
bifurcation of the simple; it is the doubling which sets up opposition, and then again the
negation of this indifferent diversity and of its antithesis [the immediate simplicity]”
(Hegel 1977: 10). In this way, man and society retains their spiritual or purposive
dimension, which was deprived by the Newtonian physics. Both society and man are
organic totality rather than mechanic atoms, in which the infinite essence of absolute
Spirit is expressed.

Positivistic organicism was more popular in the mid-19th century in France while
Hegelian essentialism was more popular in the early 19th century in Germany. Comte,
Spencer, Durkheim mainly adopted positivistic organicism while Marx embraced
Hegelian essentialism. But classical European sociologists did not restrict themselves to
the theoretical model of knowledge. Marx, Weber and Simmel also embraced the
morally practical.

In the nineteenth century the morally practical appeared in the early Romantics who
acted against “a too narrow constructing of human experience in terms of reason alone”
and who celebrate experience, “in its infinite richness and color and warmth and
complexity" (Randall 1954: 399). The most representatives of the early Romantics were Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829), August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767-1845), and Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829). The early Romantics emphasized the experience of life in the inner flow of consciousness, rather than abstract principles. The early Romantics also emphasized that individuals are qualitatively unique. Individuals are not abstract human beings like the abstract economic man, but concrete individuals who are bound to their own unique spatio-temporal, linguistic, or socio-psychological contexts. The early Romantics considered reason as part of life and history. Thus reason is limited by its own historicity, and context is more important than foundational axioms. But these early Romantics were soon eclipsed by transcendental subjectivism and finally Hegelian essentialism. Since then, the morally practical lost its intellectual power until the late nineteenth century.

But in the late 19th century, the morally practical was revitalized in a transatlantic community of discourse. The most representatives were Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), Thomas Hill Green (1836-1882), Henry Sidgwick (1838-1912), Alfred Fouillée (1838-1912), William James (1842-1952) (see Kloppenberg 1986). These thinkers were basically post-Darwinians. Unlike the technically practical which interpreted Darwin’s

2. I borrow the distinction between the early Romanticism and the late Romanticism from Saiedi (1993). Saiedi considered Romanticism mainly as a German movement and he distinguished the early German Romanticism from the later German Romanticism: “Early German Romanticism focuses on the idea that individual human beings are qualitatively unique and that they are free and autonomous. On the other hand, later German Romanticism defines individuals as passive embodiments of a universal history and celebrates tradition and religion” (69). I considers the early Romanticism mainly as an heir of the Vichian version of the Counter-Enlightenment, especially it hermeneutic approach to reality. But I do not deny that it also contains some of the Sadean version of the Counter-Enlightenment, especially its characterization of reality by paradox, mystery, contradictions, and chaos.
theory of selection as the struggle for survival among atomistic individuals, these thinkers emphasized the adaptive capacity of conscious human beings and recognized that contingency is important when explaining man and society (Wiener 1965). These thinkers fully accepted Darwin’s emphasis that “evolution was essentially a branching process, the creation of variety, rather than a main line of development with subsidiary ones” (Burrow 2000: 72), and recognized that context was more important than abstract principles. As a result, these thinkers situated practical reason in concrete sociohistorical settings, not in a priori ahistorical category. Thus we might say that the hallmark of the morally practical is contextualism that rejects excessively abstract, deductive and formal modes of thought. The morally practical, like the theoretical, preferred the organicist vision of the world to the mechanical one. But unlike the positivistic organicism that tended to see society as a transcendental entity that exists regardless of man’s participation, the morally practical conceived society as a cultural, not a biological, whole. Also unlike Hegelian essentialism that saw society as a substance, the morally practical saw society as the interaction of its elements, i.e., individuals. For example, Dilthey saw society as an intricate web of multiple relations established among individuals in constant interaction with one another.

[T]he individual. . .is an element in the interactions [Wechselwirkungen] of society, a point of intersection of the diverse systems of these intersections who reacts with conscious intention and action upon their effects (Dilthey, quoted in Frisby 1984: 47).

The morally practical advocated the Vichian subject, the self-creating as well as society-creating subject. The morally practical shared the traditional ideal of the whole man with the theoretical, but the morally practical argued that this ideal could be achieved in society. The growth of man comes together with the growth of society. The
whole being who belongs to a cultural community is characterized by his/her wholeness within him/herself, uniqueness and freedom, which were possible only in the process of his/her communion with society. According to this tradition, human beings could not be reduced to a part of a machine that had only a specific function because they were a self-sufficient cosmos. The morally practical did not see reason as a universal entity existing across time and space but as a historical product produced in specific historical, social, cultural, economic, and geographical contexts of each society. Human reason is a dynamic complexity situated in a specific history and tradition, in which human beings live, feel, desire, love, hate, eat, drink, create, worship, etc. Every society has its own reason, because every society has its own specific tradition, culture, and history. Every individual also has its own reason, but this reason is similar to other individuals’ reasons, because every individual reason is constructed within the same community.

Classical European sociologists utilized the theoretical and the morally practical when they criticized the technically practical. By contrast, they excluded the aesthetic, which was then represented by Schopenhauer (1788-1860). Early Romanticism as the aesthetic lost its power in the mid-nineteenth century. Since then, the aesthetic did not attract European intellectuals until the late nineteenth century when the irrational forces of modern European civilization began to appear more clearly. Schopenhauer saw human beings as having not only ideas (the categories through which human beings see the world), but also a will to life (a categoryless force that pushes toward certain ends). Schopenhauer had a powerful influence on later thinkers, especially Nietzsche and Freud, both of whom developed more materialist version of will to life. But later sociologists expunged the main advocates of the aesthetic model of knowledge such as Nietzsche.
(1844-1900) and Freud (1856-1939), who are nowadays considered to be forerunners of postmodernism, from the canon of sociology.

There might be two reasons for this exclusion of the aesthetic model from classical European sociology. The first is related to the newly emerging discipline called sociology. Classical European sociologists considered the aesthetic model of man and society as predominantly pre- and/or anti-social. The second is related to the historical context of the nineteenth-century. Classical European sociologists observed how German Romanticists turned into patriots, reactionaries and irrationalists after they had experienced the Terror and the military humiliations of Germany by the armies of Revolutionary France and of Napoleon. Classical European sociologists recognized the political and moral implication of the aesthetic model of knowledge: anarchy or Fascism. Considering their times as a transitional era from the traditional to the modern eras, classical European sociologists thought that the aesthetic could not provide any solid foundation on which a new social order would be established. Thus, they excluded the aesthetic model of knowledge from sociology.

Classical European sociologists such as Comte, Marx, Spencer, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel struggled with the urgent contemporary problems of the times by utilizing intellectual resources derived from both the Enlightenment and the counter-Enlightenment traditions. But there was a generational difference between Comte, Marx, and Spencer on the one hand, and Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel on the other hand. Comte, Marx, and Spencer belonged to the mid-nineteenth century. Becker (1963: 96) characterized this period as follows:

The phrase "break with the past" came spontaneously to the lips of the nineteenth-century historians because they were so much concerned with
the "continuity of history," the evolution of institutions. After twenty-five years of revolution and international war, most people felt the need of stabilizing society; and the most satisfactory rationalization of this need was presented by those historians and jurists who occupied themselves with social origins, who asked the question. How did society, especially the particular society of this or that nation, come to be what it is? The unconscious preconception involved in this question was that if men understood just how the customs of any nation had come to be what they were, they would sufficiently realize the folly of trying to refashion them all at once according to some rational plan.

Comte, Marx, and Spencer were not free from this rational plan and they concentrated tremendous efforts to synthesize the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment traditions in order to achieve it. They all produced grand narratives in part due to the efforts at synthesizing the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment traditions. Their commonality is that they all excluded the aesthetic.

Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel belonged to the late nineteenth century which was characterized by the growing awareness of the dark sides of industrialization and urbanization. Due to this historical fact, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel could pay more attention to the dark sides of modernity, especially the alienating effect of industrialization and urbanization. As a result, they were more sensitive to the aesthetic model of knowledge as compared to the previous generation. Nevertheless, Durkheim and Weber did not go far enough to embrace the aesthetic. In this respect, Simmel was exceptional. Among other classical European sociologists, Simmel was most sensitive to the aesthetic model of knowledge even though he was also influenced enormously by the Enlightenment traditions. Although Simmel presented many views similar to the aesthetic, later sociologists robbed him of his aesthetic character. Especially, early American sociologists translated Simmel as a formal sociologist. As a result, the aesthetic character of Simmel was expunged from sociology. That is why some
sociologists tried to reevaluate Simmel as a postmodernist (see Weinstein and Weinstein 1993).

Fundamental Assumptions of Classical European Sociology

Classical European sociologists (Comte, Spencer, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber) shared, to a greater or lesser extent, an hostility against the aesthetic model of knowledge. As a result, classical European sociology presented some fundamental assumptions about ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.

1) Ontology:

a. The Nature of the Social

On the nature of society, Comte rejected the technically practical while accepting the positivistic organicism of the theoretical. Comte objected to individualist approaches to society because he believed that society is an organic whole. Comte borrowed this view from biology, but unlike biological thinking, Comte conceived society mainly in terms of its mental aspects. It is ideas that make a society as an organic whole. This thinking is in fact part of long tradition of rationalism according to which reality itself is in the nature of ideas. In a sense, society is superior to the individual because society had the greater diversity of its functions: “The main cause of the superiority of the social to the individual organism is according to an established law; the more marked is the specialization of the various functions fulfilled by organs more and more distinct, but interconnected; so that unity of aim is more and more combined with diversity of means” (Comte 1968: 289). But once society was constituted, a division of labor to make individuals interdependent was required for its continued existence. Here the biological
analogy was employed again. More developed biological organisms like the human beings had more differentiated functions which did not result in chaos or disorder of the organism. "Structural differentiation" was ensued by functional integration. As the higher animal had more differentiated organs that had specialized functions, so did the higher society. In this higher society all parts functioned smoothly and peacefully with each other to integrate the whole. But society is not a simply division of labor, as the Smithian political economy argued. With the division of labor, the guidance of the state is needed to integrate society: "Without State guidance and the division of labour no society could exist at all; and conversely without society authority and the division of labour would be nothing" (Maus 1962: 14). Society as an organism develops over time according to the law of three stages: the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. Each stage has its own form of social organization: society is ruled first by pagan priests and soldiers, then by Christian clergy and lawyers, and finally, by industrialists and scientists.

Marx saw the social as an organic unity that is necessarily moving from potentiality to actuality. Marx's notion of labor plays the role of the form-giving, unifying element that brings objects back into the organically conceived production process. Society develops from the simplest substance, labor: "we must begin by stating the first premise of all human existence and, therefore, of all history, the premise, namely, that man must be in a position to live in order to be able to 'make history.'" But life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the
production of material life itself" (Marx and Engels 1995: 48). Society is a living organism whose character is determined by the method of organizing labor.

To explain the nature of society, Spencer did not take the technically practical tradition of the Enlightenment, but rather took the theoretical tradition of the Enlightenment. Even though Spencer was influenced more by the technically practical tradition of the Enlightenment, he did not follow it in regards to an ontology on society because he fully knew the anarchical implication of the its individualistic approach on society. Like other classical European sociologists, Spencer believed in a kind of social realism; he argued that society should be regarded as a distinctive level of reality. For Spencer, “the constant relations among its [society’s] parts make it an entity” (Spencer 1905: 448). But Spencer argued that there was the discreteness of the social organism standing in marked contrast with the concreteness of the individual organism: “The parts of an animal form a concrete whole; but the parts of a society form a whole which is discrete. While the living units composing the one are bound together in close contact, the living units composing the other are free, are not in contact, and are more or less widely dispersed” (Spencer 1905: 457). In spite of this wide dispersion, the social organism maintains its wholeness by means of culture. Spencer’s society is not a totalitarian organism; rather it consists of highly differentiated structures that fulfill their own specific functions so as to form a relatively loose, but stable whole. According to Spencer, this feature of society is a product of evolution. Not all societies share this feature; only the highly developed societies have it. This historical or emergent feature of society gave Spencer a conviction that a society could be regarded as an organism
Durkheim objected to both the technically practical and Hegelian essentialism, and accepted primarily positivistic organicism. Against the utilitarians who “supposed that originally there were isolated and independent individuals who thus could only enter into relationships with one another in order to co-operate,” Durkheim argued that “[c]ollective life did not arise from individual life; on the contrary, it is the latter that emerged from the former” (Durkheim 1984: 220, 220-221). Like other classical European sociologists, Durkheim believed in a kind of social realism; he argued that society should be regarded as a distinctive level of reality. But unlike Hegelian essentialism, Durkheim did not see society as a mystic whole entity whose development is a necessary realization of its substance. Rather, Durkheim followed the tradition of positivistic organicism which came from Saint-Simon, Comte, and Spencer. Following them, Durkheim saw society as a living organism whose development can be explained in terms of the law of division of labour. Durkheim knew well that the term of division of labour came from Smithian economics, but he did not want to restrict its implication to the economic field. Durkheim argued that biological works confirmed that the law of division of labour is a general law applicable to all organisms. Society is not an exception. But the division of labour in society is not exactly the same as one in organisms because, unlike organisms, society is “above all a composition of ideas, beliefs and sentiments of all sorts which realize themselves through individuals. Foremost of these ideas is the moral ideal which is its principal raison d’être” (Durkheim 1953: 59). In different words, the division of labour in society entails specific solidarity which binds individuals together to form societies. Durkheim argued that the structure of society depends on the nature of its specific form of solidarity. According to him, there are two ideal types of solidarity:
mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity is a form of social integration of the less developed society in which the division of labour is based on resemblance or sameness. In the "self-same type of society," society is like an entity which totally absorbed all its members. Thus there are no individuals who have their own subjectivities because the collective consciousness possesses most power. By contrast, organic solidarity is a form of social integration of the more developed society in which the division of labour is based on differences. As the higher animal had more differentiated organs that had specialized functions, so did higher society. As a higher organism is a system of diverse organs each of which has its own individuality, a higher society is a system of diverse institutions each of which has its own individuality.

Weber was a little different. Salomon (1935: 68) argued that "Weber operates entirely without concept of society." In fact, Weber seldom used the term "society" (Bendix 1977: 476), and did not give any reified status to the notion of society. Society is not a reified entity which operates automatically without the participation of actors. Rather, society is a man-made pattern: "When reference is made in a sociological context to a state, a nation, a corporation, a family, or an army corps, or to similar collectivities, what is meant is . . . only a certain kind of development of actual or possible social actions of individual persons" (Weber 1978: 14). Nevertheless, Weber did not deny the social as a distinctive character in its own right. Society is "modes of patterning action" through which course of actions are repeated by actors.

b. The Nature of Man

Comte rejected the technically practical that saw human beings as matters as well as the theoretical that saw human beings as wholly rational. Instead, Comte proposed a
position nearer to the morally practical. While not totally accepting the Vichian notion of human beings: “He [Comte] would not have said that man created himself through the ages” (Aron 1998: 107), he accepted the basic idea of the morally practical, i.e., one that the growth of man comes together with the growth of institutional life of society. Comte believed that both human beings and society in general would go hand in hand through the three stages and argued that there were essential dispositions, which were present from the beginning and did not change through the ages. They are feeling (affection or sentiment), thought (intelligence), and action (will). Comte argued that all these three dispositions could be differently combined through the ages. Comte, in fact, argued that there were two ways of synthesis of human dispositions: the theological and the positive ways. The metaphysical ways was just a transitional way from the theological to the positive ways. Comte (1975: 7) argued that “[t]he Theological synthesis depended exclusively upon our affective nature.” In the theological stage, human beings’ affections were stronger than their intellect, within which their egoistic, selfish instincts were stronger than their benevolent, social ones. In this synthesis the intellect was a slave of feeling; it was reduced to abject submission. Thus this synthesis was purely subjective because “the objective basis was supplied by spontaneous belief in a supernatural Will” (Comte 1975: 19). Thus this subjective system “could not harmonise with the necessarily objective tendencies and stubborn realities of practical life” (Comte 1975: 7). This is the necessary basis for the development of the positive synthesis. Metaphysical and scientific intellect began to subvert all theological social order. But the intellect was not sufficient for harmonizing all human faculties. The emotional always was the basis for the task to harmonize all faculties of human beings: “the question of co-ordinating the
faculties of our nature will convince us that the only basis on which they can be brought into harmonious union, is the preponderance of Affection over Reason, and even over Activity" (Comte 1975: 11). With regard to this task, the intellect had mainly a methodological significance. The intellect discovers the external order, which became the basis of the further positive synthesis of our all faculties. Through the positive synthesis, the subjective synthesis of theology could begin to gain its objective attribute. Based upon the external order, the positive synthesis will “bring the three primary elements of our nature into harmony” (Comte 1975: 9). This development of human beings goes together with the development of institutions such as the family, the state, etc. Within the family, “Man comes forth from his mere personality, and learns to live in another, while obeying his most powerful instincts” (Comte 1968: 281). Through the family, human beings learn obedience and command; they learned how to modify their egoistic affections by the altruistic rules set up by the family. Within the state, human beings learn how to cooperate with other extra-familial people.

According to Marx, man is a self-creative being, who develops the capacities peculiar to his “species” as he lives and works with his fellows and who, in this process, acquires his ides of the world and of himself. For Marx, self-creative means that man produces and reproduces the means of his existence as well as himself by his productive labor. Man’s labor is characterized by man’s capacity of thinking conceptually. Marx agreed that only man is self-conscious, but he added the term “species.” The term “species” is in fact the counterpart of the Aristotelian term “substance.” Species is the category of the possible, denoting in particular those potentialities which mark man off from other living creatures. These potentialities are achieved in so far as the conditions of communism
allow an individual to develop and express all that he is capable of as a human being. In short, man becomes self-conscious in the process of becoming a species (Plamenatz 1975: 68). In other words, a human being, a specific being different from other creatures, is “species man” or communist man (Ollman 1971: 151). “Species man” means that man becomes self-conscious as he becomes aware of others. Becoming self-conscious, becoming aware of other selves and coming to recognize oneself as a being of a certain kind are intimately interconnected with each other; they are inseparable. Therefore, man is characterized by being self-creative, self-conscious, and world-conscious.

Spencer believed that human beings are originally asocial individuals. But through an unconscious, essentially biological hereditary process, originally asocial individuals become gradually tamed and increasingly integrated to form a society. The process of becoming a social being follows the general law of evolution from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity. Spencer argued that civilized man is physically superior to primitive man in terms of size and structure. Likewise, civilized man is emotionally more complex and flexible than primitive man. The evolution of emotion proceeds as the evolution of society proceeds. With regard to intelligence, civilized man is also intellectually more complex and flexible than primitive man. Intelligence such as abstract ideas is compounded out of simple intelligence such as concrete ideas and so there is progressing integration and complexity. What is at stake here is that Spencer connected the evolution of physical, emotional and intellectual dimensions of human beings with the evolution of society.

Durkheim (quoted in Miller 1996: 25) emphasized the real man’s social situation and situatedness: “The real man, whom we know and whom we are, is more complex; he is of
a time and place, he has a family, a city, a country, a religious and political faith, and all these and many other concerns come together, combine in a thousand ways, cross and crisscross in their influence so that it is not at first sight possible to tell where one begins and another ends.” The real man is an integral part of society. Durkheim admitted the old belief that human beings are composed of two parts: “Far from being simple, our inner life has something that is like a double center of gravity. On the one hand is our individuality—and, more particularly, our body in which it is based; on the other is everything in us that expresses something other than ourselves” (Durkheim 1973: 152). But Durkheim explained this duality of human nature without recourse to a metaphysical transcendence. Durkheim situated the origin of the individual self in the body and the origin of the social self in society. Durkheim argued that the relationship between the soul and the body can change over time. In the self-same type of society, the soul as the collective ideal tended to totally absorb the body, not allowing the genuine individual to arise. By contrast, in the pluralist type of society, the soul tended to develop enough to allow the genuine individual to arise. In this way, Durkheim connected the nature of human beings with the nature of society. Human nature historically changes in relation to the change of the nature of the division of labor.

According to Weber (quoted in Wallace 1994: 14), both “material and ideal interests directly govern man’s conduct.” For Weber, interests refer to ends. Additionally, human beings also possess certain material and ideal means of pursuing those interests or ends. Thus “All serious reflection about the ultimate elements of meaningful human conduct is oriented primarily in terms of the categories ‘end’ and ‘means’” (Weber 1968: 52). What is at stake here is that both ends and means are culturally given.
given means that “the meaning of the world is not fixed and inherent in the world; it is a variable and changeable construct—a labeling of some features of the world as means, and other features as ends, of given actions” (Wallace 1994: 16). In this sense, human beings are primarily cultural beings who can attribute meanings to objects as means as well as ends. But this capacity is not of pre-cultural substance within the transcendental subject. Instead of using the term “transcendental subject,” Weber used the term “personality.” For Weber, personality is “not a pre-cultural, pre-evaluative core, but a self which has found an anchorage for itself in a value, a value which not only mediates between self and world, but defines the meaning of that self’s activity. More than this, it is through this relationship to value that individuals are able to take a position towards the world” (Turner C. 1992: 58). “The capacity and the will to take a deliberate attitude towards the world and to lend it significance” is culturally learned. The meaning of an object lies in its relation to human action in the role of means or of ends in a specific society. But Weber emphasized the meaning of an object as “ends” of human action because he believed that social action driven by ends is more meaningful than one driven by means.

2) Epistemology

Comte criticized the strict empiricist epistemology of Francis Bacon and John Locke who contended that knowledge is only the product of direct experience via the physical senses. Comte wanted a theory-guided empirical study: “No real observation of any kind of phenomena is possible, except in as far as it is first directed, and finally interpreted, by some theory” (Comte 1968: 242). Comte basically accepted the theoretical when he conceived sociology as the abstract theoretical science of social phenomena. In fact,
Comte’s three laws of human development “were not laws in any real sense of the word, but descriptions of mental processes that could conceivably have followed one another in the course of human development” (Abraham 1973: 87). But Comte rejected the Enlightenment thinkers who considered mathematics as the model of science and wanted to apply mathematics to the area of human society. Comte did not believe that all scientific problems had a mathematical solution. According to Comte, the sciences formed a series of increasing complexity and decreasing generality. The more simple phenomena are, the more general they are, and vice versa. In a word, every science has its own separate subject matter that should be studied by its own specific scientific method. This classification of sciences was not just nominal; science depended on phases and stages of development. Comte traced how scientific knowledge was historically formed and developed. Mathematics represented the origin of positive philosophy; mathematics showed that the sciences should study invariable relationships between independent and even apparently isolated phenomena, rather than search for causes or substances. Astronomy was the first science to reach the positive stage; then came physics, next came chemistry, and after these three had reached the positivistic stage, thought about organic phenomena could become more positivistic. In this sense, Heilbron (1990: 155) names Comte’s theory of science a “historical and differential theory of science.” Sociology was the last science that would soon reach the positive stage. Biology, a science of living organisms, can provide the basis for sociology; biology showed that progress was the development of order. Human society was like biological organism; the dominant force in the human world is the development of human ideas or civilization. Sociology is the positive study of all the fundamental laws
pertaining to social phenomena. Only sociology could grasp social phenomena by inserting them into the general social evolution. In this sense, historical methods or historical comparisons of the consecutive states of humanity are important; they put the different periods of civilization into the law of general social evolution. In this sense, sociological knowledge is general.

Marx did not see the world as a collection of unconnected appearances, but distinguished essential events from accidental events (see Meikle 1985). For Marx, the essence of things is a concrete universal, from which the essential movements of things follow necessarily. Thus, Marx concentrated on finding a concrete universal and its necessary historical movement from potentiality to actuality. Marx traced how capitalism developed from commodity as the simplest capitalist social form. In *Capital*, Marx began with the elementary commodity, or "The Simple, Isolated, or Accidental Form of Value." From this elementary commodity, the Equivalent Form, a contradictory unity of use-value and exchange-value, necessarily develops. Money is simply a more developed expression of this contradictory unity of use-value and exchange-value. In this sense, that "The simple commodity form is...the germ of the money-form" (Marx 1990: 163). Capital is the final form attained by the value-form in its process of development. As Meikle (1985: 71) rightly pointed out: "The commodity-form is made the point of departure in 'the method of presentation,' because the enquiry had revealed it to be, as Marx repeatedly describes it, the 'embryonic form' of the essence whose necessary changes and realisations of potentials culminate in the attainment of the final, finished form of that essence: capital." For Marx, this essentialist method was intimately connected with historical method. But Marx's historical method is not a simple
comparative method which aims to attain a generalization from a comparison of historical data. Marx believed that an explanation requires the elucidation of inherent tendencies to particular sorts of change.

Spencer believed that there is a fundamental reality belying all appearances, but that we could not arrive at the true knowledge of this fundamental reality \textit{a priori}. Rather, we can acquire the true knowledge of this fundamental reality through discerning “persistence in consciousness”: “The real, as we conceive it, is distinguished solely by the test of persistence; for by this test we separate it from what we call the unreal” (Spencer 1900: 143). This persistence of fundamental reality in consciousness is what Spencer called “relative reality.” This has a dissoluble relation with fundamental reality. Considering space, time, matter, motion, and force as relative realities standing in dissoluble relation with fundamental reality, Spencer confidently argued that we could build up our science upon them. In \textit{First Principles}, Spencer drew his First Principles from the physics of his time: the indestructibility of matter, the continuity of motion, and the persistence of force. The universal law of evolution was achieved from systematic deductions from the First Principles. After formulating the law of universal evolution, Spencer tried to apply it to all areas, such as astrogeny, geogeny, biology, psychology, sociology, and ethics. Spencer firmly believed in the unity of all sciences because he believed that the law of evolution operated in physical, biological and social relations.

Durkheim presented two seemingly contradictory trends. In his methodological works such as \textit{The Rules of Sociological Method} (1895), Durkheim proposed positivistic methods that aimed to provide objective and universally valid descriptions of reality. By contrast, Durkheim proposed a contextual approach to knowledge in his substantive
works such as *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912) in which the validity of any truth-claim was not universal but was bound to designated historical contexts. These two trends are not in fact contradictory because Durkheim was neither a naïve positivist nor phenomenalist who would argue that reality consists of only sense impressions and thus the researcher should rigorously restrict all explanation of phenomena purely to phenomena themselves. Even his famous methodological argument that “Sociological method as we practice it rests wholly on the basic principle that social facts must be studied as things, that is, as realities external to the individual” (Durkheim 1951: 37-38) is not positivistic in the rigid sense of positivism. According to Durkheim, social facts are prior to the individual, and they exercise control over the individual through compelling and coercive power. But this power of social facts is possible only when social facts mold and penetrate the individual and the individual in turn internalizes them. In this sense, social facts exist only through individual consciousness. Then, how can we study the social facts that exist through individual consciousness as we do the natural facts that do not exist through individual consciousness? In different words, how can we study collective consciousness, i.e., the cause of individual actions? In this sense, we cannot directly address social facts such as solidarity; we just address them through their objectifiable effects, i.e., laws and the social effects of breaking them. In this sense, Durkheim was not content with a positivistic explanation of superficial phenomena.

Weber argued that we could only know a slice of reality through knowledge or science because knowledge is an approximation of reality. But Weber did not fully accept this relativistic epistemology because he believed that the researcher could escape the trap of relativism through the formulation of ideal types. As a way of escaping from

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
relativism and skepticism, Weber proposed the so-called “ideal type.” But the ideal type does not aim to exhaust the totality of reality: “An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct (Gedankenbild). In its conceptual purity, this mental construct (Gedankenbild) cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. It is a utopia” (Weber 1968: 90). When constructing an ideal type, the researcher picks up some distinct and essential features that seem to be “practically” relevant from his value. But before that happens, the researcher should carefully analyze a situation in depth in order to discover its distinct and essential feature. In this sense that the researcher’s value is involved in the process of constructing the ideal type, the ideal type is not an objective picture that exhausts the totality of reality, but a subjective distortion of it in a sense. According to Weber, the unique individual character of cultural phenomena could be grasped through historical research of it, for the criteria of choosing its distinct and essential features could be achieved through acknowledging its cultural significance at a specific historical juncture. The ideal type should be a logically coherent statement of the characteristic properties of a particular social phenomenon. As such, it is not a pure objective foundation (an autonomous, self-evident Platonian ideal) of knowledge, but a logico-historical and heuristic construction useful for understanding the unique individual character of cultural phenomena. Thus, if the ideal type tries to set forth the general, external, impersonal, objective forms of social actions, then it is in order to address the problem of their meaning for subjective life within a particular culture.
3) Ethics/Politics:

Comte believed that progress in science and technology would lead to the improvement of material well-being of individuals and societies and further the moral perfection of man and society. He distinguished four senses of progress according to the rule of increasing generality and complexity in phenomena: material, physical, intellectual and moral progresses. Like the hierarchy of sciences, these notions of progress are hierarchically interconnected with each other: the lower conditioned, but does not determine, the higher. Material progress is "the least elevated stage of progress, but being the easiest it is the point from which we start towards the higher stages" (Comte 1975: 84). Physical progress entailed the extension of the length of life, increased security for health, etc, whose influence on the well-being of man is much greater than material progress. Compared to these two notions of progress, "Intellectual and Moral progress, then, is the only kind really distinctive of our race" (Comte 1975: 85). But moral progress is more decisive for determining our well-being than intellectual progress. This belief in progress is directly connected with Comte's vision of ethics. Comte criticized utilitarian morality because he believed that it belonged to the theological and the metaphysical stages. Furthermore, Comte conceived utilitarian morality as one of the main causes of mental, and further social, anarchy. Comte also rejected the transcendental morality that advocated the absolute triumph of reason over other human faculties. He was modest in so far as he argued that "true morality requires a deep and habitual consciousness of our natural defects" (Comte 1975: 25). Without institutions that check our egoistic instincts, we can never achieve true morality. According to Comte, individuals begin to learn altruism in social institutions such as family and society
in general. To achieve altruistic morality, individuals should learn how to subordinate their animal instinct to social morality in institutions. Institutions are important in so far as they inform human beings that there is an external order that they should follow. The political implication of this view is a combination of liberalism and aristocracy. Unlike the conservatives, Comte recognized that it was inevitable that the division of labor would bring about individual diversities. Using the biological metaphor, he recognized that diverse individuals would depend on each other and thus form a mutually dependable whole. But the real condition of Comte’s time seemed to betray this belief. Thus, in addition to the biological analogy, Comte pointed out another solid basis of integration for society: government. The government is a centralization of authority to coordinate exchanges of parts. But in addition to that, the government should develop a common morality or spirit among members.

Marx believed that history in general is moving from potentiality to actuality. He explained this progress in terms of Aristotelian logic according to which each society developed necessarily out of an inherent conflict. For Marx, this conflict is inherent between the forces of production and the relations of production, both of which necessarily developed out of substance, i.e., labor. Marx saw his time as a transitional era from a capitalist to a communist society. Marx believed that his contemporary capitalism was entering into a phase of decay which would in turn become a potential matter for a more developed form of society. In the long run, history will achieve its telos. Marx argued that the good life consists of the activity of human life in accordance with the nature of human species. The moral implication of this view is also Aristotelian. In *Nicoacehan Ethics*, Aristotle argued that the good life was activity of human life in
accordance with virtue or excellence. Marx similarly argued that the good life was activity of human life in accordance with the nature of human species. Thus Marx tended to propose a universal ethics, which must be established in the course of history. Such a universal ethics was rooted in the nature of human beings; human species was a germ of universal ethics. In this sense, Marx was different from the morally practical vision of morality in which morality was bound to a context. Marx also recognized the relativity of morality, but he considered it as a transitory or underdeveloped morality-form. The reason why Marx criticized capitalism on moral grounds was that it prevented human beings from living the good life by depriving them of their nature as human species.

Utilitarianism, the representative of capitalist morality, is an underdeveloped morality-form. Politically, Marx was against both liberal democracy of the technically practical and totalitarianism of the theoretical. According to him, liberal democracy was based on atomistic view on society while totalitarianism was based on a false abstract, i.e., a totality abstracted from and set above human individuals. Marx believed that both of approaches conceived society as an abstract vis-a-vis the individual. As an alternative of them, Marx proposed a kind of corporate liberalism, which was based on his notion of human beings as species. Following Aristotle, Marx argued that a good man was he who fulfilled his human potential and all men had the potential to become good men. But under formal democracy, men’s potential to fulfill their potential could not be fully actualized. Marx advocated true participatory democracy in which man’s process of realisation of himself as a real species being is achieved through the co-operation of mankind and as a result of history.
Spencer believed that there is a universal direction of evolution from “an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity.” What is at stake here is that Spencer connected homogeneity with disintegration or lack of mutual interdependence and heterogeneity with integration or mutual interdependence. Differentiation means specialization of functions while integration means mutual interdependence of the structurally differentiated parts and coordination of their functions. The moral implication of this view is also evolutionary. According to Spencer, egoism and altruism has existed since earlier stages, and the conflict between them has been maintained. But historical data has showed that this conflict was in the process of gradual disappearance. As societies evolved into the trebly-compound industrial type, human beings adapted themselves to highly-differentiated organisms in which mutual interdependence of human beings will be reached. In this organism, the personal pursuit of happiness will be achieved in furthering the welfare of others because others’ welfare is intimately connected with his/her own welfare in this highly-differentiated organism. The political implication of this is also evolutionary. Spencer's ideal society was based on the notion of a definite, coherent heterogeneity. The true real superorganism permits all of its parts to act freely, which will naturally lead to their cooperation. Spencer believed that heterogeneity is more stable than homogeneity.

Durkheim believed that history is in a state of progress from societies characterized by mechanical solidarity to societies characterized by organic solidarity. Following Malthus, Durkheim emphasized the importance of an increase in population which entails an increase in the geographical proximity of individuals. What is at stake here is that Durkheim connected an increase of population density with moral density. According to
Durkheim, an increase in population density leads to an increase in frequent communications between people and the need for transformation, which in turn leads to an increase in moral density, intrasocial relations, and frequency of contact between individuals. Durkheim considered morality as a product of social forces. Durkheim proposed "moral individualism." A moral individual is "an active member of a political community whose duties and desires are directed toward that community and whose benefits (such as those in the Declaration of the Rights of Man) are protected by it" (Cladis 1992: 16-17). On the political dimension, Durkheim also knew well the danger of the technically practical as well as the theoretical. He believed that the technically practical which was then represented by utilitarianism wrongly assumed that the state had a limited role to protect what exist in human nature prior to society. According to Durkheim, individual rights are not natural rights but civil rights that are given by society. Durkheim also believed that the theoretical which was then represented by Hegelian essentialism wrongly assumed that the state is a mystic entity only for which the individual exists. Against both of them, Durkheim accepted the morally practical according to which individualism had developed into a major principle of social order precisely as the state had become stronger. Thus the relationship between the individual and the state is not a static, fixed relationship, but a dynamic, historical relationship. In the past, the state was not developed enough to permit individualism. In the transitory present, individualism was not developed enough to support a more complex form of social order. His whole work can be said to reflect his effort to reconcile liberalism and communalism. But in the coming age, individualism and the state will not contradict each other: "On the one hand we admit that the state goes on developing more and more;
on the other hand that the rights of the individual, which seem to be opposed to those of
the state, develop in a similar way” (Durkheim, quoted in Hall 1987: 154). Durkheim
envisioned the future as a highly differentiated society in which every individual has
his/her specific function in the society as a whole, morally bound to each other. Thus, we
can argue that Durkheim proposed a participatory democracy, which is the basic
argument of the morally practical.

Weber believed that history develops toward the increase of power over nature and
social environment, even though the tone of his narrative was imbued with the Counter-
Enlightenment lamentation on the trade-off of the Enlightenment achievement. Weber
argued that the emerging modern world characterized by the increasingly scientific and
technical control over nature, society, and human being forced human being to fall into a
moral dilemma. Following Nietzsche, he argued that the security which had been offered
by an absolute God had disappeared, but science could not fulfill the function that God
had performed. As a Kantian, Weber claimed that we had to choose our own meanings
according to knowledge which is partial but relevant to us. Without recourse to any kind
of an absolutist monistic God, modern individuals should choose and legitimate values
that are relevant to them: “so long as life remains immanent and is interpreted in its own
terms, it knows only an unceasing struggle of these gods [ultimate values] with one
another. Or speaking directly, the ultimately possible attitudes towards life are
irreconcilable, and hence their struggle can never be brought to a final conclusion. Thus
it is necessary to make a decisive choice” (Weber, quoted in Owen 1997: 126). Weber
observed the process of dominance of the bureaucratic élites over ordinary people and
stated that the bureaucratic élites were armed with formal rationality and bureaucracy was
the formidable agency of it. Weber worried about the development of the modern bureaucratic state that tended to effectively reduce the general populace to mass political subservience. Against this, he advocated a kind of liberalism in which each member of specialized occupational groups "seeks to realize a personally chosen value by its translation into worldly ends pursued in their respective institutional sphere" (Seidman 1991a: 160). Through his political life, Weber fought for parliamentary rule and full citizenship of the workers.

**Modern American Sociology as the Exclusion of the Aesthetic**

Modern American sociology was similar to classical European sociology with regard to excluding the aesthetic when establishing sociology as a science. Except for the aesthetic, modern American sociology utilized all models of knowledge. But unlike classical European sociology, modern American sociology was not critical of the technically practical, but accepted it as the primary model of knowledge. Modern American sociology also positively accepted the morally practical because it was favorable to the American mind of heroic individualism and capitalism. In addition, modern American sociology utilized the theoretical model, but there was a significant difference between America and Europe. In Europe, the essentialist version of the theoretical such as Marxism and structuralism strongly influenced European academe including sociology. But in America, the essentialist version failed to find a foothold in sociological discourse because American secular science could not endure its teleological, thus nonscientific, implication. Rather, modern American sociology utilized the transcendentalist version of the theoretical.
In short, in the course of establishing sociology as a scientific discipline, modern American sociology excluded the aesthetic model of knowledge, but made use of other models of knowledge such as the theoretical, the technically practical, and the morally practical. The aesthetic did not find its space in modern American sociology, and developed outside of sociological discourse. As formerly stated, the aesthetic strives to go beyond the boundary of the social. The task of the aesthetic is to blaspheme the sacred nature of the social, and thus, to deconstruct the artificial distinction between the social and the nonsocial. Avant-garde art represented the aesthetic model, but did its task within the boundary of art. Art was conceived as an autonomous realm independent of science and ethics. As a result, the aesthetic couldn’t be a serious challenge to modern American sociology. In what follows, I will review this process briefly. For the convenience of discussion, I will divide modern American sociology into four periods: 1880s to 1915/18, 1915/18 to 1945/50, 1945/50 to early 1960s, and early 1960s to early 1980s.

The first department of sociology was established in the United States, not in Europe. Albion Small (1854-1926) established the department of sociology in the United States at University of Chicago in 1892, and founded the first sociological journal, the *American Journal of Sociology* there in 1895. Charles R. Henderson (1848-1915) and George Vincent (1864-1941) were the other members of the department. Later, Small brought to the department people such as William I. Thomas (1863-1947), Robert E. Park (1864-1944) and Ernest W. Burgess (1886-1966). Pragmatism influenced Chicago sociologists, but during the first period it could not be said that they formed the so-called Chicago School of sociology yet: "Pragmatism at Chicago was early recognized to constitute a
school of philosophy. The same was not true of sociology or political science, whose schools only developed a generation later. The foundations for the school of sociology was laid at the earlier period, but in the form of necessary institutional conditions rather than high intellectual achievement" (Bulmer 1984: 32). Rather, the spirit of the so-called Chicago School could be found in Charles H. Cooley (1864-1929). In fact, Cooley taught at University of Michigan and was never on the Chicago faculty, but "his psychical presence was far more significant than his corporeal absence" (Lewis and Smith 1980: 162).

Along with the Chicago School, there were other founders of American sociology such as William Graham Sumner (1840-1910), Lester Frank Ward (1839-1913), Franklin Henry Giddings (1855-1931), Edward Alsworth Ross (1866-1951), all of whom taught at the Ivy schools. Ward spent nearly forty years in government service, and went to Brown University to teach there. Ward was the first president of the American Sociological Society. Sumner, the second president of the society, taught at Yale. Giddings, the third president of the society, taught sociology at Columbia. Ross taught sociology at Stanford University until his dismissal from the school in 1900, and few years later he moved to University of Nebraska and then to University of Wisconsin where he taught for some thirty years.

Virtually all early American sociologists were greatly influenced by Darwinian and Spencerian evolutionary naturalism. According to Hinkle (1980: 16-17), evolutionary naturalism designates three appropriate tenets:

1. it is possible and desirable to offer a naturalistic, rather than a supernaturalistic, explanation of social or societal phenomena (which are thus a domain in and of nature and which involves social forces); (2) the appearance of social phenomena can be accounted for (causally) in terms
of other more basic, elementary or genetic phenomena, states, or
conditions, out of which social phenomena arose gradually; and (3)
Darwinian (and Spencerian) views of organic evolution are held to afford
an acceptable model for interpreting the stability-instability of modes of
human association as effective adaptations or adjustments to the
conditions of human existence.

Evolutionary naturalism was a British version of Darwin’s evolutionism, which was
characterized by individualistic and deterministic interpretation of Darwin’s
evolutionism. This British version was prominent in America until the 1920s because of
“American provincialism and intellectual dependence upon Britain” (Connell 1997:
1561). Early American sociologists fully accepted the individualistic feature of this view.
Martindale (1966: 22) described the social ambience of the United States where an
individualistic approach to society was welcomed as such.

In the United States, a somewhat special circumstance eclipsed the
significance of holistic social theories from the beginning. The United
States had never had a powerful traditional aristocracy. Thus, the
revolution left the country in the hands of the middle classes, but without
the urgent necessity to consolidate the socio-political order against
possible counterrevolution by traditional aristocracies, on the one hand, or
against an activated proletariat, on the other. Furthermore, a great
continent remained to be exploited. As a result, there was no need for the
sharp reversal of the philosophical and ideological outlook comparable to
the European movement from enlightenment rationalism to romanticism,
from laissez faire individualism to sociological holism.

Early American sociologists tried to eliminate or minimize the deterministic feature
of evolutionary naturalism, preserving the belief in the progress or evolutionary
development of humanity from the simple origin to the complex present (or future).
Early American sociologists tried to debunk the organicists’ reification of social structure
and development by emphasizing the on-going process. This emphasis on the on-going
process fitted well to most early American sociologists’ aspiration to reform society with
the aid of scientific knowledge. In this post-Civil War era, America underwent rapid
industrialization and urbanization in which American sociologists saw advances of material life as well as decline of the traditional Protestant morality. American sociologists were very conscious of the ethical and political implications of the historical changes, as the vast majority came from rural and religious (Protestant) environments and was educated in the Protestant ethics that demanded every individual to work hard in order to believe that he is chosen by God. Every individual is a solitary pilgrim who has to go his own way, not having any choice but to believe that s/he is chosen by God. Nobody can decide who I am and what I do. This Protestant heroic individualism led American sociologists to the Enlightenment belief in progress, one that men can reform society towards betterment of humankind through applying scientific knowledge to society (see Greek 1992). But American sociologists had observed a lot of urban problems and the decline of the Protestant ethic. American sociologists wanted to preserve the traditional Protestant ethics by reforming social problems with scientific knowledge, believing that if they would discover laws about human organization, these laws could be used for the progressive betterment of society. These laws were usually expressed in terms of evolutionism: "the survival of the fittest." Except for some extreme liberalists, most American sociologists who observed the chaos of industrialization, urbanization, and immigration believed that the social system should be reformed and that it could be reformed without revolution. In this sense, early American sociologists wanted to be both scientific and moralistic.

Regardless of which school the early American sociologists belonged to, there were two different interpretations of evolutionary naturalism: the "social forces group" and the "interactionist group." The "social forces group" mainly followed the technically
practical when modifying evolutionary naturalism. The technically practical that the social forces group accepted was mainly based on the model of Newtonian physics that tries to find universal laws like the laws of gravity. This kind of the technically practical, like the theoretical, employed abstract and grand discourses. By contrast, statistics, which characterized the post-Newtonian model of the technically practical, was not yet employed. Following the technically practical, the “social forces group” emphasized individualistic and behavioristic aspects of evolutionary naturalism. The “social forces group” believed that some basic interests, desires or forces are universal or nearly universal characteristics of human beings, which impel people to do things. The social forces group believed that society or organization emerged out of the interaction of individuals, each of whom is trying to satisfy some kind of individualistic interest, desire or force. This group did not emphasize the rigid and objective feature of society, but recognized the importance of the social process that is a perpetual relation between forces lodged in individuals. The “social forces group” was represented by Small, Sumner, Ward, and Ross. Giddings also accepted the technically practical but his position was significantly different from other social forces group members. Unlike them, Giddings did not conceive early humans as egoistic, individualistic, selfish, atomistic, solitary, etc. Rather, he believed that “Human nature is [characteristically and] preeminently social nature” (quoted in Hinkle 1980: 107). Despite this difference, Giddings basically accepted the technically practical, but unlike the social forces group that accepted the Newtonian model of the technically practical, Giddings argued that statistics was needed.

3. Despite Small having established the Chicago sociology, he was not directly influenced by pragmatism (Bulmer 1984: 31). Rather, Small was similar to other Ivy school sociologists.
for sociology to become a reliable science. Even though statistics was relatively little used among sociologists up to 1930, Giddings became the forerunner of neo-positivistic sociology.

The “interactionist group” adopted primarily the morally practical when modifying evolutionary naturalism. This humanistic modification of evolutionary naturalism was possible with the aid of pragmatism which developed the basic tenets of the morally practical. Ontologically, pragmatism rejected the deterministic worldview which saw the world as inherently structured and determined in and of itself. Rather, it presented pluralistic worldview according to which contingency and ambiguity were considered as main features of the world. Reality is not ready-made and complete for all eternity but is still in the making. This indeterminate notion of the world was intimately associated with an emphasis on human beings as an active beings. Following the Darwinian notion of evolution, pragmatism saw the individual as an active flexible being who “continuously adapts to his environment, changing his action to meet the exigencies of the situation and transforming the situation to satisfy his practical needs” (Shalin 1986: 11). According to pragmatism, the individual and the environment mutually constitute each other. Action connects the individual and the environment. Knowledge of the world is neither a speculative pursuit of the eternal Truth nor the blind accumulation of bare facts. Rather, knowledge is an instrument by which man adapts better to the environment. Thus, what is important is to experience the world through action although knowledge is always partial because the world is still in the making: “the state of indeterminacy endemic to reality cannot be terminated once and for all. It can be alleviated only partially, in concrete situations, and with the help of a thinking agent” (Shalin 1986: 10). On the
direction of history, pragmatism basically shared the belief in human progress with the aid of knowledge, but it did not believe that the mechanism of progress was determined *a priori*. The concrete manifestation of progress depends on interactions between human actors and the environment. On morality, pragmatism emphasized the moral autonomy of human beings; they are responsible for their actions. This morality is intimately connected with a kind of participatory democracy which presupposes the pluralist organization of society. As Joas (1993: 18) excellently summarized:

The concept of rationality and the normative ideal of this mode of thought are theoretically grasped in the idea of self-regulated action. Pragmatism's theory of social order, then, is guided by a conception of social control in the sense of collective self-regulation and problem-solving. This conception of social order is informed by ideas about democracy and the structure of communication within communities of scientists.

Pragmatism was not a unified school, and generally accord unqualified primacy to neither individual nor society: the individual is explained in terms of society and society in terms of individual. Still we could find a significant division between nominalist and realist pragmatists. Peirce represented the realist version of pragmatism. Compared to Peirce, James and Dewey were more nominalist than realist (Lewis and Smith 1984)^4. These two version of pragmatism influenced American sociologists even though Peirce did not influence them as James and Dewey did. Similarly, we can distinguish between two groups of interactionist sociology: the psychical interactionist and the social interactionist.

^4. In fact, this division was not determinate because the two groups basically shared the basic tenets mentioned above (see Shalin 1986). Inspite of this, we could identify that these two groups emphasized one over the other among the individual and structure. We believe that this distinction would be helpful for further mapping the development of interactionist sociology.
The psychical interactionist group "draws attention away from the biological givens and centers the actual field of interpersonal interaction as the primary source of social organization. The psychical interactionists were more aware that the biological universals can be accommodated through a wide variety of social structures. It is, therefore, impossible to explain the diverse array of concrete forms of social organizations by pointing to a list of universal 'instincts' or 'forces.' Rather, each form must be interpreted through the specific interpersonal and historical processes that conditioned its occurrence" (Lewis and Smith 1980: 157-158). Unlike the social forces group which took the technically practical, the psychical interactionist group basically accepted Dewey's claim that we live in "a universe which is not all closed and settled, which is still in some respects indeterminate and in the making...an open universe in which uncertainty, choice, hypotheses, novelties, and possibilities are naturalized" (Dewey, quoted in Kennedy 1950: 52). James, Dewey, and Cooley could be representatives of the psychical interactionist group.

If the psychical interactionist group shifted the focus from the biological to consciousness, the social interactionist group shifted the focus from consciousness to the objective world. Mead represented this view, recognizing that "a great deal has been placed in consciousness that must be returned to the so-called objective world" (Mead 1962: 4). Mead gave priority to society over the individual: "the whole (society) is prior to the part (the individual), not the part to the whole; and the part is explained in terms of the whole, not the whole in terms of the part or parts" (Mead 1962: 7). To Mead, "the social whole precedes the individual mind both logically and temporally. A thinking, self-conscious individual is...logically impossible in Mead's theory without a prior
social group. The social group comes first, and it leads to the development of self-conscious mental states” (Ritzer 1996: 184). Compared to the psychical interactionist group that emphasized the open, flexible universe, Mead emphasized the universal and objective feature of society in which the individual participates through taking the roles of others: “Mead’s approach is compatible with the recognition that relatively to the most general co-operative acts there are highly invariant features of the world” (Morris 1962: xxx). Mead’s views are well presented in his famous book Mind, Self, and Society posthumously published in 1934 by his students. In fact, Mead’s views were “developed from 1900 on at the University of Chicago in the widely known and highly influential course, ‘Social Psychology’” (Morris 1962: v). One of the recent works showed well how Mead developed his views from Dewey’s 1896 article “The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology” (Cook 1993). Thus, we consider that Mead’s views were basically developed during the first period (1880s-1915/18).

In the second period (1915/18-1945/50), American sociologists started doubting their optimistic belief in progress and began to make efforts to control social problems. The massive violence of World War I made it no longer possible “to take ‘progress’ unproblematically as the reality to be studied, the object of knowledge” (Connell 1997: 1533). Also a varuety of “social problems” associated with the acceleration of industrialization, urbanization, and immigration were enough to challenge the optimistic belief in human progress. In parallel, America began to change into an organized bureaucratic society as large corporations and large-scale industries developed. Large bureaucratic organizations demanded that sociologists devise social skills to explain, predict, and control the social world, and offered huge amounts of funding to American
sociologists in return for solving social problems. The “efficiency” of the theory to solve social problems was the funding agents’ main concern (Turner and Turner 1990). This condition led American sociologists to detach themselves from evolutionism, regardless of whether it was mechanistic or dialectical, which proposed a grand narrative about the origin of humanity and its subsequent evolution of humanity. Indeed, there were still some scholars who continued to use the evolutionary scheme, but they increasingly lost their currency (Hinkle 1994: 65-148). Rather, American sociologists began to study the concrete social problems around them (Hinkle 1954, 1994; Turner and Turner 1990). Answering the demands of the funding agency, they devised sophisticated methodological strategies to explain, predict and control social problems. Sociology as a “genuine” science became conceptualized as inductive, empirical research: “Perhaps, the most characteristic concern of the second period was to make sociology a genuine science through a devotion to inductive, empirical research” (Hinkle 1994: 30). The effort to turn sociology into a science encouraged the detached and objective study of society, which allowed no room for the subjectivity of the researcher. Sociology became increasingly equated with the scientific method.

With regard to the notion of a scientific method, there were two main positions. One, proposed by the so-called Chicago sociology, took the morally practical as the model of sociology as a scientific method. I consider thus Chicago sociology as a sociological version of pragmatism which could be seen as an heir of the morally practical. As previously stated, the most important feature of the morally practical is the emphasis on the freedom of human beings in the open universe. Likewise, pragmatism believed in men’s conscious activity (rationality) to define and solve problems encountered in the
course of their conduct. For pragmatism, science is a type of activity, i.e., a problem-solving activity. Also, pragmatism believed that social order could be maintained only through active participation of actors.

As we have seen, pragmatism had two versions: James, Dewey, and Cooley’s nominalist version and Peirce and Mead’s realist one. The psychical interactionists such as Cooley followed a nominalist version. In the second period, although psychical interactionism was developed by Thomas, Ellwood, and Blumer (Lewis and Smith 1980), Thomas would be considered as its main representative because it was Thomas who set up this tradition at Chicago. Thomas challenged any kind of reified vision of society and man, revitalizing their subjective dimension. Thomas placed more emphasis on man’s power to define a situation than on the obdurate nature of the situation. Social structure or situation matters only when it is experienced by actors. Social structure is pluralistic because actors experience it in different ways. In this sense, social structure is fluid and dynamic enough to accord formative power to actors.

The realist version was developed by Park and his followers. In the Introduction to the Science of Sociology (1921), Park distinguished social nominalism from social realism, and rejected social nominalism which saw society as consisting of “a group of independent individuals who created social organization through psychical interactions” (Smith and Lewis 1980: 185). Park shifted the interest from social nominalism to social realism even though these two positions were intermingled:

On the macrolevel question of the relationship between consciousness and social organization, Park was...a self-professed realist. Yet when required to provide an account of the process through which social consciousness is formed, Park relied upon the American tradition of Dewey, Cooley, and Thomas. The structural component of Park’s thought
was definitely realistic, but his processual analysis remained essentially nominalistic (Smith and Lewis 1980: 186-187).

These two intermingled positions make it difficult to precisely grasp Parks’s position. Indeed, Park did not present his view in a systematic way, but I want to emphasize Park’s realist side because his students’ studies of cities were based on his realist view to study “society as it is”: “Under Park’s guidance, urban ethnography, the study of social behavior in its ‘natural setting,’ became the fulcrum of research at Chicago” (Lai 1990: 2). The subsequent monographs published in the 1920s and the 1930s such as The Hobo, The Gold Coast and Slum, The Gang, The Taxi-Dance Hall, and The Pilgrims of Russian Town were developed under Park’s guidance, and formed the dominant tradition at Chicago (Bulmer 1984). The most important feature of these studies is that the authors gathered the data from their firsthand acquaintance with the society around them. The realist ontology underlies these studies, according to which “a sociologist is merely a more accurate, responsible, and scientific reporter” (Park, quoted in Bulmer 1984: 91).

The other, proposed by the so-called neo-positivist sociologists, accepted the technically practical as the model of sociology as a scientific method. Neo-positivist sociology was developed mainly by Giddings’ graduate students at Columbia or students of their students. It is by the end of the 1920s that these “two major and antagonistic conceptions of science and scientific method are beginning to crystallize, one centering on statistics and the other on case study” (Hinkle 1994: 34). Up to 1930 American sociologists mainly used qualitative methods. Indeed, up to then statistics had been relatively little used (Harvey 1987: 74). But after the 1930s, neo-positivist sociology, which mainly used statistics, increasingly dominated American sociology. We consider neo-positivist sociology as an heir of the technically practical, but unlike positivist
sociology, neo-positivist sociology aimed to find truths with a small "t": they are conditional and subject to revision of the accumulation of new knowledge. During the second period, neo-positivist sociology was developed mainly by F. Stuart Chapin (1888-1974), William F. Ogburn (1886-1959), George A. Lundberg (1895-1966), etc. (Hinkle 1994). Neo-positivist sociology became the most dominant trend in American sociology, especially after 1930. Lundberg was considered to be the most representative figure by his contemporary sociologists (see Simpson 1949; Timasheff 1950). His Social Research (1929) set up subsequent development of positivistic sociology.

These two versions of American sociology, i.e., pragmatic sociology and neo-positivist sociology, were more interested in scientific "methods" than scientific "theories." But by the 1930s, a new interest in the general theory emerged. Pitirim Sorokin (1889-1968) and Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) represented this trend. While Sorokin did not exert any significant influence on the subsequent development of American sociology, Parsons set up the dominant theoretical position in modern American sociology. Before the publication of The Structure of Social Action in 1937, modern American sociology had been virtually equated with methods or methodologies. As we have seen, the models of the morally practical and the technically practical almost eliminated the need for the theoretical. In this respect, Parsons was outstanding: he helped American sociologists revitalize their interest in the theoretical.

Parsons was critical for his times, because most sociologists were busy doing empirical research. These empirical sociologists assumed that theory is a metaphysical or mystical remnant that should be expunged from the establishment of scientific sociology. By contrast, Parsons argued that all empirical researches already worked with reference
to generalized theoretical categories. Thus, from his early career, Parsons began to propose "generalized analytic theory" against a variety of empiricism (positivistic empiricism, particularistic empiricism, and intuitionist empiricism) as well as idealism. Parsons' term "generalized analytic theory" could be thought of as a sociologization of the transcendentalist version of the theoretical. Just as this version tried to retain the spiritual dimension of man and society while criticizing the harsh materialism of the Enlightenment, so Parsons wanted to retain the spiritual or normative dimension of human beings while criticizing the extremes of positivism and behaviorism. Parsons argued that positivism was inappropriate for the study of human beings because it used the models of the physical sciences which deal with an inanimate matter. Further, Parsons rectified the basic tenet of the theoretical, one that there is a necessary relation between the structure of mind and its external referents: "empirical reality...is a factual order. Furthermore its order must be of a character which is, in some sense, congruent with the order of human logic" (Parsons 1968: 753). Parsons proposed the "action frame of reference" as an equivalent to Kant's categories of time and space through which we experience or organize things themselves. Concrete entities are "constructed entities, the construction being determined by the structure of the frame of reference employed" (Parsons 1968: 754-755). In this sense, we can call Parsons a Neo-Kantian (Hinkle 1994: 53).

In the second period, American sociologists tried to preserve the liberal idea, but they felt that traditional liberalism was deficient in securing order. Those who embraced the morally practical and the technically practical kept working under the assumption of the liberal ideal of autonomous individuals. Roughly up to the 1930s, they claimed that
study on the normative dimension was not their jobs as genuine scientists because genuine scientists transcended the normative dimension. But what they really did was to defend American liberalism characterized by individualistic notion of society and reformative politics. To American liberalists, the social system was established and maintained by the voluntary consensus among individuals, and social problems could be solved on the individual level. Thus, they concentrated on devising methods to measure individual "attitudes." But confronting a series of social events during the 1930s such as the Great Depression, the rise of labor movement, and the rise of fascism and Nazism, American sociologists became to feel that American liberalism was threatened. On the social level, perceived threat was manifested as a "corporate liberalism," characterized by "administered markets and government regulation, with the rise, legitimation, and institutionalization of the corporate-capitalist order, and hence with the dominant position in the market of the corporate sector of the capitalist class" (Sklar, quoted in Woodiwiss 1993: 15). Parsons' voluntaristic theory of action was devised before corporate liberalism emerged as an alternative for traditional liberalism. As a result, Parsons worked under the framework of traditional liberalism. But since then Parsons began to move away from traditional liberalism towards corporate liberalism. In this sense, modern American sociologists in the second period had a strong normative interest in securing American liberalism.

The third period (1945/50 to early 1960s) was characterized by prosperity in the United States. The United States emerged from World War II as the most stable industrial society in the world, and seemed to many to have solved the fundamental problems of social survival and growth. Socially, this period could be expressed as a
great success of corporate liberalism. The welfare state seemed to successfully administer unstable markets through fiscal and monetary management, and the welfare state also seemed to solve the problem of economic inequality by income reallocations through taxation. The welfare state extended its power to intervene deliberately in society, and as a result, demanded a lot of technocrats armed with administrative skills to rationally control society. Much of applied sociology developed in this social context. Many modern American sociologists adopted the technically practical model of knowledge that deployed statistics for the empirical studies of social problems that the welfare state demanded them to study.

Parsons' functionalism idealized this, as reflected the prosperity of the domestic economy as well as the hegemony of America all over the world after World War II. Parsons saw the structure of society as mutually supportive and tending toward a dynamic equilibrium. His main concern was the maintenance of order within the social system. This equilibrium vision of society was Parsons' intellectual response to the "smooth" development of American capitalism after World War II. As Martindale (1966: 23) put it:

Only after the closing of the American frontier, the rise of mass industry, two world wars, and the Great Depression was the collective and its problems brought to central focus in the American outlook as had long been the case in Europe. The time was finally ripe for the major development of a form of sociological holism. Sociological holism eventually emerged in American sociology under the name of functionalism or, as it is sometimes called, structural functionalism.

Parsons' functionalism showed some inherent conflict with the theory of the welfare state because the theory of welfare state acknowledged that there existed "inherent social 'imbalances' of a sort that needs to be corrected, changed," rather than to assumed that
"there is, fundamentally, a self-maintaining social system" (Gouldner 1970: 348).

Parsons dealt with this conflict by proposing a cybernetic hierarchy among subsystems. What is important to us is that Parsons adopted the transcendentalist version of the theoretical. Martindale (1966: 30) rightly pointed out that Parsons' functionalism was a revised version of positivistic organicism, the modern rendition of the transcendentalist version of the theoretical:

Actually, sociological functionalism is a revised version of positivistic organicism. In contrast to the various branches of social behaviorism, all of which treated the individual and various of his properties as primary social realities, in a manner reminiscent of the positivistic organicists, the functionalists take some form of collectivity as the primary unit of social life. Sociological functionalism rests on the premise that social life is organized into organic systems. It also assumes that any item in the social system is embedded in a functionally interdependent set of relations within the whole (Matindale 1966: 30).

Even though he did not give up the voluntaristic theory of action totally (Turner and Beeghley 1974), Parsons shifted his interest from the voluntaristic actor to the normative forces of the social system (see Scott 1963, 1974). This shift already began when Parsons published "Values, Motives, and Systems of Action" and The Social System in 1951. But it was not until 1956 in Economy and Society (coauthored with Smelser) that a more elaborated explanation of functionalism was developed (Brownstein 1982). Parsons elaborated his theory in decidedly more functionalist and formalist terms. Relying on his analytic realism, Parsons concentrated on building a systematic theory, which assumed a systematic world of phenomena as its counterpart. From our perspective, Parsons faithfully followed the basic tenet of the theoretical that the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things. Thus, what is important is to build the "order and connection" of ideas. Individual idea or concept is
not important unless it is systematically connected to others that form the whole system of ideas. In this model, a concept should have coherence with the total system of assertions within which it belongs. It is thus collectivity, not individuality, that counts. This holistic position hints that Parsons’ functionalism is an heir of the transcendentalist version of the theoretical. Following the transcendentalist version of the theoretical, Parsons tried to invent sociological theory as “grasping the most abstract, fundamental, and universal features of society and weaving them into a general theory that aspired to comprehend all societies—past, present, and future” (Seidman 1994: 112-113). Just as ideas or forms are a transcendent and immaterial realm of ideal entities, so Parsons’ theory is “an autonomous, intellectual enterprise, unsullied by social interests or moral advocacy, whose sole justification lay in the general truths that it inspired to reveal” (Seidman 1994: 113).

C. Wright Mills (1916-1962) criticized corporate liberalism as an ideology of the power elite from the perspective of a small-scale world of small entrepreneurs and farmers. He did not see the United States as a functionally integrated system or well-administered welfare society, but an exploiting system in which the power complex dominated the middle and the mass. Mills also criticized both empirically-oriented applied sociology and Parsons’ functionalism for justifying corporate liberalism. When criticizing Lazasfeld’s “abstracted empiricism” and Parsons’ “grand theory,” Mills utilized the realist version of the morally practical. Starting early on in his career, Mills was enormously influenced by pragmatism. From the perspective of pragmatism, grand theory or grand narrative is useless because neither counts for individuals. In the revised
version of his dissertation *Sociology and Pragmatism*, Mills (1964: 268) expressed this below by quoting James.

Damn great Empires! including that of the Absolute. . .Give me individuals and their spheres of activity. . .I am against bigness and greatness in all their forms, and with the invisible molecular moral forces that work from individual to individual, stealing in through the crannies of the world like so many soft rootlets, or like the capillary oozing of water, and yet rending the hardest monuments of man's pride, if you give them time. The bigger the unit you deal with, the hollower, the more brutal, the more mendacious is the life displayed. So I am against all big successes and big results; and in favor of the eternal forces of truth which always work in the individual.

Mills accused grand theory of not connecting with substantive problems and thus providing ideological support for the status quo. Mills also criticized trivialized technically practical model of knowledge then represented by Lazasfeld, and criticized abstracted empiricism for its conducting of trivial studies which were psychologistic in orientation, and lacking any sense of connection with the wider social structure.

The core, from which Mills criticized both grand theory and abstracted empiricism, is one of the basic tenets of the morally practical: contextualism. But Mills' acceptance of the morally practical is significantly different from the nominalist version of the morally practical. While the nominalist version was mainly concerned with the “situational” feature of contextualism, Mills' version of the morally practical was primarily concerned with the “structural” feature of contextualism. While the nominalist version tended to concentrate on the micro level of social processes in which meaning is the most important sociological problem, Mills paid more attention to “power,” and criticized the formalistic aspect of pragmatism, which disengaged itself from politics and pressing social issues.

The fourth period (early 1960s to mid-1980s) could be characterized by the crisis of the 1950s’ achieved modernity. In the 1950s, most mainstream sociologists held the
triumphant belief that, for the first time in history, industrial society had solved the
fundamental problems of social survival and growth. But starting at some point in the
1960s, this belief began to disintegrate. Kumar (1978: 187) documented the ambience of
the time as the following:

The ‘end of ideology’ is itself denounced as an ideology, the ideology of a
complacent, short-sighted and one-sided materialist society. There is the
discovery, or rediscovery, of the dark side of industrialism. . . The
economic benefits of industrialism are seen to be purchased at the cost of
increasing ‘dis-economies’ to the society at large: pollution, crowding, the
exhaustion of the natural fossil fuels on which the industrial economy
itself depends. The main currents of industrialization—rationalization and
bureaucratization—run into an impasse, and increasingly large-scale
hierarchical organization seems productive mainly of inefficiency and
irrationality.

This decline of belief in triumphant industrialism was further ignited by the new
social movement: the civil rights movement, women’s liberation movement, the anti-war
student movement, the New Left, the hippie counterculture (“sex, drugs, and rock ‘n’
roll”), and the gay-lesbian movement. These new social movements criticized corporate
liberalism in general and academic discourse in particular as a dominant ideology that
justified the white/Anglo-Saxon/Protestant/masculine/middle class/aged/heterosexual
worldview. These movements extended the subject of knowledge and generated new
social knowledges such as African-American studies, feminism, lesbian and gay studies,
cultural studies, etc. But up to the early 1980s these new knowledges did not
fundamentally challenge the modernist framework of American sociology that saw
scientific knowledge (the theoretical and the technically practical) as the primary model
of knowledge. Most of these new knowledges were produced outside of mainstream
American sociology. Compared to other human studies, American sociology was
relatively slow to integrate these new forms of knowledge.
But some American sociologists tried to embrace these new knowledges. They thought these new knowledges would endorse the realist version of the morally practical. Feminist sociology represented this trend. Modern feminism in general emerged from the so-called second-wave women’s movement in the late 1960s through the 1970s; it emerged as an interdisciplinary effort to theorize this movement in such fields as philosophy, history, economics, anthropology, political science, psychology, literature, religion, and sociology. Modern feminism appeared in several forms: the liberal, the Marxist, the radical, the socialist, and the psychoanalytic feminism (see Tong 1989). These different types of feminism are “modern” insofar as they mimic the modern notion of science directly inherited from the Enlightenment tradition: rationalist foundationalism and empirical cause-effect model.

Rationalist foundationalism tried to discover some fundamental foundations on which society as well as true human knowledge are systemically organized. Modern feminism also tried to discover some fundamental foundations of gender inequality in society, on which feminist knowledge is systemically organized. These fundamental foundations had different names for different types of feminism: “a set of customary and legal constraints” for liberal feminism, “class system” for Marxist feminism, “patriarchal system” for radical feminism, “dual system of class and patriarchy” for socialist feminism, and “Oedipal logic” for psychoanalytic feminism. According to this foundationalism, gender inequality was a manifestation of some fundamental laws governing all social phenomena; therefore, modern feminists tried to establish an abstract grand system of knowledge on gender inequality, deducing from these some fundamental laws.
Modern feminists also believed that causes operate at the level of measurable variables. According to this, women were reduced to a measurable variable (gender). Modern feminists wanted to add one more variable called gender in order to establish "a general theory" that could explain the causes of gender inequality. Research was designed using a deductive form of logic wherein theories and hypotheses were tested in a cause-effect order. These empirical studies were considered a key task in developing knowledge on gender inequality. Modern feminists believed that sexism and androcentrism in scientific inquiry are the consequence of science badly conducted, and that better scientific knowledge on society will be achieved if feminists eradicated these biases in scientific inquiry. Modern feminists mainly challenged the incomplete way scientific methods were practiced, not modern Western science itself.

The new social movements also provided a social ambience in which Parsons' functionalism appeared untenable. Society could no longer be seen as an integrated system. Instead, many emerged new trends in sociology that challenged Parsons' functionalism. They are symbolic interactionism, dramaturgical analysis, phenomenological sociology, ethnomethodology, exchange theory, conflict theory, etc. These theories adopted new models of knowledge different from Parsons' functionalism. Broadly speaking, symbolic interactionism, dramaturgical analysis, phenomenological sociology, and ethnomethodology followed the nominalist version of the morally practical that emphasized action (individuality) over structure (collectivity). They all considered meaning the most important sociological problem and considered language the primary source of social meaning (Lemert 1979). They all followed the nominalist version of the morally practical: "these subjective-idealist theoretical orientations easily..."
could have revived Cooley, Ellwood, and other American psychical interactionists with whom they are metatheoretically continuous” (Lewis and Smith 1980: 247).

Symbolic interactionism is associated with Herbert Blumer who coined the term “symbolic interactionism” in 1937. Blumer wrote a series of articles attacking the established sociological position, which were collected in 1969 in *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. There Blumer presented the nominalist version of the morally practical. Blumer argued that society is made up of active individuals who have selves. Individual actors form society in the ongoing processes of interacting with each other; without consistent interaction between individual actors, society would stop existing. Goffman’s dramaturgical analysis embraced the nominalist version of the morally practical. Against prevailing theoretical abstractions and research methods to capture “reality,” Goffman was concerned with how realities are socially constructed in concrete interactions. Social order is the result of social interaction as well as the foundation for on-going interaction. Phenomenological sociology took the nominalist version of the morally practical, and traced its roots in German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). In their book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966), Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman developed Husserl’s insight into sociologically significant inquiry. Berger and Luckman (1966: 18) asked “How is it possible that subjective meanings become objective facilities?” They emphasized the subjective experience of the reality of everyday life. “In contrast to Goffman, whose actors appear to be reading scripts which were written by others, Berger and Luckman’s actors improvise and create their own scripts” (Wallace 1994: 263). Garfinkel’s ethnomethodology also adopted the nominalist version of the morally practical. According to him, the social world is orderly
organized, but this order is not "out there." Rather, it is achieved by active participants who share "common sense knowledge of social structures."

It should not be ignored that in this period there began the rapid development of new technologies in mass media represented by the launching of the Russian Sputnik in 1957. The first landing on the moon in 1969 convinced people that the space age which technologists and men of science would lead had begun. With the sense of crisis, a new optimism armed with the technological determinism began to spread. In this context, renewed concerns with social change emerged. Futurology became the fashion of the time. Many social scientists, most of whom were prominent announcers of the "end of ideology" in the 1950s, presented post-industrial society as the future. Herman Kahn and Anthony Wiener's *The Year 2000* (1967), Z. Brzezinski's *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technnotronic Era* (1970), Peter Drucker's *The Age of Discontinuity* (1971), and Daniel Bell's *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (1973) were the representative books during those days. But among the post-industrial society theories, Bell's theory was the most representative. Daniel Bell, a sociologist and the Chairman of the Commission in the Year 2000, was intellectually an heir of the Enlightenment thinkers such as Turgot and Condorcet, and more directly of the 19th century evolutionists such as Saint-Simon, Comte and Spencer. But unlike his forerunners who had conceived of industrial society as the last stage of evolution of human history, Bell added one more last stage to it: the post-industrial society. But the basic logic of Bell's post-industrial society theory was the same as one of the industrial society theory imagined by his intellectual precursors. This optimistic belief in technological progress generated a social ambience in which positivistic sociology equipped with the technically practical model of
knowledge flourished. Positivistic sociology was confident with the sociologists' ability to understand, predict, and control men and society with scientific knowledge.

George Homans' exchange theory and Randall Collins' conflict theory represented this positivistic orientation. They tried to synthesize the technically practical and the transcendentalist version of the theoretical. They are intellectual heirs of Newton as far as trying to explain everything in terms of a few concise principles. In 1961 Homans published *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms*. Since then, exchange theory soon became a widespread movement throughout the social sciences including sociology. Exchange theory "gained not only major adherents but influential revisers...and it deeply affected sociological work in virtually every empirical field" (Alexnader 1987: 157).

What is important is that Homans tried to synthesize the technically practical and the transcendentalist version of the theoretical. In his previous work *The Human Group* (1950), Homans was more concerned with empirical generalization. But in *Social Behavior*, Homans went further than mere empirical generalization, he wanted to explain them in terms of deductive reasoning:

> The inevitable next step is to ask why the empirical propositions should take the form they do, and this is to ask for explanations. Once you have established that the height of the tides varies with the phases of the moon, your next step is to ask why this proposition should hold good. And once you have established that the higher a man's rank in a group, the more closely his activities conform to its norms, you will ask why it should be so. The only way to get an answer is to borrow from somebody else's work, if you can, or invent for yourself, if you must, a set of more general propositions, still of the same form as the empirical ones, from which you can logically deduce the latter under specified given conditions. To deduce them successfully is to explain them (Homans 1961: 9-10).

For this task, Homans borrowed higher-order propositions from the behaviorist psychology of B.F. Skinner and what he called "elementary economics." But the
fundamental logic Homans followed is the Newtonian synthesis of reductionism (the technically practical) and deductionism (the theoretical). Homans’ exchange theory adopted Newtonian physics as the primary model of science of social behavior or true exchange. As Newtonian physics reduces organized wholes to their simplest units, Homans’ exchange theory reduces the social to individual behaviors, and further, individual human to individual animal behaviors. Individual animal behavior is the most simplest unit of all behaviors, and thus, basic propositions about individual animal behavior is generally applicable to all behaviors. Homans considered these basic propositions as the First Principles in his deductive system. For Homans, these First Principles are indemonstrable: “As we move towards more and more general propositions, we reach, at any given time in the history of science, propositions that cannot themselves be explained” (Homans 1961: 26). As previously stated, the First Principles should be invented or borrowed from other sciences. Homans called this process of borrowing or inventing the more general propositions “induction.” This process is “an act of creation, which has no rules of procedure that will ensure you success” (Homans 1961: 10). In a sense, these First Principles do not guarantee an empirical referent in the empirical world. In this sense, Homans can be seen as a Platonist. But Homans was not content with induction because he wanted genuine explanation. For Homans, explanation is “the process of deriving the empirical propositions from the more general ones” (Homans 1961: 10). Explanation has definite rules of logic. As Newtonian physics explains all phenomena in terms of three laws of motion, Homans’ exchange theory tries to explain all social behavior in terms of five general psychological propositions about human behavior. Homans ambitiously claimed
that "My strategy is that deductive explanations should be inductively arrived at"
(Homans 1961: 10).

In his work *Conflict Sociology: Towards an Explanatory Science* (1975), Randall Collins also tried to change sociology into a science. Collins criticized both naïve positivism which equates science with precise measurement and careful statement, and the theoretical in sociology (functionalism) that searches for universals because "phenomena that are truly universal cannot be explained in any testable fashion, but only speculated about" (Collins 1975: 6). For Collins, real science provides generalized explanation. The essence of science is the "capacity to give the conditions under which some things happen rather than others" (Collins 1975: 2). In other words, the real explanation of science provides conditions for variations in phenomena, but a pseudoexplanation of pseudoscience doesn't. For Collins, real science achieves the scientific ideal to explain everything in terms of a few concise principles. These principles should be ceaselessly applied to other phenomena so their explanatory power can be tested. Formulating some universal principles is not sufficient if it leaves "the problem of stating conditions under which things happen or do not happen. . .Without such a statement of conditions for variation, there is no proof that explanation is right, that the way of conceptualizing the phenomenon captures its essential features" (Collins 1975: 6). For Collins (1975: 2-3), "the method of validating a theory—of showing that its explanations are true—ultimately depends on its capacity to act as an economical and coherent filter for our experience in the broadest sense." In this sense, Collins' conflict theory synthesized the technically practical and the transcendentalist version of the theoretical. As the following statements show well:
The scientific ideal is to explain everything, and to do it by making causal statements which are ultimately based upon experience. The most powerful scientific theory is the one that can get the most explanatory mileage out of the most concise body of principles. Science is a way of finding the common principles that transcend particular situations, of extrapolating from things we know to things we do not know, a way of seeing the novel as another arrangement of the familiar (Collins 1975: 2).

Fundamental Assumption of Modern American Sociology

In sum, modern American sociology utilized all models of knowledge except the aesthetic. While mainstream American sociology mainly adopted the technically practical and the theoretical, critical sociology and interactionist sociology embraced the morally practical. In this sense, we can identify three types of modern American sociology. The following is a brief summary:

1) The Technically Practical Version of Sociology ("Positivistic Sociology"): Positivistic sociology was first developed by the "social forces group" in the first period. Small, Summer, Ward, and Ross adopted the model of Newtonian physics, and like him, they tried to find the universal laws of society and man. The social forces group claimed that there exist universal basic interest, desires or forces that impel people to do things, and thus human behaviors could be explained in terms of those basic social forces. Positivistic sociology was further developed by neo-positivist sociologists in the second period. George A. Lundberg represented this period. Unlike the social forces group, neo-positivist sociologists did not adopt the model of Newtonian physics that aimed to find absolute universal laws. Rather, they adopted statistics as the primary model of knowledge, which aimed to formulate empirical generalization. Neo-positivist sociology has dominated modern American sociology. In the fourth period, positivistic sociology
also began to reemerge in George Homans’ exchange theory and Randall Collins’ conflict theory. Following Newtonian physics, they tried to explain all social behavior in terms of a few general propositions.

2) The Morally Practical Version of Sociology ("Critical Sociology" and "Interactionist Sociology"): The morally practical was associated with the American pragmatism of Peirce, James and Dewey. Pragmatism in general accords unqualified primacy neither to the individual nor to society, but a significant differentiation between the nominalist version and the realist version could be found. The nominalist version of pragmatism emphasized the power of human agency to shape the world which is indeterminate. By contrast, the realist version of pragmatism emphasized the contextually-bound realities which shape people’s lives. These two versions of pragmatism had their counterparts in sociology. The nominalist version of pragmatic sociology ("interactionist sociology") was first developed by Charles H. Cooley and William I. Thomas in the first and second periods. Later, interactionist sociology was developed into Herbert Blumer’s symbolic interactionism, Goffman’s dramaturgy, Garfinkel’s ethnomethodology, Berger and Luckman’s phenomenological sociology, etc. Interactionist sociology tended to concentrate on the micro level of social processes in which meaning is the most important sociological problem. The realist version of pragmatic sociology ("critical sociology") was first developed by George H. Mead and Robert Park in the first and second periods. Later, critical sociology became associated with C. Wright Mill’s radical sociology that paid a more attention to “power.” Mills criticized formalistic aspect of pragmatism, which disengaged itself from politics and pressing social issues. Through Mills, critical sociology developed to encompass a
variety of critical thoughts associated with Marxism, feminism, gay-lesbian thoughts, African-American thoughts, etc. Even though these critical thoughts relied to some degree on Marxism, they did not accept the essentialist version of the theoretical that Marxism had.

3) The Theoretical Version of Sociology ("Functionalist Sociology"): Functionalist sociology was developed by Talcott Parsons in the second and third periods. Beginning early in his career, Parsons was very critical of the technically practical model of knowledge, what he called utilitarianism. Following the tradition of positivistic organicism, Parsons proposed a kind of transcendentalist version of the theoretical, and tried to devise a systematic theory, which assumed a systematic world of phenomena as its counterpart. In this sense, Parsons faithfully followed the basic tenet of the theoretical, one that considers the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things. Thus, what is important is the "system" of individuals, not the individuals themselves. An individual idea or concept does not count unless it is systematically connected with the total system of assertions to which it belongs. Like Plato's Idea, Parsons' system of ideas is more "real" than individual things that do not belong to it. Parsons' functionalism was an expression of the most abstract, fundamental, and universal features of society.

All these types of modern American sociology shared the hostility against the aesthetic model of knowledge even though the degree of hostility differed from one to the other. As a result, all these types of modern American sociology shared some fundamental assumptions about ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.
1) Ontology

a. The Nature of the Social

Positivistic sociology in general assumed that the social world showed recurrent or persistent patterns as the physical world did. Compared to neo-positivist sociology, positivist sociology emphasized more deterministic character of the social world. Positivist sociology assumed that the social world is orderly and integrated like a machine whose parts operate according to mathematical laws of dynamics. Neo-positivist sociology saw the social world as recurrent patterns of interaction among individuals, rather than as a reality \textit{sui generis}. Neo-positivist sociology replaced absolute laws with more modest empirical generalization, but it still assumed that patterns of interaction among individuals would show orderly organized characteristics.

Both interactionist sociology and critical sociology assumed that the social world shows orderly recurrent or persistent patterns, which are not natural but made by human beings. Interactionist sociology saw the social world as a negotiable fluid order that ultimately resides in the interaction of individuals. Even though emphasizing the "negotiable fluid" nature of the social world, interactionist sociology does not question the "orderly" nature of the social world. By contrast, critical sociology emphasized more the "orderly" nature of the social world than the "negotiable fluid" nature of it. As a result, critical sociology emphasized the temporal or historical dimension of social patterns.

Functionalist sociology believed that the social world is as orderly and integrated like a living organism. The social world is seen as a reality \textit{sui generis}. All parts are orderly
interconnected to form an integrated whole. The social world is a self-maintaining system.

b. The Nature of Man

Positivistic sociology believed that man is an animal whose behavior is mechanically governed by the attainment of pleasant experiences and the avoidance of painful ones. Humans are "naturally" disposed to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. In this sense, all humans are naturally identical, and hence stable and persistent interaction between them is possible.

Both interactionist sociology and critical sociology drew the line between man and animal. Possession of a social self is the mark that separates man from animal; through a social self, man becomes an agent of interpretation, definition, and action within a social field. Interactionist sociology emphasized that self-indication or self-reflectivity is acquired through social process, thanks to which man can become an autonomous, socially responsible actor who acts in a stable and predictable way. As a result, stable and persistent interaction between humans who have selves is possible. While interactionist sociology tacitly assumed ahistorical or universalistic notion of self, critical sociology argued that the nature of self or identity differs from context to context. But critical sociology also believed that occupying the same structural position necessarily results in forming an identical self. For instance, people who occupy the same structural position such as the working class should result in forming the same identity. As a result, stable and persistent interaction between those who share the same structural position is possible.
Functionalist sociology believed that man shows recurrent or persistent patterns of behaviors, because he is a system of action with its four subsystems to satisfy four functional requisites. Man is an autonomous self-sufficient being who is equipped with four subsystems, whose action is determined by the interchange and coordination of these four subsystems. Thus, stable and persistent interaction between those who are fully socialized is possible.

2) Epistemology:

Positivistic sociology believed that social reality could be best represented when values are not be involved in the research process. Sociological research is a value-free, unbiased, and objective activity. Sociological researcher should occupy an objective transcendental position free of values. Positivistic sociology usually uses formal languages as transparent tools to measure reality. Some of them are variables, hypotheses, units of analysis, and causal explanations. Positivistic sociology usually aims to develop generalizations that contribute to sociological theory which enables one to better predict, explain, and understand some phenomena.

Both interactionist sociology and critical sociology believed that social reality could be best represented when sociological researchers enter into the world of the researched and understand not just what the researched do but why they do what they do. To interactionist sociology, the privileged position to represent reality is not an objective transcendentalist position but the inner position of the researched. Participant observation along with focus groups will allow the researchers to study actions in terms of their subjective meaning to the researched. Critical sociology believed that everything researchers do is value-loaded rather than value-neutral. In contrast to relativism, critical
sociology believed that there is a structural vantage point from which the true "essence" of reality could be grasped. Methods should be devised so as to capture not only the patterns but also their historical origins, development, and contradictory features because truth is assumed to be total, not partial.

Functionalist sociology aimed to devise a general system of concepts so as to represent universal features shared by all systems. Concepts do not have direct empirical referents in the real world but analytic constructs. Thus when abstracting concepts from the real world, value-involvement is unavoidable. What is at stake is to construct concepts so as that they are logically related to each other in the propositions. Logical integration of propositions is the most important. In this sense, sociological researcher is similar to a transcendent god. Sociological theory should be structured as a direct representation of the mind of the sociologist. The general system of concepts should be generally applicable to all systems.

3) Ethics/Politics

Positivistic sociology believed that human history is in a state of naturally determined linear progress toward perfection. Man is naturally disposed to maximize pleasure and minimize pain and s/he learns how to rationally do this according to the social system of reward and punishment. In this sense, men should rationally restrain and deny their immediate desires. Liberal society can be maintained by the market system which is capable of performing coordination functions without the extensive operation of the coercive and constraining power of the state. For these coordination functions, the natural law of the survival of the fittest is important. The competitive individuals, the fittest, lead society in general toward more survivable form in which the weakest
naturally vanish. Consequently, all surviving members are similar or identical instances of a common humanity.

Both interactionist sociology and critical sociology argued that human history is open and its progress depends on human acts. Nevertheless, both of them shared the belief that human history has tended to move toward a more progressive state. Self-restraining and self-denying morals are needed. Interactionist sociology emphasized that man can adjust his/her desire to others’ expectation, thanks to the possession of a self. This adjustment requires man to repress or manage his/her own desire. Critical sociology emphasized that man can overcome his/her own private interest, thanks to sharing the same structural position in society. Politically, both interactionist sociology and critical sociology advocated participatory democracy in which nobody is alienated from society. Interactionist sociology tended to believe that the structural arrangement of society is flexible enough to allow all members to actively participate in decision-making in society. By contrast, critical sociology emphasized that the structural arrangement of society is too strong and unequal for some members to participate in decision-making in society.

Functionalist sociology believed that history is in a state of differentiation entailing cultural or moral integration among parts, which has improved humanity. Humans are supposed to restrain or deny their selves in order to serve the organic whole of society. Society should be in a state of equilibrium in which all properly socialized members perform their proper functions. If there are some dysfunctions, technocrats would cure them with scientific knowledge. The bureaucratic state equipped with technocrats is the neutral agent that does this.
CHAPTER 5
THE EMERGENCE OF POSTMODERN AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY AS A RESPONSE TO THE AESTHETIC CHALLENGE

I have argued that sociology was based on the modern assumption of the scientization and moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. Mainstream American sociology such as functionalist sociology and positivistic sociology worked on the assumption of the scientization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. Non-mainstream American sociology such as critical sociology and interactionist sociology worked on the assumption of the moralization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. Postmodern social theory challenged this fundamental assumption of modern American sociology by way of presenting the aestheticization of ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.

American sociology began to respond to this challenge from the late 1980s on. But the responses to postmodernism differed among variations of American sociology. Interactionist sociology in general actively embraced the aesthetic challenge. Some of critical sociology also critically responded to the aesthetic challenge. By contrast, both positivist sociology and functionalist sociology evaluated postmodernism in a negative light. This chapter aims to review how each sociology responded to the aesthetic challenge. In what follows, critical postmodern sociology and interactionist sociology will be discussed in terms of how each responded to the aesthetic challenge to the
fundamental assumptions of sociology about ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. Then the resistance of mainstream American sociology to the aesthetic challenge will be discussed.

Critical Postmodern Sociology

Some of critical sociology responded to the challenge of the aesthetic with the morally practical model of knowledge, especially contextualism, from which critical postmodern sociology emerged. Critical postmodern sociology did not accept the poststructuralist notion of language as a social ontology. The main reason is that the poststructuralist notion of language as being undecidable is somewhat alien to the core idea of critical sociology: the contextually-bound realities that shape people’s lives. Rather than accepting poststructuralist notion of language as a general ontology, critical postmodern sociology tried to investigate the researched by situating it within its sociocultural, political, economic contexts. By contrast, critical postmodern sociology is more open to the methodological implication of poststructuralism, and tries to situate knowledge within social contexts in which real people live. There are roughly three positions about this. David R. Dickens, who relied on the Frankfurt School and pragmatism, paid attention to the fact that postmodern perspective exhibits striking parallels with the project of classical European sociology. Ben Agger relied on the Frankfurt School. And Steven Seidman relied on pragmatism.

1. David R. Dickens

Dickens embraced critical postmodernism rather than poststructuralist postmodernism
because he was suspicious of the significance of poststructuralism in the emancipatory project of Marxism in general and in sociology in particular (see Dickens 1990). Dickens did not fully embrace poststructuralism because he saw some limits of language-based alternatives. According to him, poststructuralism distorted Saussure by emphasizing the arbitrary and radically relational nature of signs within linguistic systems over the referential dimension of signs. Dickens (1990: 155) pointed out that “there is a fundamental disanalogy between texts and institutions which severely circumscribes the extension of radical linguistic critique to concrete historical processes.” If other postmodern sociologists have tried to “aestheticize” sociology, Dickens has tried to “sociologize” the postmodern. For him, the ideal of sociology is the classical (European) sociology. He argued that postmodern perspectives are virtually same as the project of classical sociology.

In its many guises postmodernism addresses the same sorts of issues that have fired the sociological imagination since the inception of the discipline in the nineteenth century. These issues include those concerning the nature and extent of large-scale structural transformations in Western societies, their corresponding effects on the nature of social interaction and on the construction of social identities, and the need for new theoretical and methodological strategies. Seen in this way, postmodern perspectives exhibit striking parallels with the project of Marx, Weber, Simmel, Durkheim, Mead, and others in the classical sociological tradition as they, too, struggled to find new ways to understand the dramatic changes in social structure and everyday life during their own time (Dickens and Fontana 1992:10-11).

Dickens called the first two issues a substantive-theoretical dimension including the macro and the micro levels, and the third issue a methodological dimension, and he added to these two dimensions a normative dimension which concerns ethical and political implications of the first two dimensions. Dickens paid attention to the fact that classical sociologists struggled with all these three dimensions during their own time. To him,
postmodern theorists also seemed to struggle with these three dimensions during contemporary times. In this sense, Dickens considered postmodern social theory as both continuity and discontinuity of the project of classical sociology. To him, continuity appeared mainly in critical postmodern social theory and discontinuity appears in poststructuralist postmodern social theory. As I have discussed, critical postmodern social theory followed the morally practical model of knowledge while poststructuralist postmodern social theory followed the aesthetic model of knowledge. Dickens criticized poststructuralist postmodern social theory which tended to equate the postmodern with the aesthetic.

Although Dickens agreed to some extent with the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the social that the social became flexible, fluid, and further, fragile because mass-mediated culture became the new organizing principles of society, he argued that this predominance of mass-mediated culture did not necessarily mean that major modernist institutions such as capitalism, nation-state, and large-scale bureaucracies totally lost their power to organize the social. His point is not to deny any dramatic transformation of traditional institutions, but to recognize the process of reconfiguration of these institutions as well as the process of cultural change. Dickens (1996: 31) positively evaluated British or British-oriented postmodern social theorists (Lash and Urry 1987; Harvey 1989; Featherstone 1991; Crook, Pakulski and Waters 1992) who “have documented the dramatic transformations in contemporary economics, politics, science, religion, family life, and class, gender, and ethnic relations, in terms of their elective affinities with the rise of postmodern culture.” These postmodern social theorists are critical postmodernists rather than poststructuralist postmodernists. They
situated postmodernism in terms of the historical and political-economic contexts in which it is inscribed. In this sense, Dickens could be said to follow the morally practical model of knowledge. He believed that only when the predominance of mass-mediated culture is situated in terms of the historical and political-economic contexts in which it is inscribed, superficial grasp of postmodernism could be avoided because contextualizing of cultural change would inform us of both changes and continuities of culture.

Reconfiguration is perhaps a better term than fragmentation to describe these recent trends as it recognizes both changes and continuities within contemporary institutions and social relations as well as continuities and changes between and among them, avoiding the simplistic dichotomy of unbroken continuity versus radical rupture that characterizes current debates concerning the legitimacy of postmodernism as a general theoretical category (Dickens 1996: 31).

Dickens agreed to some extent with the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the individual that man is decentered, dispersed, and multiplied in continuous instability mainly due to the bombardment of mass-mediated communication. Dickens tried to explain this change in terms of classical sociology, especially Mead and Cooley's social psychology. Mead emphasized the context in which self or identity is formed: "without social institutions of some sort, without the organized social attitudes and activities by which social institutions are constituted, there could be no fully mature individual selves or personalities at all" (Mead 1962: 262). Cooley analyzed the displacement of primary group relations by more impersonal secondary group relations in modern societies. According to this tradition, what is important for the self and social interaction is the nature of institutions in which the individual is inscribed. Poststructuralist postmodernists argued that modernist institutions became textualized by electronically-mediated mass communication. Thus, the individual is free from any

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
institutional constraints. What is more important is that poststructuralist postmodernists argued that "There is no narrative logic inherent in the presentation of images; they are just randomly recombined as mechanical permutations" (Harms and Dickens 1996: 216). Further, poststructuralist postmodernists argued that the "rapidly expanding number, diversity, and pace of these communications overwhelms the individual's ability to interpret their meaning rationally" (Harms and Dickens 1996: 216). If the subject is constituted by discourses, then the postmodern subject is randomly constituted by discourses of mass media. Dickens criticized this view. According to him, social institutions are not totally textualized and postmodern media has its narrative logic which is organized by pursuit of accumulation of capital. The individual is not entirely replaced by free-floating signifiers because modern institutions such as capitalism, the nation-state, and large-scale bureaucracies still work.

By focusing on communications apart from the social context of their production, postmodernists ignore the powerful material forces that shape the communication process. . .postmodernists have lost sight of the political economic dimensions of communication. . .The new information technologies that are at the heart of the postmodern condition cost money, have developed within the logic of capital, and are produced by corporations interested primarily in accumulating capital (Harms and Dickens 1996: 219-220).

As a response to the aesthetic challenge to sociological methodologies, Dickens (1994: 98) emphasized "the continuing need for critical, historical analysis of contemporary societies. Even those intrigued by such widely heralded postmodernist themes as 'the end of the social' and 'the disappearance of man' will hopefully view these as topics for concrete empirical investigation rather than as metaphysical manifestos to be accepted or rejected at face value." Dickens proposed postmodern-oriented cultural studies which substantively emphasized "the heightened importance,
even centrality, of culture in the structuring and functioning of everyday life in contemporary ‘advanced’ societies . . .,” but which did not deny “the continuing importance of major modernist institutions such as capitalism, the nation-state, and large-scale bureaucracies” (Dickens 1996: 31). From the start, cultural studies had multidisciplinary roots in the Birmingham School. More importantly, multiperspectival approaches are needed because the nature and the role of culture have become increasingly complex in contemporary societies. Following Johnson (1987) and mainly Kellner (1992), Dickens (1996: 32) argued that “this research program is focused on three interrelated sets of issues: the production of cultural texts; textual analysis of cultural objects and their meanings; and the study of lived culture and experiences.” The first issue emphasizes the political economic dimension of culture and how this shapes the ideological contents of its products. The second issue involves the implementation of a variety of reading strategies, including semiotics, deconstructionism, and feminism. The third methodological dimension of postmodern-oriented cultural studies examines “how individuals and groups connect their lived experiences to the cultural representations of those experiences” (Dickens 1996: 33). In sum, cultural studies uses the multiperspectival methodologies such as the political economy, variety of textual analysis, and ethnography, which were all used by the early British cultural studies. Dickens’ postmodern-oriented cultural studies is a kind of revitalization of the early British cultural studies: “Like the classic Birmingham studies of working-class subcultures, a multiperspectival cultural studies approach attempts to trace the linkages among the various levels, from the structural political economic through the textual to the interpersonal, that together constitute the complicated terrain of contemporary media.
Dickens presented a critical position about the aesthetic challenge to the normative dimension because he did not believe that the decline of the unilinear deterministic sense of temporality necessarily leads to the loss of sense of temporality itself, and further, to the morally and politically irresponsible conclusion that “anything goes.” He argued that the decline of unilinear deterministic sense of temporality ironically convinced us to be more sensitive to differences and local contingencies. Dickens rejected both the universalist ethics and easy-going amoral postmodern relativism. Ironically, personal moral responsibility is needed. Dickens basically agreed with postmodernists that difference, pluralism, and the incommensurability of culture and values should be embraced, but he warned of the danger of cultural populism. Cultural populism tended to believe that in mass culture difference, pluralism, and the incommensurability of culture and values are already embraced. Thus, what is remaining is to enjoy mass media. Dickens did not believe in this. Following the tradition of cultural studies, he argued that mass media culture is an ideology, even though fragmented or decentered, to stunt political opposition. “Political resistance requires active work and organization, not just ‘killing time’” (Harms and Dickens 1996: 223).

2. Ben Agger

Unlike Dickens and Seidman, Agger is a self-proclaimed Marxist, who did not abandon truth, reason, or justice as reconstructive ideals. He rejected some versions of postmodernism which abandon Marxism as well as radical politics. Nevertheless, he
tried to embrace some politicized postmodernism which would revitalize Marxism as a critical social theory in "fast capitalism" (Agger 1989). For Agger, critical theory aims to radically change the domination of production over reproduction, which according to him is the axial logic of domination in civilization. Agger highly evaluated Marx as a critical theorist who articulated concepts of exploitation and the alienation of labor in market capitalism in the nineteenth century. According to him, the first-generation Frankfurt critical theory of Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse broadened Marx’s concepts of exploitation and alienation of labor into the category of domination in late capitalism characterized by the state intervention in economy and the rise of the culture industry. But the first-generation theory fell short in its lack of political activism resulting from a mandarin approach to culture industry, which lacked a grounding in everyday life. In this sense, the first-generation Frankfurt critical theory ignored the popular. The first-generation Frankfurt critical theory also ignored feminism by defending paternal authority as the source of childhood ego autonomy. The second-generation critical theory of Habermas reformulated Marx’s capital/labor motif in system/lifeworld terms so as to theorize new social movements grounded in the lifeworld. But Habermas did not pay sufficient attention to male supremacy and the popular. According to Agger, feminism and postmodernism could fill in this gap in critical theory. Feminism challenged male supremacy while postmodernism, especially critical postmodern cultural studies, challenged the mandarinism of the Frankfurt critical theory (Agger 1992a, 1993). Agger saw it as his mission to create a new version of critical theory, a feminist postmodern critical theory. For him, the core of critical theory is a utopian vision that allows people to see and hopefully moves them to act beyond what it is. What is
important here is the recognition that the social world is not absolutely determined. This indeterminate nature of the social world is directly connected with the belief in the human agency to change the social world. This idea is the core of the morally practical. Agger refuted the aesthetic in as far as it endorses nihilism, cynicism, fatalism, etc., which eventually supports the status quo. For him, poststructuralism and some postmodern cultural studies influenced by poststructuralism represent this apolitical stance. Agger's acceptance of poststructuralism is limited because he was suspicious of the Saussurean linguistics as ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics. For him, Saussurean linguistics metaphysically tends to desert human agency and significant politics based on the subject. For him, the question of human agency and politics is not a metaphysical, but an empirical issue. Among many arguments put forward by Derrida, Agger (1994, 1996) only tended to accept the undecidability of the text as opening possibilities of new interpretation. Agger wanted to see the relationship between the social and the individual in terms of dialectics, not in terms of differance; he believed that the dialectical difference between the social and the individual, and theory and practice is the best way for a transformational project because it poses a utopian society as an alternative to the present. Only when posing a utopian society could critical theory avoid normal naturalization of the present as the eternal.

Agger accepted some of the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the social when he characterized postmodern capitalism as fast capitalism. According to him (1992b: 9), fast capitalism is “the second stage of late or monopoly capitalism, in which it is virtually impossible to disentangle the productive and reproductive, labor and text, science and fiction, men and women, white and non-white, base and superstructure.” The
main force of this transformation of capitalism was the development of new mass communication technologies such as TV, mainly through which the culture industry developed and extended its influence on the everyday lives of people. In this sense, the social has become textualized. But Agger (1993: 24) did not agree with the thesis of the "total" textualization of the social, arguing that "[t]he text is a world, although the world is not all text." He wanted to distinguish the world from the text even though he recognized that it has become increasingly difficult to do so in postmodern capitalism because of fast capitalism or hyperreality. But as a Marxist, Agger wanted to locate the deep structure belying hyperreality: "Although sign value is important in its own right, we must not lose sight of surplus value, which endures as the fundamental means of exploitation, profit, and domination" (Agger 1993: 24). For him, this deep structure is the exploitation of labor power, whose nature has changed over time. During Marx's era, the exploitation of labor power was centered around the realm of production, which was maintained by false consciousness. But in late capitalism when the Frankfurt critical theorists worked, the logic of capital was extended to other realms. The exploitation of labor became (re)produced by domination, i.e., the deep internalization of alienation. The state became the central agent for social control and large corporation the central figure to impose endless consumption to masses. Still, exploitation and domination were centered in visible institutions. But in postmodern capitalism, the situation seems to change. The social seems to be decentered, flexible, and fragile enough to invite pluralist democracy. But the basic logic of capital is the same. What has changed is the degree of complexity of exploitation and domination.

In postmodern capitalism domination, as Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse call it, is regionalized, differentiated, and deconstructed inasmuch
as system, in Habermas’ terms, colonizes the everyday lives of people everywhere. Upon casual inspection, these differential instances of domination appear to stem from separable sources—capitalism, patriarchy, racism. But once we understand their common source in the hierarchies of production over reproduction, ...then we can theorize a complexly integrated postmodernism that only appears to proliferate healthy difference at every turn. Difference, like plurality, is marshaled ideologically in order to demonstrate the system’s openness and fairness (Agger 1993: 9).

According to Agger, pluralist democracy could not be achieved unless hierarchies of domination are ameliorated or altogether eliminated. Differentiation under capitalism leads only to quasi-difference because capitalism itself is a totalizing system which penetrates every area of life and thus destroys individuality and particularity: “What is unique about postmodern capitalism is the way in which differentiation reproduces homogeneity and hegemony, hence blocking world-historical transformation” (Agger 1993: 9-10). In this sense, “[r]eality’ is still real—it is grounded in historical structures of domination that can be unpacked, to use a popular deconstructive phase, around the axial principles of their structure and function” (Agger 1993: 15). It is too early to claim the end of the social (structured inequality). The social is still, even though complexly, integrated according to the hierarchies of production over reproduction.

Agger tried to refute the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the individual because he believed that the thesis of the death of the subject cannot be posed metaphysically as some poststructuralist postmodernists do. According to poststructuralism, the subject is narrated by language or discourse, not vice versa. Some semiotic versions of information society theory endorse the death of the subject by arguing that hyperreality of culture industry makes people drifting signifiers. Agger refuted this poststructuralist claim because he wanted to make the subject narrate
language or discourse, not vice versa. Agger (1993: 41) claimed that "[t]he degree of subjectivity's eclipse is above all an empirical question," and asked, "How much do forces of discipline and power imperil political imagination and agency?" (1993: 41). What is important is to "reckon empirically with the discursive and political contexts within which individuals find themselves positioned" (Agger 1993: 41). But unfortunately, Agger never empirically investigated the thesis of the death of the subject in fast capitalism. Rather, he was busy in theorizing the possibility of agency. For this, he relied on Marcuse who claimed that the decline of the subject is associated with the decline of a bourgeois mode of socialization rooted in patriarchal authority. Marcuse argued that the generic atom directly becomes a social atom through the all-embracing forces of total administration. But Marcuse did not desert the possibility of the agency, grounding agency on the objective character of human subjectivity, Eros, which is never totally mainpulable by dominant ideology (Agger 1992b). Agger followed this notion of ineradicable subjectivity as a basis for agency. In fast capitalism, individuals are bombarded by hyperreality, but they are not entirely exhausted because they have an institutional basis for agency, Eros. Surplus repression is variable because the amount of libidinal repression historically varies. The possibility of the agency is everywhere regardless of the amount of libidinal repression. In this sense, Agger did not agree with the aesthetic argument that man is decentered, dispersed, and multiplied in continuous instability.

Agger basically embraced the aesthetic argument that there is no presuppositionless representation of social facts: "There is no 'outside' to language, no Archimedean point of epistemological privilege from which we can be granted access to perfect lucidity
through certain protocol statements, such as those of mathematics" (Agger 2000: 56).

Thus, positivist notion of science as presuppositionless representation of social facts loses its validity because science is not exempt from the discursive and rhetorical. In this sense, the traditional distinction between science and literature is blurred (see Agger 1991). All stories including science and literature are perspectival, discursive, and rhetorical, which aim to present a worldview and to persuade others of it. But Agger did not want to equate science with literature because he wanted to retain the public nature of scientific story. For him, telling a literary story usually implies a more personal, even inimitable recounting of events. In this sense, he was against Lyotard who deserted grand narratives in favor of little narratives. No matter whether a story is big or small, all stories are agendas, i.e., totalizations and structurations. It is a political decision whether to choose a collective, big, public story or an individual, small, private story. He did not argue “that we should abandon grand narratives but that we should refresh timeworn large stories with new empirical evidence and better theorizing” (Agger 1993: 84).

Agger wanted to retain a comprehensive theoretical logic, which provides a total explanation about the domination of the productive over the reproductive. Total social science is needed because the social is unequally structured according to the axial logic of domination which is a ‘micro’ as well as ‘macro’ practice” (Agger 1993: 81). For this, Agger tried to articulate feminism, postmodernism, and the Frankfurt critical theory. Feminism addresses the body and the domestic labor, informing that the personal is the political and the political is the personal. Postmodernism addresses the imagination or philosophy of history, informing the discursive nature of nature-like reality. Critical theory addresses popular culture, politically theorizing the culture industry. These three
theories positively evaluate the devalued (woman and household, the imagination, and
the popular) by male supremacy, a modernist philosophy of history, and cultural
mandarinism. According to Agger, these theories have different emphases, not different
logics. Thus, he wanted to create a feminist postmodern critical theory: "I am saying that
it is vitally important to formulate Marxism, feminism, and postmodernism as
articulations of an overarching critique of domination or critical theory. The payoff of
this integration is the explanation of a host of interrelated phenomena in terms of a
singular theoretical logic, hence affording new social movements a common self-
understanding and, just possibly, common political strategies" (Agger 1993: 65). The
singular logic is the domination of production over reproduction:

The underlying structural principle of modernist civilization, then, is
expressed in a range of hierarchies of production over reproduction, from
capital/labor to men/women, white/colored, science/art, material/ideal,
West/East, North/South, labor/text, exchange value/use value, and many
others. What these hierarchies have in common is the subordination of
activities heretofore regarded as nonproductive or reproductive to a
productivist rule of value—for example, in a capitalist society exchange
value, or in a sexist society men's work (Agger 1993: 95).

In this sense, Agger endorsed the ideal of totality: "I retain Marx's idea that there is
an underlying structural logic to postmodern capitalism that can be expressed
theoretically to explain all domination" (Agger 1993: 87). One of the main merits of the
totality theory is that it "explains all modernist dominations, from class to gender and
race" (Agger 1993: 104). The basic logic of domination is also relational in the sense
that it well understands that "domination happens relationally, between people and
among groups" (Agger 1993: 104-105). The most important thing is that the basic logic
of domination is transformational "in the sense that it suggests a dynamic process
whereby reproducers recognize that they are in fact producers and thus mobilize
themselves to wrest both discourse and material power from those who have heretofore arrogated privilege to themselves. In other words, the production/reproduction hierarchy always contains the potential for its deconstruction via coming to consciousness, new public discourse, and organized social movements” (Agger 1993: 105).

On the transformational nature of the logic, Agger met a politicized Derrida (see Agger 1991, 1994). According to Agger, Derrida challenges metaphysics of presence based on the binary oppositions of the subjects (presence) and the others (negative mirror images of presence), presenting the thesis of undecidability, “the tendency of texts to exclude (‘defer’) problems that they cannot solve in their own terms” (Agger 1994: 501). Derrida’s deconstruction is not nihilistic nor destructive because it valorizes and gives voices to the otherness by subverting the dichotomies of presence/alterity.

Far from being nihilist, Derrida wants to reveal the hidden assumptions of systems in order to open public dialogue about them; far from refusing values, Derrida wants more talk of values, albeit talk rendered humble and dialogical by the acknowledgement that no text or argument can achieve “foundation.” Thus, . . . deconstruction is a necessarily political way of reading writings (and all discourses) that exploits writing’s undecidability, difference, and deferral to produce a new version of “the text” and thus a new world (Agger 1994: 503).

Agger extended Derrida’s deconstruction to a multidisciplinary or pandisciplinary radical cultural studies. Although Agger endorsed the Frankfurt School’s fresh empirical analysis of the structural contradictions and crisis tendencies of capitalism, he did not concentrate on larger structural analysis of capitalism. Rather, he concentrated on a politicized deconstructive reading and writing which aims to deconstruct the role of cultural texts and practices in the imposition of false needs through commodified cultural consumption. He had a different notion of text distinguished from the depoliticized poststructuralism which proclaims the death of the subject in the text, emphasizing the
dialectical relationship between the author and the text: "It [a social theory of text] views the text as a deliberate authorial product; it also views the text as having an internal logic—language game—that imposes its own meaning on the text. Thus, texts can be viewed as an interplay between authorial intent and the structuring logic of language game in use" (Agger 2000: 16). Agger (1992a: 1) hated "a vacuous methodology for reading cultural texts that has no real political grounding." Especially, he was very critical of "the poststructuralism methodologized into deconstruction in American literary departments" (1992a: 2) which "engage in self-referential discussion that legitimize their common enterprise rather than solve real empirical and political problem" (1992a: 154).

According to Agger (1992a: 153), Americanized literary deconstructionism has tended to become "a cult—an endlessly self-reproducing series of ungrounded readings not anchored in the framework of an overarching social theory and political practice."

Americanized literary deconstructionism "neglects the difference between theory and literature, utterly substituting the former for the latter and thus losing any practical context within which literary theory could do useful work in deconstructing the theory/literature duality as well as literary texts themselves for their imbedded metatheoretical assumptions about the nature of class, gender, race and all the rest" (1992a: 155). Unlike this deconstructionism, a political deconstructionism that Agger envisioned engages in the politics of ideological contestation: "Deconstruction helps us find, decode and then rewrite ideology that increasingly takes the form of Baudrillard’s simulations and not the straightforward texts of religion and bourgeois economic theory readily debunked by Marx" (1992a: 155). In fast capitalism where "the boundary between text and world is fading fast" (Agger 1989: 16) and writing merely tends to
“reflect and thus reproduce the given order of things” (Agger 1989: 17), the critique of ideology is more difficult because there seems to be nothing outside of text.

Deconstruction tries to deconstruct text as the given order of things, relating text to its context of production and reception: “we must read into and out of particular simulations of popular culture, engaging with them on the quotidian level of their production and reception, which we theorize in terms of larger structural principles of social and economic reproduction” (Agger 1992a: 182).

Agger wanted to deconstruct cultural products as well as contribute to counter-hegemonic political practice. Then how is it possible? From what position? There is no Archimedean position to guarantee the validity of deconstructive critique of hegemonic ideology and to construct a counter-hegemonic political practice. Agger (1992a: 182-183) proposed a (auto)biography as an alternative starting point toward a radical cultural studies:

We are products of our time and place—men, women, the middle class, Anglo-Americans, academics. For me as a man fully to comprehend the political possibilities of a feminist deconstruction I must position myself in terms of the fields of difference constituted hierarchically around the issue of gender. I must reflect on my own conditioning as man and on what I actualize in the way of manly behavior in order to understand how our culture positions women subordinately with respect to men. Similarly, for me to engage in cultural criticism and media analysis I have to reflect on the ways in which I have been constituted by cultural works and practices that are typical of my generation, social class, gender and national heritage. Surely, the fact that I watched the infamous family sitcoms of the 1950s and 1960s affected the ways in which I understood my own family dynamics as well as formed my relations with women, which I had to redo in the meantime.

Cultural studies is, thus, a kind of self-criticism. A researcher of cultural studies starts from his/her autobiography and connects it with more politically oriented theory.

Reading and writing him/herself is internally connected with reading and writing culture.
Thus, without changing him/herself, the researcher of cultural studies cannot change people. In the process of research, the researcher problematizes the taken-for-granted images, including his/her ego: "In the process of cultural problematization we problematize ourselves, understanding and thus changing ourselves as the cultural conduits we have become" (Agger 1992a: 183). In this sense, autobiography revitalizes author-present writing which is against both positivist writing and nihilistic deconstructionist writing. This author-present writing is one of the features of what Agger called "public sociology" (Agger 2000).

Agger accepted the aesthetic challenge to the sociological, especially positivist, notion of temporality. Agger (1993: 23) argued that we should abandon "the idea that we can remake the world through social engineering," and also rejected deterministic Marxism which believes that the future can be politically preordained. The teleological optimism precludes people necessary to bring about a better world. He argued that we need the philosophy of history which holds open the possibility of fundamental social change. Like Habermas, Agger did not think that the emancipatory project of the Enlightenment should be abandoned because he wanted to direct the change of society to a "dominationless society" (1992a: 146) in which true cultural needs such as "unfettered self-expression as well as substantive political-economic autonomy" (1992a: 150) will be fulfilled. To Agger, this dominationless society (postmodernity) is a utopia from which the present society would be criticized:

It is my argument here that we should treat postmodernity as a utopian category. . . I argue that postmodernism, conceived within the eschatological or "critical" framework of Marxist critical theory, does not betray Marxism but extends Marxism into the late 20th century, formulating postmodernity as the latter-day version of Marx's socialism. In particular, postmodern critical theory is the first narrative to pose a
possible utopian future not as a determinate outcome of nature-like social laws but rather as one conceivable discursive accomplishment among many (Agger 1996: 37).

Morally, Agger accepted that free flow of bodily desire is needed. But unlike some postmodernists who oppose biology (body, play) to sociology (society, work), Agger wanted to merge play and work, or nonproductive / creative and productive work in people's own daily lives (Agger 1992b). According to him, some postmodernists wrongly emphasize the pleasure of texts in the realm of consumption, naturalizing the division of production and consumption. According to this scheme, free flow of bodily desire is possible only in the realm of consumption. According to Agger, this position is similar to neoliberalism which endorses multiculturalism in the realm of consumption. He argued that this position deepens alienation and domination. Following Marcuse, Agger proposed “erotization of labor” as an ideal of good life. Erotization of labor means that “a type of work can become the creative and productive self-externalization of polymorphous erotic individuals who have been freed from surplus repression imposed by capitalism” (Agger 1992b: 93). This ideal cannot be achieved without restructuring work structure.

Politically, Agger also accepted that the traditional politics based on the self-same subject is out of date, but he did not endorse the politics of difference:

Although cultural pluralism is to be defended against occidental ethnocentrism, it is hardly a valid utopian construct when it amounts to lip service on the part of the dominant group and does not promote real difference. Difference theory is certainly correct to defend the claims of individuals and groups against the state. But the narrowing of difference theory into a politics of subjectivity tends to ignore the structural and institutional nature of politics today...Although the ultimate aim of politics is to liberate subjectivity, this is not to be achieved via a program of self-transformation involving therapies and technologies of adjustment, from twelve-step programs of aerobics (Agger 1993: 71).
Thus, politics which links personal problems with public issues is needed because liberation involves both subjective and institutional transformation. Textual politics should be connected with institutional politics. It is not enough to deconstruct texts for a radical transformation. In addition to it, the effort to transform institutions of textuality such as university and culture industry is needed so that people's communicative competence and access to public discourse are improved. This demands some coalition among the dominated, forming a collective movement. This coalition comes from the underlying structural logic of domination of production over reproduction.

3. Steven Seidman

Seidman did not seem to take the aesthetic challenge seriously because he thought that there are only two kinds of knowledge model in sociology: sociological theory and social theory (Seidman 1991b). Sociological theory has two versions: (neo-)functionalist sociology which embraced the theoretical and positivistic sociology which embraced the technically practical. (Neo-)functionalist sociology, what Seidman called "philosophical sociology," has been preoccupied with "a series of highly abstract, socially remote issues such as the micro-macro link, the interrelationship between agency and structure, action and order, and structure and culture" (Seidman 1994: 4). Similarly, positivistic sociology, what Seidman called "scientific sociology," has fallen into remote and socially pointless issues by aiming to "explain the social laws of the universe or to reduce society to a set of general principles that, like physics, can be formulated in mathematical equations and formulas" (Seidman 1994: 5). As an alternative for these sociological theories, Seidman proposed "social theory." Seidman wanted to revitalize sociology as a
moral public practice to aim to promote public enlightenment and action. This vision of sociology as a moral public practice is in fact one of the core ideas of the morally practical. Seidman wanted to revitalize this tradition which emphasizes the power of human agency to shape history. This power does not come from the *a priori* abstract reason, but from the practical reason embedded in its contemporary social conflicts and public debates. As Seidman (1994: 2) put it:

Sociology must recover its role as public educator. I urge a recentering of sociological theory in public debates and conflicts. Instead of sociological discourses being driven by disciplinary conventions and disputes, theorists should take their problems, themes, and language of argumentation from a public world of social and political conflict. Sociologists need to recover the moral impulse of their role, to see themselves less as scientists and more as public educators engaging the issues of the day. I imagine a sociology that can sustain its rich tradition of conceptual and empirical analysis while recovering its public role and authority. If we abandon the false promise of science to achieve objective and universal knowledge, if we accept our role as storytellers or social critics, we can revitalize sociology and contribute to the strengthening of a democratic public culture.

What is at stake here from our perspective is that Seidman ignored the aesthetic model of knowledge, presenting the binary opposition of sociological theory and social theory, in which sociological theory has been positively positioned over social theory. According to Seidman, the main result of this binary opposition is the isolation of sociology from the public. Seidman seemed to believe that this problem could be solved by reversing this binary hierarchy. Seidman found the revitalization of social theory in postmodernism. Seidman connected postmodernism with the development of new social movements rather than with the large-scale transformation of traditional institutions: “postmodern social discourse emerged, at least in part, from the development of the new social movements. The intellectual and social historical meaning of postmodernism in
the U.S. needs to be grasped in relation to the evolution of these movements” (Seidman 1991c: 183-184). As a result, Seidman rarely talked about institutional changes.

Seidman responded to the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the social from the perspective of the morally practical. Embracing the lead of the British cultural studies, Seidman saw the social as texts: “[s]ocial realities are approached as a field of signs, meanings, or, if you will, texts. . .This suggests a view of the social as deeply cultural or as organized by signs and meaning patterned in relations of identity and difference” (1996a: 9). But Seidman was critical of some poststructuralist textualism in which the term “social” is mainly negative. “The tendency in Foucault to collapse all social control into domination and in Baudrillard to flatten the social universe into an undifferentiated manipulated, dominated mass is both sociologically naïve and politically suspect. . .In Baudrillard and Lyotard, ‘the social’ remains an underdeveloped concept” (Seidman 1994: 231). Compared to some anarchistic poststructuralism, the British cultural studies escaped the danger of textualism by introducing the idea that [t]exts are produced by social practices in particular institutional contexts which have histories” (Seidman 1996a: 9). Thus, texts are not a field of free play of differences in which no constrains exist. Texts are not a flattened universe (a self-referential system). Rather, texts are conceptualized “as positioned both in relation to other texts—the principle of intertextuality—and in relation to social practices and conflicts—gender-based, class based, and so on—that produce texts and affected by them.” (Seidman 1996a: 9).

Seidman situated this textualization of the social within information society or consumer society. Seidman seemed to believe that contemporary society of America has undergone a large-scale structural transformation and thus is qualitatively different from modern
America, but he did not give any convincing evidence for a large-scale structural transformation. Following the semiotic version of information society theory or consumer society theory, Seidman (1996a: 11) just seemed to believe that "the new positioning of the mass media, the saturation of daily life by commerce and commodification, the new technologies of information, and the foregrounding of cultural politics" signal "perhaps a second 'great transformation' in post-Renaissance western societies." Seidman seemed to take the great transformation for granted without giving a comprehensive argument about it. Thus, Seidman argued that this great transformation urged French postmodern theory and cultural studies to make a semiotic turn from which social realities are considered to be a field of signs, meanings or texts. Therefore, the traditional core categories that have enabled sociologists and Marxists to do systematic analyses of society have become obsolete: they are "classes, economic dynamics, bureaucracy, occupations, status groups, market exchanges, population dynamics, and network structures" (Seidman 1996a: 11). These categories are assumed to be "the organizing social principles or key variables" (Seidman 1996a: 9). In these systematic analyses of society, culture is seen as "discrete, isolated values, beliefs, attitudes, identities, or ideologies" (Seidman 1996a: 10). This old attitude does not fit a second great transformation in post-Renaissance western societies.

Seidman responded to the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the individual from the perspective of the morally practical. American sociology "assumes the individual as a foundation of social life as figures the self as an internally coherent, rationally calculating agent" (Seidman 1996a: 12). But according to him, this methodological individualism is not only a betrayal of classical sociology's original
project as “a critique of the notion of a presocial self and a critique of the idea of ‘society’ as a creation of a rational subject” (Seidman 1996a: 13), but also is incongruent to the contemporary Western societies in which mass media saturates individuals. Contrary to modern American sociology, Seidman (1996a: 12) imagined “the individual as socially produced; as occupying multiple, contradictory psychic and social positions or identities.” Seidman tried to understand how the structural transformation of Western societies had impact on the conventional notions of self and identity. He considered the development of new mass communication technologies as the most spectacular index of that structural transformation, and recognized that mass media contains many discourses and practices and that the self is complexly constructed through these many discourses and practices. Thus, the subject is considered to occupy contradictory psychic and social positions and identities. In the contemporary Western societies, the self is not the modern subject who “is figured as ego-and-present-centered and programmed (seemingly by nature) to be goal-directed, strategically rational, and social, that is, compelled to interact or engage in social exchange” (Seidman 1996a: 13). Rather, the self is a social product who is constructed through a variety of discourses and practices of mass media.

Seidman willingly embraced the aesthetic challenge to sociological methodology. Seidman criticized sociological theory as a “foundational” discourse, borrowing the term “foundationalism” from Rorty. Rorty (1979: 293) characterized foundationalism as the demand for “some transcendental standpoint outside our present set of representations from which we can inspect the relations between those representations and their objects.” According to Seidman (1991b: 133), sociological theory has served this task: “We have assigned ourselves the task of defining and defending the basic premises, concepts, and
explanatory models of sociology. We have assumed the role of resolving disciplinary
disputes and conceptual conflicts by presuming to be able to discover a universal
epistemic rational that provides objective, value-neutral standards of conflict resolution.”
According to him, this vision of sociological theory is a kind of human science that the
Enlightenment project and modern Western civilization have defined. Seidman (1996a:
700) attacked the thesis of value-neutrality: “It is the compulsion to erase epistemological
and social differences—a compulsivity concealed behind the sacred canopy of
Enlightenment and progress but also exposed by the very ‘otherness’ it calls forth—that
is the political unconscious of the human sciences.” Thus, Seidman (1991b: 136)
proposed to abandon the modernist justifications of conceptual strategies and to accept
local, pragmatic rationales for conceptual approaches: “Instead of asking what is nature
of reality or knowledge in the face of conflicting conceptual strategies—and therefore
going metatheoretical—I suggest we evaluate conflicting perspectives by asking what are
their intellectual, social, moral, and political consequences.” In addition to
foundationalism, Seidman also criticized the quest for a totalizing general theory.
General theory assumes that the researcher can transcend local and particularistic points
of view so as to reach the universal truth. He argued that general theory cannot avoid
being local and ethnocentric. As Seidman (1992: 68-69) put it:

I recommend abandoning the project of developing general theories such
as historical materialism, structural-functionalism, or French or American
structuralism. I also have doubts about the value of more narrowly
focused general theories of (say) the state, social movements,
modernization, or crime. It seems to me that general theories cannot
escape being culture-bound or ethnocentric because of their sociohistorical
embeddedness. Moreover, general theories are more likely than local,
contextual social analyses to promote essentializing, reified identities, to
promote and legitimate social hierarchies, to repress social differences and
particularities, and to ignore the interests of marginalized populations or
simply to be irrelevant to their struggles and aims. Finally, general theories mask their will to shape history. They contribute to the depoliticization of the public sphere by trying to transfigure moral and practical struggles into analytical or metatheoretical struggles.

Following Foucault, Seidman claimed that the claim to truth is inextricably an act of power—a will to form humanity. What is more important is that this will to power is subject to particular cultural and power struggles. In this sense, science is not a general theory which is objective and universal because it is intimately connected to particular interests at a specific juncture of time and space. As an alternative for foundationalism and general theory, Seidman (1991b: 138) proposed social theory as the social narrative.

The postmodern social narrative I advocate is event-based and therefore careful about its temporal and spatial boundaries. By event-based, I mean that the primary reference points of postmodern narratives are major social conflicts or developments. As event-based narratives, postmodern social analyses also would be densely contextual. Social events always occur in a particular time and space, related to both contemporary and past developments in a specific social space. Individual societies evolve their own unique configurations and historical trajectories, which are best analyzed historically, not from the heights of general theory.

Modernist narratives are characterized by the flat, unidimensional language of domination and liberation whose main consequence is to repress and marginalize differences. Thus, Seidman argued that these narratives should be replaced by “the multivocal notion of multiple, local heterogeneous struggles and a many-sided experience of empowerment and disempowerment” (Seidman 1991b: 142). Thus, epistemological pluralism is inevitable. Seidman envisioned the active intervention of social theory in the pressing public issues that would influence the lives of people.

From a postmodern pragmatic standpoint, it would not be sufficient simply to invoke general values (e.g., freedom, democracy, solidarity, order, material comfort, pleasure) or moral imperatives (e.g., that individuals should be treated with respect or dignity or should be treated as ends) either to justify or to criticize current social arrangements or to
recommend changes. Social criticism must go beyond pointing to the deficiencies of current realities from some general moral standpoint. It would be compelled to argue out its standpoint through an analysis that is socially informed and pragmatic (Seidman 1991b: 142).

In fact, this vision has been developed by critical theories. Seidman wanted to revitalize this tradition, stripping it of essentialism. Seidman (1996a) found one of the ideals of social research in the tradition of British cultural studies. Cultural studies has recognized the nexus of power/knowledge and encouraged the “organic intellectual” who speaks “from a specific social location addressing events or developments as a particular conjuncture” and who “is always socially and politically situated” (18). This embeddedness motivates public engagement and makes possible an effective intellectual intervention. Seidman also argued that sociology should embrace the formation of new domains of social knowledge such as communications, gender studies, comparative literature, queer theory, postcolonial studies, etc. (see Seidman 1995, 1996b). On methods, Seidman argued that sociology should embrace other methods utilized especially by the humanities. Foucauldian genealogy and archeology are useful for the study of “the making of bodies, desires, and identities,” “power / knowledge regimes,” and “dynamics of normalization, discipline, and surveillance.” Psychoanalytic theory is useful for the study of “the social formation of subjectivity, gender identity, male domination, and sexuality which focuses on the interplay between psyche and society and on interpsychic dynamics” (14). This argument for trans- or multi-disciplinarity attacks the rigidity of disciplinarity of modern American sociology. In fact, Seidman (1996b: 711) proposed a postdisciplinary culture of human studies:

These fields of knowledge [new domains of social knowledge] point to the institutional consolidation of hybrid knowledges that underscores the
blurring of the lines among the human sciences, literature, rhetoric, ethics, and philosophy and between scholarship and partisanship.

Seidman did not accept the aesthetic argument that the sense of temporality is lost in the postmodern world, arguing that the sense of loss of temporality is an effect of the Eurocentric discourse: "Both the great modernist narratives of progress and the counterenlightenment motif of decadence are decidedly Eurocentric" (Seidman 1991b: 140). What is needed is to investigate the enormous social complexities and heterogeneous struggles and strains within a specific society at a specific time. The moral implication is that the individual should rely on local values or traditions because there is no transcendent or universal moral standards. What is important here is that the individual has multiple identities and group affiliations. This position assumes a radically pluralistic society in which heterogeneous struggles with multiple possibilities for empowerment exist: "My own view is sympathetic with Rorty's affirmation of contemporary Western societies while pushing his liberalism in a decidedly stronger pluralistic and democratic direction" (Seidman 1991c: 184). This radical pluralism comes from Seidman's discontent with the traditional liberalism which has concealed the compulsion to erase social differences. Against this, Seidman argued that difference should not be negated for the formation of identity. In this sense, Seidman accepted the aesthetic notion of politics.

Interactionist Postmodern Sociology

Only interactionist postmodern sociology can be called "postmodern" in the strict sense that it embraced the aesthetic challenge enthusiastically. As I have argued, interactionist sociology emphasized the "indeterminate" nature of the world, which
allows humans to make their destinies. Some interactionist sociologists easily found that poststructuralism has a very similar view, and soon began to embrace it. The most distinctive feature of interactionist postmodern sociology is to accept the poststructuralist model of language as both social ontology and sociological methodology. In different words, interactionist postmodern sociology willingly textualized both the social and the individual. Embracing a semiotic version of information society theory or consumer society theory, interactionist postmodern sociology claimed that discourses of mass communication were producing visual language, replacing the earlier forms of literacy based on orality and the print media. Interactionist postmodern sociology did not accept critical postmodern social theory, and as a result it talked rarely about a decline in political efficacy of the modern nation state and economic transformations in production processes and workplace organization. Even if it does, it concentrates on how electronically-mediated mass communications influence nation-state and economy. The most representative are Laurel Richardson, Norman K. Denzin, and Patricia T. Clough. They all used to work within the interactionist sociology, but has rapidly moved towards poststructuralist postmodern social theory.

1. Laurel Richardson

Richardson accepted the aesthetic challenge mainly in terms of the epistemological/methodological challenge: "I am attracted to postmodernism as a 'sensibility,' a way of looking at and operating in the world. The core of that sensibility is the doubt that any discourse has a privileged place, any method/theory a universal and general claim to authoritative knowledge" (Richardson 1993: 77-78). Unlike Aristotle
and Kant who divided knowledge into three, Richardson divided knowledge into two modes: the logico-scientific mode and the narrative mode. From my perspectives, the logico-scientific mode parallels the theoretical and the technically practical while the narrative mode parallels the morally practical: "The logico-scientific mode looks for universal truth conditions, whereas the narrative mode looks for particular connections between events. Explanation in the narrative mode is contextually embedded, whereas logico-scientific explanation is abstracted from spatial and temporal contexts" (Richardson 1990: 118). Reminding of Derrida's deconstructive strategy of a bipolar opposition, Richardson argued that the logico-scientific mode of knowledge has been privileged over the narrative mode in the Western intellectual history and that what is needed is to deconstruct this hierarchy. According to Richardson, the core of postmodernism is the new notion of language: "Language is not simply transparent, reflecting a social reality that is objectively out there. Rather, language is a constitutive force, creating a particular view of reality" (1991a: 3). This poststructuralist notion of language undermines the logico-scientific mode: the poststructuralist notion of language reveals that the privileged truth of the logico-scientific mode is connected with a particular view of reality. Richardson presented a feminist-poststructuralist theorizing and writing as an alternative. Richardson wanted to transform sociology by revitalizing the narrative mode in sociology.

To the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the social, Richardson did not present a comprehensive response. Richardson seemed to just take for granted the inappropriateness of the traditional sociological notion of the social. The most important reason for this is that Richardson accepted the poststructuralist notion of language in
constituting social reality. Because of the indeterminate nature of language, the social world is fluid, often contradictory and ambiguous, in which diversified discourses compete. But Richardson did not totally give up the sociological notion of the social. Richardson observed that the social reality is unequally arranged in terms of class, gender, race/ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, martial status, etc. As a result, there are many collectivities which sociological categories can embrace. For instance, there is a set of single women involved with married men (Richardson 1985). This set can be seen as a sociological group because it as a collectivity shares some common lived experiences, which gives it the possibility to act collectively.

To the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the individual, Richardson also did not present a comprehensive response. The reason is the same: Richardson accepted that language constitutes the subject. Richardson (1991a: 13) argued that "Subjectivity...—like the social world—is fluid, often contradictory and ambiguous, rather than fixed and unified, and subjectivity, like the social world, is a site where discourses compete." Discourses cannot avoid using narrative: "Narrative displays the goals and intentions of human actors; it makes individuals, cultures, societies, and historical epochs comprehensible as wholes; it humanizes time; and it allows us to contemplate the effects of our actions, and to later the directions of our lives" (1990: 117). The human subject has lived experience of discourses through the mind and body: "the mind and body split does not work as a meaning-making paradigm" (Richardson 1999: 79). But Richardson (1992: 26) emphasized that "lived experience is lived in a body." As a result, bodily experience is influenced by, for instance, poetry devices such as "line length, meter, cadence, speed, alliteration, assonance, connotation, rhyme and
off-rhyme, variation and repetition” (1992: 26). This character of bodily experience makes it difficult for the subject to form a self-identical identity.

Richardson’s main merit lies in her response to the aesthetic challenge to the sociological methodology. Richardson rejected the binary opposition of science/narrative, fact/fiction, plain language/rhetoric, objectivity/subjectivity, etc., tracing how this binary opposition historically occurred since the seventeenth century. Richardson claimed that this historical separation was completed in the nineteenth century: “By the nineteenth century, literature and science stood as two separate domains. Literature was aligned with art and culture. It contained the values of ‘taste, aesthetics, ethics, humanity, and morality’ and the rights to metaphorical and ambiguous language. Given to science was the belief that its words were objective, precise, unambiguous, noncontextual, nonmetaphoric” (Richardson 1991a: 4). But this “historical separation of literature and science is not immutable” (Richardson 1991a: 4). Embracing the poststructuralist notion of language, Richardson challenged this binary opposition: “All language has grammatical, narrative, and rhetorical structures which ‘create value, bestow meaning, and constitute (in the sense of imposing form upon) the subjects and objects that emerge in the process of inquiry.’ There is no such thing as a neutral language” (Richardson 1991a: 3). According to this, it is untenable that “language is intrinsically irrelevant to the scientific enterprise and that science writing is neutral and transparent” (Richardson 1991a: 6). Scientific inquiry also uses language, and thus, it cannot be objective: “All social scientific writing depends upon narrative structure and narrative devices” (Richardson 1990: 117). In this sense, “Social science writing including sociology is socio-historically constructed” (Richardson 1991a: 10) and “truth
claims are suspected of making and serving particular interests in local, cultural, and political struggles” (Richardson 1993: 78). The result is that “[o]nce the epistemic veil of privileged truth is lifted, feminism, Afro-American, gay, and other routinely discounted-as-ideology discourses rise to the same epistemological status as dominant discourses” (1993: 78).

Then, isn’t there any privileged writing for sociology? Richardson did not go that far. Richardson wanted to privilege lived experience of people. Richardson paid attention to the fact that ordinary people organize their lives in terms of narrative:

**Narrative** is the primary way through which humans organize their experiences into temporally meaningful episodes. People link events narratively. “Narrative meaning is created by noting that something is a “part” of a whole and that something is a “cause” of something else. The meaning of each event is produced by its temporal position and its role in a comprehensible whole (Richardson 1990: 118).

What is important here is that “Narrative explanation means that one person’s voice—the writer’s—speaks for others” (Richardson 1990: 130). The narrative that most ordinary people are using is characterized by the following:

People make sense of their lives, for the most part. . . in terms of specific events, such as giving birth, and sequences of events, such as the life-long impact of parenting a damaged child. Most people do not articulate how the sociological categories of race, gender, class, and ethnicity have shaped their lives or how the larger historical processes such as the demographic transition, service economies, and the Women’s Movement have affected them (Richardson 1990: 130).

Sociologists are basically the same, but “[s]ociologists tell the collective stories of constituencies to which they may not even belong” (Richardson 1990: 130).

A collective story tells the experience of a sociologically constructed category of people on the context of larger sociocultural and historical forces. The sociological protagonist is a collective. I think of similarly situated individuals who may or may not be aware of their life affinities as coparticipants in a collective story. My intent is to help construct a
consciousness of kind in the minds of the protagonists, a concrete recognition of sociological bondedness with others, because such consciousness can break down isolation between people, empower them, and lead them to collective action on their behalf (Richardson 1997: 14).

For this reason, telling a collective story entails a practical-ethnical issue: “how can we use our skills and privileges to advance the case of the non-privileged” (1990: 131). Richardson argued that collective story could have a privileged place within a liberating (liberated) sociology: “This narrative tells the collective story of the disempowered, not by judging, blaming, or advising them, but by placing their lives within the context of larger social and historical forces and by directing energy toward those social structures that perpetuate injustice” (Richardson 1997: 19). According to Richardson, a feminist-postmodern sociology can tell this type of collective story. Feminism has been driven by political practice which aimed to dismantle the subordination of woman. Feminism has tried to situate the women’s lives within the context of larger social and historical forces, arguing that the personal is the political. Contemporary deessentialized and deuniversalized feminism willingly embraced postmodernism which argued that theorizing must be grounded in explicitly historical and cultural ways (Richardson 1991b).

Richardson believed that collective story should be closer to lived experiences of people, move them, make them engage in interpretive labors, and thus, empower them. Richardson argued that poetry, rather than prose, is more appropriate for this double task and she tried to represent lived lives poetically (see Richardson 1992).

Poetry depends upon the silences and pauses of speech and is closer to oral representation that is prose. As a result, poetry is, arguably, closer to lived experiences and more likely to affect its readers and listeners. Poetry is both visual and oral, both speakable and readable. Poetic representation commands itself to multiple and open readings in ways that
conventional prose does not; it engages its readers in frankly interpretive labor (Richardson 1991c: 177).

To the aesthetic argument of the loss of sense of temporality, Richardson responded negatively because it betrays the commonplace fact that “Everywhere people experience and interpret their lives in relationship to time. Time is the quintessential basis for and constraint upon the human experience. And, everywhere, humans make sense of their temporal worlds through the narrative” (1990: 124). Of course, Richardson rejected the grand narrative that uses the linear notion of temporality. But the attack on the linear notion of temporality does not necessarily mean that humankind lost sense of temporality. On morality, Richardson did not elaborate much. But we can get a moral implication from Richardson’s works. Richardson seemed to reject traditional morality because it is based on the binary opposition of the mind and body. The self-restraining morality is achieved only at the cost of bodily experience. Richardson wanted to vitalize lived experience. On politics, Richardson was critical of the traditional politics of assimilation and acculturation. In fact, the politics of inclusion operates on the binary opposition of inclusion and exclusion. Richardson challenged the politics of assimilation and acculturation which is buttressed by modern sociological story. For instance, a modernist story used the guiding concepts of assimilation and acculturation when telling about Native Americans: “For the acculturation story, the writing problem was the description of past culture. Indian life had no future, and the present was interpreted in light of this futurelessness as pathology and disintegration. The political action consistent with this metaphor was to send Native American children to Anglo boarding schools, to create urban relocation projects, to undermines tribal tradition” (Richardson 1990: 132). Richardson criticized this story. Richardson argued that what is needed is to
tell the other story to the disempowered: "For the contemporary resistance narrative, however, the writing problem concerns the future: the resistance of indigenous people to exploitation in their struggle to preserve ethnic identity. The writing describes the resistance in the present to preserve the past for the future. Political action consistent with this narrative is intervention to prevent cultural genocide" (Richardson 1990: 132).

2. Norman K. Denzin

Denzin tried to synthesize feminism, postcolonialism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism through the axial principle of C. Wright Mill's pragmatism. For Denzin, Mills is important because "Mills argued that as new realities and new images appear on the horizon, the old Enlightenment ideologies of liberalism and socialism are in the process of collapsing. Fearing that a Cheerful Robot would become a predominant social type, Mills argued that we need to study 'the types of men, women and children that this postmodern age is producing.' We will require, he said, different theories, methods and different ways of looking at this new historical moment" (Denzin 1993a: 179). Denzin believed that feminism, postcolonialism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism are following Mills' lead: "Taking their lead from Mills, feminist scholars (Meaghan Morris, Dorothy Smith, Patricia Clough), scholars of color (bell hooks, Cornell West, Stuart Hall, Patricia Collins), poststructural theorists (Barthes, Foucault, Derrida) and avowed theorists of the postmodern (Jameson, Lyotard, Baudrillard), postmodern theorists now attempt to write and theorize this historical moment Mills identified." For Denzin, these new theorists are important because they analyzed the nature of new realities and new images in postmodern era. Denzin (1991b: ix) argued that "classical sociological ways of
representing and writing about society require radical transformation” because they are inappropriate for representing and writing about new realities and new images. For this transformation, Denzin enthusiastically embraced the aesthetic challenge to American sociology. Denzin (1992: 24) was critical about mainstream American sociologists who have been preoccupied with the abstract sociological problem of macro-micro links: “What’s at issue is hegemony and control of a theoretical paradigm that would speak for all of sociology. Beneath this search for power are individual careers, prestige, publications, and the power to determine what passes as knowledge within a discipline.” Against this depoliticized abstract project, Denzin (1996a: xxiv), following pragmatic tradition, wanted to start from the worlds of lived experiences and to use “pragmatically gained knowledge as a tool for social criticism.” But Denzin distinguished himself from traditional pragmatists who worked decades before, calling his pragmatism a media and communication centered pragmatism. Following the semiotic version of information society theory or consumer society theory, this pragmatism accepted “the proposition that the image of reality has replaced reality” (Denzin 1996a: xx). Denzin concentrated on the nature of the image of reality and its impact on the social and the individual. Following a politicized version of Derridean deconstruction, Denzin tried to deconstruct the “images” of the repressive arrangements of class, gender, race and ethnicity, that electronically-mediated mass communications represent as the real.

Denzin embraced the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the social. According to Denzin (1991b: 23), the sociological notion of the social as a totality is a sociological fiction: “ordinary sociology’s society, society-at-large, is a sociological fiction; society in the abstract is neither visible nor countable. It exists in the texts that
sociologists and others write about it.” Denzin defied all reified notion of the social and proposed a new notion of the social which is virtually same as the poststructuralist notion of language. The postmodern world is a world where symbols and meaning freely circulate within a system and have no apparent concrete anchoring in reality. The postmodern world consists of systems of representation, not systems of real things. In the postmodern world, everything becomes what Denzin (1991a: 17) defined as cultural: “Culture refers to the taken-for-granted and problematic webs of significance and meaning that human beings produce and act on when they do things together.” Denzin did not believe that these meanings are neutral because he believed that they are “shaped and moulded by larger culture-and-meaning-making institutions of society-at-large” (1991a: 17). In the postmodern world, the main institution to shape and mould meanings is electronically-mediated mass communications. The language of electronically-mediated mass communications is similar to the Derridean notion of language as a process of deferral and delay. The language of electronically-mediated mass communications does not represent the real but produce texts which are always parts of other texts. The texts contain contradictory features because there is no author to organize them coherently. Likewise, the culture of postmodern society that the language of electronically-mediated mass communications produces cannot avoid containing some contradictory features.

It seems difficult to find any recurrent or persistent patterns of social behaviors because culture as a text appears to be seamless: “A text is never a finite entity, with fixed boundaries, for a text always spills over into other texts” (Denzin 1991a: 25). Denzin implicitly wanted to make society like a text. But Denzin observed that there are
many determinant signifiers to freeze a text. Socially, they are master signifiers such as
gender, social class, race and ethnicity. The discourses of electronically-mediated mass
communications produces a variety of texts that arrange gender, social class, race and
ethnicity in a way to (re)produce an unequal system of the social.

Denzin also embraced the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the
individual. Like other texts, the human being is constituted by a variety of discourses
that electronically-mediated mass communications deliver. The discourses of
electronically-mediated mass communications are mainly visual, which displace the
earlier forms of literacy based on orality and the print media. The visual discourses of
electronically-mediated mass communications introduce a new set of media logics and
media formats:

These new formats alter the person’s relationships to the “real” and the
technologies of the real. They maintain a narrative and epistemological
commitment to the simulational logic of the third stage of the sign. They
serve to turn the individual into a new cultural object; an object who
produces cultural knowledge and cultural texts via the new informational
formats (Denzin 1991b: 8).

Following Baudrillard, Denzin (1991b: vii) argued that “members of the
contemporary world are voyeurs adrift in a sea of symbols. They know and see
themselves through cinema and television.” Thus, the individual in the postmodern
world seems to be free of any kinds of constraints. But Denzin did not forget to mention
that new media formats are simultaneously new vehicles for the (re)production of official
ideology. The individual is (re)produced as the postmodern self whose ingredients “are
given in three key cultural identities, those derived from the performances that define
gender, social class, race and ethnicity. The patriarchal, and all too often racist
contemporary cultures of the world ideologically code the self and its meanings in terms
of the meanings brought to these three cultural identities” (Denzin 1991b: viii). Visual discourses of electronically-mediated mass communications are ideological in so far as they try to reify the subjects, giving some specific fixed essences to the subjects. The individual seems to freely enjoy the representation of mass media, but s/he is in fact caught in ideological discourses. Nevertheless, Denzin did not believe that the individual became a cultural dope because alongside media representation the individual lives in the worlds of lived experiences. “The postmodern self,” thus, “has become a sign of itself, a double dramaturgical reflection anchored in media representations on the one side, and everyday life on the other” (Denzin 1991b: viii). Thus, the relation between media representations and lived experiences is an empirical, not ontological problem. In this sense, Denzin wanted to preserve the dialectical relationship between lived experiences and experiences mediated by mass communications such as TV and cinema.

Denzin also embraced the aesthetic challenge to sociological methodology. First of all, he refuted the modernist epistemology that assumed the privileged position of absolute spectator: “any hint of objectivity predicated on the privileged position of the absolute spectator must be relinquished” (Denzin 1991b: xi). Following Derrida, Denzin called this epistemology a metaphysics of presence that assumes that speech and writing are direct mirrors to thought, speakers and writers are fully present to themselves, and texts are pure. This realist epistemology is false because “things do not exist independent of the representations in social texts” (Denzin 1993b: 149). The logocentric search for a fixed presence is doomed to fail due to the nature of language as a process of deferral and delay. Denzin distinguished two models of interpretation in human disciplines: “The first seeks to decipher, unravel, and discover the truth, the origins, the centers, the essences,
the inner structures, and the obdurate meanings that operate within and shape particular forms of experience, interactional sites, social texts, and social institutions” (Denzin 1991b: 153). According to him, the classical and neo-classical version of sociology as a science of society followed this model. The other model followed Derridean deconstruction: “It seeks ... to examine how current textual practices (including theory and research) reify structures, subjects, and social experiences. It proposes to deconstruct these practices so as to reveal how they keep in place a politically repressive picture of the social that is out of touch with the world as it is lived, and experienced” (Denzin 1991a: 153). Denzin actively embraced the second position because he wanted to make sociology civic sociology, “a form of radical democratic social practice” (Denzin 1996b: 747).

Denzin extended deconstructive methods to cultural studies: “Viewing human experience as a social text, cultural studies attempts to deconstruct and unravel the ideological meanings that are coded into taken-for-granted meanings that circulate in everyday life” (1991a: 17). Denzin (1992: 81) defined cultural studies as follows: “Such an approach examines three interrelated problems: the production, distribution, consumption, and exchange of cultural objects and their meanings; the textual analysis of these objects, their meanings, and the practices that surround them; and the study of lived cultures and lived experiences which are shaped by the cultural meanings that circulate in everyday life.” The first problem was addressed in the Frankfurt School’s culture industry thesis; it involved “issues of ideology and the political economy (semiosis) of signs, including how these signs are worded or photographed, where they circulate, who buys them, and so forth. The systems of discourse that shape the meanings brought to
any cultural object must also be examined" (Denzin 1992: 81). The second problem was
dealt with in the early British cultural studies; it examines “how a text constitutes (hails)
an individual as a subject in a particular ideological moment and site.” A variety of
reading strategies such as feminist, semiotic, hermeneutic, deconstructive, psychoanalytic
reading strategies can be used. The third problem was dealt with mainly in the British
subculture studies and the American interactionist ethnographic studies; it examines
“how interacting individuals connect their lives to these ideological texts and make sense
of their experiences in terms of the texts’ meanings” (Denzin 1992: 82). What is
important here is that Denzin has focused on the last two problems. In many articles,
Denzin did excellent textual analyses using Derridean deconstructive reading and writing.
Denzin has also focused on ethnographic works dealing with how interacting individuals
connect their lived experiences to the cultural representations of those experiences. By
contrast, Denzin has relatively ignored the first problem. Even when Denzin addressed it,
he did not study the political economy of the sign. Rather, he focused on the systems of
discourse. For instance, in Hollywood Shot by Shot (1991), Denzin analyzed eight
systems of discourses which shaped the presentation of the alcoholic, relatively ignoring
the political economy. For Denzin, structures of meaning seem to be more important
than structures of political economy. Later, Denzin (1996: xv) added two more problems
to the definition of cultural studies: “those transnational cultural and representational
practices which produce and reproduce new forms of control, desire and terror in
everyday life”; and “new forms of textual representations that illuminate and critique
those practice.” In this new definition, Denzin emphasized the globalization of the
culture industry. Denzin recognized that through the global network, new global cultural
forms and practices have begun to have impact on the local cultural forms and practices.

But Denzin did not locate this globalization of the culture industry within the new development of capitalism. In this sense, Denzin omitted to consider the political economy as a method, which I believe is a serious default in his cultural studies.

Denzin also embraced the aesthetic challenge to the normative dimension. Embracing the aesthetic attack on the linear sense of temporality, Denzin argued that “[e]ach historical moment can be taken on its own terms, and situated within its particular cultural, sexual, racial, social, moral, economic, and political order of things” (Denzin 1991b: 49). On morality, Denzin (1991b: 5) argued that “[c]ultural eclecticism has become a way of life.” People have increasingly become conspicuous consumers who try to verify their existence through diversified consumption. This way of life is contradictory to the liberal ideal of morality characterized by self-denying ethics. He defied this kind of conservative, commercialized version of morality, and advocated “a radical, non-violent pluralism that represses no one and liberates all” (Denzin 1991b: 154). On politics, Denzin (1992: 161) criticized the Chicago School model of democratic politics which privileges the heroic individuals who “create their own value through action and by assuming full responsibility for the consequences of their own conduct.”

Social inequality and conflicts are seen as a result of lack of communication among people, and thus, they are considered to be eradicated if there is full communication among people. There is a sharp division between the public and the private: the public sphere includes economy and politics while the private includes family, friendship, and leisure activities. The public is a field in which the free and open communication of informed citizens construct the public good. The institutions of civil society such as
media, school, social sciences, etc. will present the knowledge necessary for the public to make correct decisions in any problematic situation. The state is supposed to speak on behalf of its citizens. But according to Denzin, this traditional politics has served as a dominant ideology to perpetuate the status quo: "an economic division of labor organized for private profit rather than human need; a gender-based division of labor 'that separates privatized childrearing from recognized and remunerated work'; gender and race-segmented 'paid labor markets that generate a marginalized underclass'; and a world political economy and system of nation-states that 'engage in crisis management in the form of segmented social welfare concessions and subsidized war production" (Denzin 1992: 145). This politics is now outmoded; new politics is needed because of the postmodern condition depicted above. Denzin (1996a: xxiii) described this new politics, the post-pragmatic politics, as thus:

This post-pragmatism will dispense with the liberal desire to sustain a fiction between the public and the private. It will seek a radical democratization of gender, race and ethnic relations. It will deconstruct the ideological means that surround these relationships, including the "bourgeois concepts of individualism, interpersonal relations, education, productivist values and natures." It will analyze the discursive and interactional forms these relationships assume within organizational, class and interpersonal structures. This post-pragmatism will critically attach itself to the postmodern family, the media and popular culture, cyberspace, science, protest movements, national identities, and race and gender as the critical sites for interpretive-political work. It will push hard at the boundaries and intersections of public science and the media, seeking science and the media as the dominant discourses of power and control in contemporary life.

3. Patricia T. Clough

Like other interactionist postmodern sociologists, Clough accepted mainly
poststructuralist postmodern social theory rather than critical postmodern social theory. The main reason is that Clough wanted to understand the modernist division between nature and technology, the body and the machine, the real and the virtual, the living and the inert “in terms of differential relationships rather than oppositional or even dialectical ones” (Clough 2000a: 11). Here no element is ontologically privileged. She seemed to believe that critical postmodern social theory followed the dialectical model of base and superstructure. Compared to other interactionist postmodern sociologists, she has some peculiar characteristics. Firstly, Clough considered poststructuralism as an epistemological shift as well as an ontological shift: “against the usual treatment of poststructuralism as provoking an epistemological shift, I want to suggest that poststructuralism’s reach to the future of thought is in its ontological implications” (Clough 2000a: 5). This means that she clearly situated poststructuralism within the age of teletechnology. In this sense, she followed the semiotic version of the information society theory. Secondly, Clough connected poststructuralism with Lacanian psychoanalysis when she explained the constitution of the subject identity and social reality. She claimed that the Oedipal complex functions as the dominant narrative logic informing the construction of the subject’s identity and social reality. According to her, the Oedipal logic constitutes the masculine subject as a unified, rational, autonomous figure by replacing irrationality onto the figure of the other. This masculine subject constructs the realist narrative through which the realist notion of social reality is produced. She wanted to deconstruct this Oedipal logic. In this sense, feminism is inherent in her project (see 1990, 1992a, 1992b, 1993, 1994). Lastly, Clough connected the change from modern to postmodern era with the change of theorizing writing from
narrativities to teletechnologies: "while I would argue that our classical theorists gave lasting form to the discipline of sociology, as well as influenced every discipline of the human sciences, and that they did so by theorizing the rise of industrialization and the mechanization of the mode of capitalist production, I also would argue that poststructural theorists have instigated a profound transformation of these same disciplines, by theorizing writing in terms of information/communication media technologies, especially telecommunications. In this sense, poststructural thought has always threatened to displace classical sociological theory” (Clough 1996: 722-723).

Clough embraced the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the social. Following Derrida, she rejected the traditional ontology of presence. According to her, the sociological notion of the social is based on the traditional ontology of presence, which is held by the Oedipal logic. The Oedipal logic endorses the traditional ontology of presence by producing realist narrative whose author is a unified, rational, autonomous subject: “the desire of the realist narrative is an oedipal desire with which the past is rewritten and the present is desired to the end(s) of the subject’s self-knowledge, his unified self-development” (Clough 1992a: 22). Against the traditional ontology of presence, she presented preontology, or what Derrida called “hauntology.”

I want to suggest that the ontological implications of poststructuralism cross through the ontology of presence, put origins and authenticity under erasure, making ontology impossible or only impossibly so. The shift in ontological perspective that poststructuralism implies makes ontologizing impossible but imperative, necessary for thinking Being anew. that is, for bringing Being back to the opening of ontology, to the preontological, and thereby inviting a rethinking of technicity as well. Poststructuralism, I want to suggest, offers an ontological perspective in which nature and technology, the body and the machine, the real and the virtual, the living and the inert are given in differential relationships, each inextricable from the other” (Clough 2000a: 6).
What is at stake is that Clough situated the ontology of presence within the modern era and the preontology within the age of teletechnology or telecommunication.

By teletechnology I mean to refer to the realization of technoscience, technoculture, and technonature—that is, to the full interface of computer technology and television, promising globalized networks of information and communication whereby layers of electronic images, texts, and sounds flow in real time, so that the speeds of the territorialization, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization of social spaces, as well as the adjustment to the vulnerabilities of exposure to media event-ness, are beyond any user's mere decision to turn "it" on or off (Clough 2000a: 3).

Telecommunications challenges the sociological notion of the social based on the traditional ontology of presence. Telecommunications undermines the sociological category of social structure: "telecommunications plays a large part in... the deconstruction of the 'principally co-ordinated space... inside which all traditional sociological categories have been once securely allocated'" (Clough 1996: 723). As a result, telecommunications introduces a new notion of the social based on preontology.

The sociological notion of the social is based on the sharp division between the public and the private spheres, the family and the state, the economy and the state. Autonomy of each institution is the core idea of the sociological notion of the social. But with the development of teletechnology, this notion of the social has lost its referent. The boundaries become blurred. But this does not mean that the social disappeared.

What is expected instead is various reterritorializations in the reconfiguration of social spaces conditioned by the transnationalization of capital and the globalization of teletechnology, such that the transnational or the global are better understood as nodes in various networks alongside the local, the singular, the immanent. As the relevant distinction for political economy is no longer that between circulating capital and fixed capital but rather between capital effected by state apparatuses and capital effected by multinationals and globalization, the functions of nation-states and the aims for their interrelationship in terms of a transnationalism are being revised (Clough 2000b: 384).
This new notion of the social is very similar to one that the aesthetic assumes. Clough (2000a: 4) argued that "matter-energy flows" are displacing the structural. Using Deleuze and Guattari’s terms "territorialization," "deteritorialization," and "reterritorialization," she valorized the aesthetic argument that the structural is in flux. She saw the traditional notion of the social in a negative light because she believed that the Oedipal logic "holds together the structural configuration of family and national ideologies, the state and civil society, and the private and the public spheres" (Clough 2000a: 12). Clough (1996: 727) argued that telecommunications deconstructed the traditional notion of the social: "the difference between production and consumption has been displaced; so too the distinction between the private and public spheres is all but erased."

Clough believed that the sociological notion of the subject, which derived out of modernist social-structural configuration of family and national ideologies, the state and the civil society, and the public and private spheres, lost its significance. The core idea is that the subject becomes what the aesthetic assumes, a free-flowing matter. Following Lacanian psychoanalysis, she argued that the modern subject as a unified, rational, autonomous being was constituted as the resolution of the Oedipus complex in which the position of the subject, masculinity or femininity, is fixed. In the Oedipal logic, the position of the masculine subject is fixed as being "a unified, rational, autonomous figure by displacing irrationality onto the figure of the other: the woman, the colonized subject, the raced subject, and the homosexual" (Clough 1996: 724). But the development of telecommunications undermines the Oedipal logic, and further, its discursive product, the modern masculine subject. According to Clough, the multiple, diffuse subjectivity of
telecommunications escapes the Oedipal logic: "The logic of telecommunications is not narratively organized around a subject. . . . The logic is not about before-during-after. Given its seemingly endless flow of information and images, telecommunications is organized with. . . . the logic of underexposed-exposed-overexposed"; "Its [telecommunications'] unconscious cannot be found in projecting a unified subject through displacement onto others. The unconscious of telecommunications is more in the felt constancy of its flow of information and images. The unconscious of telecommunications is in the way its stills and extends time that is already consumed or socialized" (Clough 1996: 726, 728). The logic of underexposed-exposed-overexposed does not concern representation. Rather, what matters is "the capacity and speed of the circuits of information in which the subject is no longer the centering (or decentering) figure and therefore no longer the site of an unconscious not-knowing" (Clough 1996: 726). What is at stake here is that telecommunications functions as an agent of socialization: "The socialization processes of the institutions once enclosed in the private sphere of civil society have been generalized. Telecommunications can no longer be conceived as a technological extension of the human being that is engaged in the perfecting of the subject, socializing and educating the individual. Rather, telecommunication increasingly submits socialization and education to the requirements of technology" (Clough 1996: 727). Telecommunications changed the nature of the subject: "the subject is only one point (or even multiple points) in the network of always already transmitted information" (Clough 1996: 727). In the Oedipal logic, the unconscious of the subject is located under the subject because the Oedipal logic displaces the lack of the subject onto the other. But in the logic of underexposed-
exposed-overexposed, "the unconscious is always already everywhere in the flow of images and information. Only the intensities of the flow can change, can be changed" (Clough 1996: 730).

Clough embraced the aesthetic challenge to sociological methodology, arguing that the traditional methodology of sociology is imbued with narrativity intrinsically associated with the Oedipal logic. She criticized empirical science which masquerades itself as a factual representation of empirical reality by using the realist narrativity, a production of projected or displaced unconscious desire. She held that "all factual representations of empirical reality, even statistical representations, are narratively constructed" (Clough 1992a: 2). All narratives, including the scientific one, conceal within them the writing subject's unconscious desire which desires to disavow the writing subject’s loss of the mother and to fix its sexual identity through the crude anatomical opposition. Therefore, reality outside the narrative does not exist, nor does factual or neutral reality exist outside the narrative; all realities written by narratives are sexual. Clough (1992a: 4) argued that the researcher’s authority as an author is fantasmatically constructed by "defensive fantasies in which a coherence of identity is imagined in order to disavow and supplement the failure of identity." According to her, narrativity intrinsically associated with the Oedipal logic has dominated the human sciences including sociology: “[n]arrative has functioned...to constitute the authorial subject as a unified, rational, autonomous figure by displacing irrationality onto the figure of the other: the woman, the colonized subject, the raced subject, and the homosexual" (1996: 724).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Clough sought to find anti-Oedipal or pre-Oedipal narrativity in telecommunications because she believed that telecommunications erupts the Oedipal narrativity. She seemed to suggest to follow the pre- or anti-Oedipal logic of telecommunications. Writing experiments such as the ones of Carolyn Ellis, Laurel Richardson, and Allen Shelton are strategies to re-find the social in the telecommunications age. Their writings take sociology into the “network imagination of telecommunications.” In a sense, they mimic the logic of telecommunications which is characterized by the following: “The personal story does not begin in order to end with the unified, autonomous, rational subject all of one piece. The personal story is always a breached autobiographical form”; “Cuts in the writing allow for play with the timing of the appearance and disappearance of images and information, the switching on and off of representations, subjects and voices, histories, events and situations. The particular, the local, or the contingent are evoked without the illusion that their appearance makes the global disappear once and for all” (Clough 1996: 729). She was very cautious when she evaluated experimental writing. Sociology has usually followed the unconscious of the human sciences, but postmodern critique of sociology and the development of telecommunications technologies challenged sociology’s usual way of defining/writing the social. The link of power and knowledge becomes obvious, and sociologists’ self-reflexivity based on the unified, autonomous, rational subject or on scientific community is no longer available. What should sociologists do? Just keep on with conventional writing? Or follow the logic of telecommunications? In this dilemma, experimental writing can be seen as a transitional alternative to re-find the social. Clough (1996: 730) argued as follows: “I propose that we focus on these writings because they are symptomatic of our interregnum between the
past of the human sciences and the future of what Seidman calls the postdisciplinary
discourses of culture. Having already abandoned the science/nonscience binary, while
transgressing the border separating the empirical conventions of the social sciences from
the literary and the rhetorical, these writings demand a new form of criticism.” Like
other postmodern sociologists, Clough proposed a transdisciplinary studies which
combines social science and literary criticism. Literary criticism is significant when it
makes apparent the entanglement of desire, power, and academic discourse. She argued
that African-American feminists, Third World feminists, feminist post-colonial critics,
and queer theorists inform us that academic discourse is interwoven with an author’s
unconscious desire to disavow an author’s loss and to control/shape the world according
to an author’s ideal unified imago at the cost of other differences of race, class, sexuality,
ethnicity, nationality, and gender. These studies theorize across the border of social
science and literary criticism in order to reclaim previously assimilated cultural histories
as well as revise notions of fantasy and unconscious desire.

Clough proposed a deconstructive reading (and writing) as a main method, which is
based on new “understanding of all texts as deployments or distributions of persons,
places, events, and perspectives in relations of power/knowledge” (Clough 1992a: 132).
She tried to deconstruct canonical texts which utilized realist narrativity that combines
authorized knowledge with a fantasy of a unified masculine subject identity. The
masculine author is sexually biased, but it masquerades itself as a unified subject who
factually represents the empirical reality. The aim of Clough’s strategy is to deconstruct
this fantasmatic subject and to analyze how the text deploys or distributes persons,
places, events, and perspectives in relations of power/knowledge.
Clough also embraced the aesthetic challenge to the normative dimension. The core idea is to escape the Oedipal logic. Clough attacked the linear notion of temporality, which is endorsed by the Oedipal logic, and also criticized the self-denying or self-restraining morality, which is driven by the unconscious desire to disavow the subject's loss and to fantasmatically construct its unified imago at the cost of others. She also rejected traditional politics based on essentialist identity, attacking the modernist assumption that real experiences of real people exist outside of discourse. From this perspective, she criticized even modern feminist politics for utilizing the identity politics that argues that all members of the same oppressed group share a common identity. Thus, she aimed to deconstruct identity politics, investigating how many identities are discursively produced in relation to hegemonic discourses. For instance, the meanings of women are discursively produced under specific conditions, and thus, they can be changed. In this sense, she concentrated on textual politics. She held that hegemonic discourses enframe the psychic structure of the subject, regulate the sense of reality for the subject, and establish texts (deployments or distributions of persons, places, events, and perspectives in relations of power/knowledge) through (historically) conflating themselves with realist narrativity. In this sense, discourse is a site for the production of knowledge/power. Thus, deconstructive reading of hegemonic discourses also means an effort to rearrange a certain political, economical arrangement.

Critics of Postmodern Sociology

Generally speaking, mainstream American sociology represented by positivistic sociology and functionalist sociology has ignored the aesthetic challenge to the
fundamental assumptions of modern American sociology. Mainstream American
sociology has been busy in making sociology a genuine science of humanity and society.
But some mainstream American sociologists began to be interested in the aesthetic
challenge. But their interest in the aesthetic challenge was different from one of
postmodern American sociologists who embraced the aesthetic challenge in order to
broaden the horizon of sociology. Unlike them, some mainstream American sociologists
tried to defend modern American sociology as a genuine science of humanity and society
against the aesthetic challenge. These mainstream American sociologists believed that
the new condition called the postmodern could be investigated through traditional
methodologies. Thus, according to them, there is no need to invent new strategies to
study the postmodern. In what follows, I will briefly discuss how these mainstream
American sociologists responded to the aesthetic challenge. Jeffrey Alexander will be
considered as an exemplar of functionalist sociology. Jonathan Turner will be thought as
an exemplar of positivistic sociology.

1. Jeffrey Alexander

Functionalist sociology represented by Parsons' functionalism had been dead until
neofunctionalism emerged in the midst of 1980s. Jeffrey Alexander played an important
role in revitalizing functionalist sociology. Through *Theoretical Logic in Sociology*
(1982) and *Neofunctionalism* (1985), Alexander presented "multidimensionality" as the
criterion of good sociological theory, elaborating on Parsons' functionalism. Like
Parsons who wanted to make the analytic reference, Alexander used the idea of
equilibrium as a reference point. Alexander believed that both the social and the
individual are multidimensional and thus sociological inquiry also should be multidimensional. Thus, what is at stake is to construct a "general theory" to grasp this multidimensional nature of the social and the individual.

Alexander's general theory embraced the transcendental version of the theoretical which emphasizes the capacity of the mind to ascend from the illusory world of the particulars to the real world of the universals. As Alexander (1992: 325) put it in a modest tone: "To advocate the necessity for general theory is to uphold the possibility of universal thought. Universalism rests upon the capacity of actors to decenter themselves, to understand that the world does not revolve around themselves, that they are not its creators, that they can study 'it' in a relatively personal way." He wanted to make sociological theory a general theory:

Sociological theory can be legitimate and socially important enterprise only if it can make a claim to reason. . . .To make a claim to reason. . . .is to suggest that sociological theory can achieve a perspective on society which is more extensive and more general than the theorist’s particular lifeworld and the particular perspective of his or her social group. If this is not possible, there is no such thing as theory, whether social or sociological (Alexander 1991: 147).

Then, how can a sociologist transcend his/her own particular perspective so as to form more extensive and general theory? Alexander recognized that theory can not achieve “the view from nowhere.” Nevertheless, Alexander (1991: 147) argued that theory achieves “a view from ‘somewhere else,’ a place that is neither the theorist’s own personal world nor the world entirely outside.” Alexander (1991: 147-148) described “somewhere else” as follows:

In the life of the university, this place is sustained by the intellectual disciplines, which exert stringent demands for the impersonal expression of personal commitments that Weber called value-rationality. These disciplines have been created historically by what can be called broadly
the tradition of reason, which has developed very gradually and unevenly and in many different civilizations over thousands of years. In microsociological terms, this tradition is sustained by the decentering of moral and cognitive understanding that underlies socialization, as Piaget and Parsons have shown. In macrsociological terms, the tradition of reason is institutionalized when civil society guarantees universal rights to particular groups according to the rule of an impersonal law.

Alexander considered the capacity to achieve “somewhere else” as an index of maturity in both the individual (micro level) and civilization (macro level). The earlier the individual, the more s/he is centered. Likewise, “The earlier the human society, the more its members experience centeredness” (Alexander 1992: 325). By contrast, the more mature the individual, the more decentered s/he is. Likewise, the later the human society, the more its members experience decenteredness. In this sense, decentering one’s own self and own civilization is an index of maturity because it enables us to go beyond our own particular positions and to comprehend the world and self in a universalistic and impersonal way. Alexander considered positivism and empiricism as an extreme version of decentering and Romanticism and idealism as an extreme version of recentering. Positivism and empiricism eliminated reason, arguing that scientists experience themselves as mirroring nature. He called this “absent reason.” Alexander posited poststructuralism as a contemporary extension of neo-romantic countermovement against this absent reason, originating from Romanticism and idealism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The common feature of this countermovement is its refusal of universalism or the value of general theory and its contextualism whose epistemological implication is conventionalism and skepticism. Alexander opposed both positivism and empiricism on the one hand, and contextualism on the other hand.
With this view on general theory, Alexander responded to the aesthetic challenge to American sociology. Alexander did not accept a positivist position that scientific knowledge is exempt from any ideological implication. This argument is understandable because Alexander did not use the term ideology as the Marxian notion of false consciousness. Rather, it is a Geertzian notion of ideology which refers to a symbolic system that functions to interpret the world in a manner that provides meaning and motivation. Alexander distinguished four distinctive theoretical-cum-ideological periods in postwar thought. First is modernization theory and romantic liberalism, which covers the period from end of World War II to later 1960s. Modernization theory is a general theory in as far as it presented a general claim that “there are functional not merely idealistic exigencies that push social systems toward democracy, markets, and the universalization of culture, and that shifts toward ‘modernity’ in any subsystem create considerable pressures on the others to respond in a complementary way” (Alexander 1995: 11). Modernization theory is an ideology insofar as it endorsed romantic liberalism which emphasizes real individuals and incremental change over a collective historical subject and revolutionary change. Second is antimodemization theory and heroic radicalism, which covers the period from later 1960s to end of 1970s. Antimodemization theory is a general theory in as far as it presented a general claim that serious “reality problems” betray modernization theory. Antimodemization theory is an ideology in as far as it endorsed heroic radicalism which emphasized a collective historical subject and revolutionary change over real individuals and incremental change. Third is postmodern theory and comic detachment, which covers the period from early 1980s to mid-1990s. Postmodern theory is a general theory in as far as it produced new middle range models.
of culture, science and epistemology, social action, gender and family relations, and economic life. Postmodern theory is an ideology in as far as it endorsed comic detachment: “Because good and evil cannot be parsed, the actors—protagonists and antagonists—are on the same moral level, and the audience, rather than being normatively or emotionally involved, can sit back and be amused” (Alexander 1995: 27).

Alexander (1995: 29) argued that “the departure from postmodernism has already begun.” An upcoming theoretical-cum-ideological period is neo-modernization or reconvergence theory and the combination of the narrative forms of its predecessors. Neo-modernization or reconvergence theory is an heir of early modernization theory. Neo-modernism is an ideology as far as it reinflated the emancipatory narrative of the market. Alexander was basically positive to this transformation, but under the condition that we should avoid the totalizing conceit: “Institutional structures like democracy, law, and market are functional requisites if certain social competencies are to be achieved and certain resources to be acquired; they are not, however, either historical inevitabilities or linear outcomes, nor are they social panaceas for the problems of non-economic subsystems or groups” (Alexander 1995: 46).

As we know from what we have discussed so far, Alexander did not accept the aesthetic challenge to American sociology. On the aesthetic challenge to the sociological notion of the social, he argued that “[m]odernization theory (e.g. Parsons 1964) stipulated that great civilizations of the world would converge towards the institutional and cultural configurations of Western society. Certainly we are witnessing something very much like this process today, and the enthusiasm it has generated is hardly imposed by Western domination” (Alexander 1995: 42). He rarely talked about the aesthetic challenge to the
sociological notion of the individual. He did not seem to be interested in how mass communications influence the construction of the self and social interaction. On the aesthetic challenge to the sociological methods, Alexander did not accept the crisis of representation because he believed that Western civilization has developed universal criteria. In this sense, he defended scientific sociology: “one must distinguish between different kinds of narratives—between stories that are literary and political, on the one hand, and scientific on the other. Science differs from other narratives because it commits the success of its story to the criterion of truth. For every scientific narrative we are compelled to ask, “Do we know whether it is true?” (Alexander 1991: 149).

Alexander also did not agree with postmodernists who claim that we lost the sense of temporality. Alexander pointed out that “[e]very historical period needs a narrative that defines its past in terms of the present, and suggests a future that is fundamentally different, and typically ‘even better,’ than contemporary time” (Alexander 1995: 10).

Alexander did not believe in the inevitable linear development of history, but still believed that the human race has moved toward market and democracy. On morality, Alexander accused postmodernism of being fatalistic, private, particularistic, fragmented, and local. Alexander believed that Western civilization had achieved universal morality that transcends fatalistic, private, particularistic, fragmented, and local morality. On politics, Alexander endorsed liberalism equipped with institutional structures such as democracy, law, and market.

2. Jonathan Turner

Since the 1980s, positivistic sociology has flourished independent of the influence of
postmodernism. Especially, in the course of 1980s rational choice theory emerged as a dominant version of positivistic sociology. The core idea of positivistic sociology is to create a natural science of society. Most positivistic sociologists did not take the aesthetic challenge to American sociology seriously. They usually ignored it. But some of them began to think postmodernism seriously. Jonathan Turner is one of the representatives. Turner (1985, 1990, 1992) actively defended positivism. His main aim was to turn sociology into precise science like the natural sciences. For this, pre- or non-scientific elements should be diminished in sociology. According to Turner, there are four basic approaches to building sociological theory: metatheorizing schemes, analytical schemes, propositional schemes, and modeling schemes. Metatheorizing schemes are concerned with "the basic presuppositions that should guide theoretical activity. . .What is the nature of human activity, human interaction, human organization? What is the most appropriate set of procedures for developing theory and what kind of theory is possible? What are the central issues or critical problems on which sociological theory should concentrate? And so on" (Turner 1992: 167). Metatheorizing schemes also address a history of ideas associated with classical sociologists. According to Turner (1992: 168), metatheorizing "is not theory and it is not easily used in actual theorizing." Analytical schemes involve "the construction of abstract systems of categories that presumably denote key properties of the universe and crucial relations among these properties" (Turner 1992: 168). Analytical schemes include two basic approaches: naturalistic analytical schemes and sensitizing analytical schemes. Naturalistic analytic schemes assume that "the ordering of concepts in the scheme represents an ‘analytic accentuation’ of the ordering of the universe; as a consequence of this isomorphism, explanation is
usually seen as involving the discovery of the lace of an empirical event in the scheme" (Turner 1992: 168). Sensitizing analytic schemes argue that “the system of concepts can only be sensitizing, and at best, can only provide general guidelines for interpreting empirical events” (Turner 1992: 168-169). Propositional schemes “revolve around statements that connect variables to one another. That is, propositions state the form of the relation between two or more variable properties of the social universe” (Turner 1992: 169). Propositional schemes include three types: axiomatic, formal, and empirical. Axiomatic theorizing “involves deductions, in terms of a precise calculus, from abstract axioms that contain precisely defined concepts to an empirical event. Explanation consists of determining if an empirical event is ‘covered’ by one or more axioms” (Turner 1992: 169). Formal theorizing is “watered-down axiomatic theorizing” in which abstract laws are articulated and deductions to empirical events are made. In formal theorizing, “[e]xplanation consists of visualizing an empirical event as an instance or manifestation of the more abstract law” (Turner 1992: 169-170). Empirical theorizing uses empirical generalization as a kind of axiom. Finally, modeling schemes use a visual picture for mapping properties of the social universe and their relations. Modeling schemes include abstract-analytic models and empirical-causal models: “Abstract-analytical models develop context-free concepts” and “represent their relations in a visual picture”; “Empirical-causal models are usually statements of correlation among measured variables, ordered in a linear and temporal sequence” (Turner 1992: 171).

Turner (1992: 174) criticized naturalistic analytical schemes and metatheorizing for tending “to be too philosophical and detached from the actual workings of the world. They become overly reified and either concerned with their architecture or obsessed with
their scholastic capacity to ‘resolve’ philosophical issues.” Turner (1992: 172) argued that the best approach to theory-building in sociology is “a combination of sensitizing analytical schemes, abstract formal propositions, and analytical models.” To Turner, this best approach is positivism as defined below:

Start with sensitizing schemes, propositions, and models, and only then move on to the formal collection of data or to metatheorizing and scheme-building. In this way, it will be possible to generate scientific knowledge about the social universe, with the result that sociology can take its place among the natural sciences (Turner 1992: 175).

Turner was very optimistic about the development of positivist sociology as true science. In fact, this article of 1992 was a part of Postmodernism and Social Theory: The Debate over General Theory edited by Steven Seidman and David G. Wagner. In this article, Turner did not mention even a word about postmodernism. By 1992, Turner still maintained his confidence in positivist sociology, which had been announced in 1990.

There is very creative and synthetic work currently being done at both the micro and macro level, as well as in efforts to link these. Most of this work builds on the early masters, employs formalism, and states propositions that are testable. Moreover, I sense that positivistic sociology is on the verge of developing laws and models that are equivalent of those in the natural sciences and that will bring us closer to Comte’s original dream. . . .The relativistic, solipsistic, particularistic, anti-positivistic, and meta-istic (to invent a word) character of theory is no longer a challenge to debate. Increasingly, it is something to be ignored (Turner 1990: 388-389).

But this optimistic hope has not come true. As we know, postmodernism, which might be characterized by being relativistic, solipsistic, particularistic, anti-positivistic, and meta-istic, has been massively influential within the social sciences and humanities. Turner could not ignore postmodernism any more, but he could not fully accept it. Instead, Turner tried to rewrite postmodernism in terms of positivist sociology.
In “A Formalization of Postmodern Theory” (Allan and Turner 2000), Turner tried to do this task. Turner (365) clearly claimed that “our goal is to provide an example of what can be done from a positivistic point of view.” Following Jameson, Turner (365) defined social postmodernism as “a critical form of theorizing that is concerned with the unique problems that are associated with culture and subjectivity in late capitalist societies.” He rightly pointed out that all postmodernists address two issues of culture and subjects. According to his view on positivism, he started with sensitizing schemes about two issues of culture and subjects, which most postmodern theorists have provided: increasing importance of culture, destabilization and dereification of culture, increasing significance of the self, and decreasing viability of the individual subject. And then, he tried to translate these postmodernists’ claims into “propositions that highlight the key forces that are hypothesized to be part of a ‘postmodern condition’” (364). He did this job well. Postmodernists’ claims are changed into propositions whose empirical plausibility seems to be assessable. He did not assess the empirical plausibility of each proposition because it is beyond the scope of a single article. Rather, he hoped that his work would stimulate others to refine the propositions and to bring data to bear on the claims of postmodern theory.

Nevertheless, Turner (381) tried to present a preliminary assessment by outlining the postmodern condition in a visual picture as follows.
According to Turner, postmodern theory assumed that the forces on the left cause the outcomes listed on the right. He pointed out that postmodernism is strongest “when the forces on the left are highlighted, because these do indeed seem to be empirically true” (380). But he suspected “whether the outcomes listed on the right of the figure are empirically true” (381) even though postmodernists believed that the outcomes are inevitable. Thus, he suggested that from a positivist’s point of view these outcomes should “be considered hypotheses that have varying degrees of plausibility but that have not been systematically examined empirically” (381). Turner (381) asked, “Are these empirically plausible? And, if so, to what degree?” He answered that we need more data.

Turner rarely talked about postmodern challenge to sociological methodologies because he believed that the positivist methodology he outlined is still the best way to
study postmodern condition. He also did not pay attention to the normative implication of postmodernism, which is in a sense inevitable because positivist inquiry, by nature, does not care about ethics and politics. To positivist inquiry, ethics and politics are pre- or un-scientific assumptions which should be diminished in science.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUDING REMARKS: FURTHER IMPLICATION OF POSTMODERN AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY

Some scholars consider postmodernism to be a fad of the 1980s (Alexander 1995; Callinicos 1990; Faberman 1991; Frow 1995; Huber 1995; Rosenau 1992). But I believe that postmodernism is more than a fad and I agree with some sociologists’ argument that a postmodern perspective exhibits striking parallels with the project of classical European sociology (Dickens and Fontana 1992: 10-11; Smart 1993: 28; Wagner 1994: vix).

Embracing their arguments, I point out some parallels between postmodern social theory and classical European sociology in terms of three dimensions: ontology, epistemology, and ethics/politics.

First is the ontological dimension. On the macro level, in the classical era, market economy or capitalism began to emerge with the rise of the nation-state and in postmodern era, global market system has emerged with the development of multi-or trans-national organizations. On the micro level in the classical era modern individuals, who were freed from traditional institutions such as extended family, Catholic Church, the feudal economy, and monarchy, were emerging. These new individuals were mainly the propertyless/rootless masses. In the postmodern era, the postmodern subjects, who are freed from any kind of fixed sources of identity such as class, age, gender, race,
ethnicity, and sexual orientation, have emerged mainly due to the dedifferenting impact of electronically-mediated media on the social and the individual.

Second is the epistemological dimension. In the classical era, there was a strong sense of epistemological break with the traditional epistemology. With regard to the position to truth claims, the scientific epistemology was struggling with the religious epistemology. In the postmodern era, there is also a strong sense of epistemological break with the modernist epistemology. With regard to the position to truth claims, the non-positivist, non-foundational epistemology is struggling with the positivistic epistemology. In the classical era, new scientific methods to study society were struggling with the traditional ones. In the postmodern era, multidisciplinary approaches to society are struggling with the disciplinary approach.

Third is the normative dimension. In the classical era, ethics and politics based on alleged universal laws were struggling with traditional ethics and politics based on the Catholic God. One of the main interests of the classical era was how to homogenize the newly emerging propertyless/rootless masses into useful laborers. With regard to this, liberalism and communism struggled with each other. Liberalism wanted to base its ethics and politics on the rational individual while communism strove to ground its ethics and politics on the collectively shared values. The question was whether rationality was individual or collective. In the postmodern era, ethics and politics based on differences are struggling with modernist ethics and politics based on sameness. One of the main concerns of postmodern ethics and politics was how to live together without repressing/silencing/marginalizing the differences.
In this sense, the postmodern perspective or situation invited sociology. But American sociology was quite unwilling to accept this invitation. American sociologists hardly paid attention to postmodern debates until the mid-1980s. Up till the early 1980s the debate on postmodernism remained almost exclusively confined to more humanist-oriented sciences. Instead of sociologists, English literary critics and artists were able to be sensitive to the structural transformation of Western societies. In a sense, English literature became more sociological than sociology. One of the main reasons for this irony might be the deadlock of imagination in which American sociology was kept because it has been so obsessed with the issue of how to make sociology a science. The primary model of science that modern American sociology adopted was the technically practical. It has become clear that the technically practical derived from the nineteenth-century thermodynamics. Lyotard (1984: 55) explained this in terms of Laplace's fiction of the demon: "he [the demon] knows all of the variables determining the state of the universe at a moment $t$, and can thus predict its state at a moment $t' > t$. This fiction is sustained by the principle that physical systems, including the system of systems called the universe, follow regular patterns, with the result that their evolution traces a regular path and gives rise to 'normal' continuous functions (and to futurology...)." As Lyotard pointed out, the advent of quantum theory and microphysics has made this model obsolete. But mainstream American sociology has stuck to this model. This fixation to the old model is partly explained by the demands of the state and large corporations which funded sociologists. The main concern of the funding agencies was how to administrate or discipline people in the name of scientific efficiency. American sociology began to bloom institutionally right after it embraced the technically practical
as the main model of sociology, especially after World War II (see Turner and Turner 1990). But the cost was very high. American sociology has been shut off from the “real world.” Instead of reading/writing the “real” change of America, American sociology has striven to achieve the analytic synthesis of narrowly-oriented empirical data. Following the ideal of natural science proposed by the technically practical, American sociology has tried to create a natural science of society. In addition, American sociology has striven to establish the grand abstract system of theory deduced from some fundamental axioms. Embracing the transcendentalist version of the theoretical, functionalist sociology has been preoccupied with a series of highly abstract issues such as the micro-macro link, the interrelationship between agency and structure, action and order, and structure and culture (see Seidman 1994). These two mainstream trends of American sociology has repressed and marginalized other voices such as the morally practical and the aesthetic, resulting in the poverty of imagination in American sociology.

While American sociology has been obsessed with this scientific project, French intellectuals were busy transgressing the traditional boundaries of the theoretical, the practical, and the aesthetic. Why did new thoughts such as structuralism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism originate and develop in Europe and not in America? I draw a hint from Seidman (1994: 195): “In France, we look less to the narrow academic disciplines of the social sciences to locate the major breakthroughs in the human studies than to broader movements of thought that have an interdisciplinary, public character.” I believe that the core of French thought came from the aesthetic model of language. In the New French social theory, poststructuralist linguistics has replaced the nineteenth-century thermodynamics model, liquidating the validity of the
notion of a stable system and opening up an indeterminate micro-world. As poststructuralist postmodern social theorists have shown, poststructuralist linguistics is successful at analyzing micropolitics focusing on mass culture, sexuality, subjectivity, desire, power, narrativity, textuality, etc.

American sociology has rarely paid attention to these issues because they are difficult to quantify. In this sense, the aesthetic challenge might be thought to be a new opportunity for American sociology. As I have shown in chapter 5, postmodern American sociology has embraced this aesthetic challenge fairly well, by acknowledging that linguistic forms are constitutive of culture, sexuality, subjectivity, desire, power, etc. Postmodern American sociology accepted that linguistic forms create the conditions that locate the social inside the social texts, not within the institutions. The main reason is that traditional institutions lost their former power to constitute the social. Instead, free-floating images produced by electronically-mediated mass communications are in a ceaseless double process of creation and destruction of the social in the texts. As a result, textual politics gained power: if we want to change how things are, we must change how things are written.

I believe that this position has some merit, but I would like to add one thing that postmodern American sociology seems to relatively ignore. Following poststructuralist postmodern social theory, interactionist postmodern American sociology over-emphasizes the textual aspect of the social. Poststructuralist postmodern social theory is usually highly abstract; it tends to overemphasize the polysemic nature of texts, erasing the economic and social contexts in which texts are produced, distributed, consumed, and reproduced. As a result, poststructuralist postmodern social theory is highly textual or...
cultural rather than material or institutional. Interactionist postmodern sociology tends to repeat this fallacy. Of course, only a few people would deny that the social has become cultural or textual in a postmodern era. Even positivistic sociologist such as Jonathan Turner recognized it as I have shown in the previous chapter. But this would not necessarily mean that institutional analysis is out-of-date because only a quite few people could also ignore the Marxist argument that the main force of changing the social into the cultural is the movement of capital. As Jameson (1984b: xx) put it: "The dynamic of perpetual change is, as Marx showed in the Manifesto, not some alien rhythm within capital—a rhythm specific to those noninstrumental activities that are art and science—but rather is the very ‘permanent revolution’ of capitalist production itself." Capital has accumulated until it has become an image, which seems to move according to the logic of poststructuralist linguistics. But this would not mean that we don’t have to study institutional change which made capital into an image.

Critical postmodern sociology tries to fill this gap, but it tends to emphasize only one aspect of Marxist political economy. First of all, Marxist political economy has a special way of addressing a large-scale institutional change by tracing the change of accumulation of capital (for instance, see Brenner 1998; Mandel 1975). Marxist political economy emphasizes the crisis and change inherent in capitalism, seeing capital as value looking for accretion, for surplus-value. The basic drive of capitalism is to accumulate capital: "what characterizes capitalism is precisely the compulsion to accumulate, that is ‘enlarged reproduction’" (Mandel 1990: 61). Marx saw the inevitability of periodic crises of overproduction mainly due to the fact that "the owners of the means of production are organized separate firms which compete with each other for shares of the
market” (Mandel 1990: 82). Thus, Marxist political economy investigates how the mode of accumulation of capital changes over time.

Marxist political economy also emphasizes the importance of the historical and political economic contexts in which the cultural or the textual is produced, distributed, consumed, and reproduced because it believes that the historical and political economic contexts determine the way that the cultural or the textual is produced, distributed, consumed, and reproduced.

Critical postmodern sociology has relatively ignored the first aspect of political economy while emphasizing the second aspect. I doubt it is possible to situate the cultural within certain historical and political economic contexts without investigating the new mode of accumulation of capital. But critical postmodern sociology, which I presented in the previous chapter, has not provided a systematic analysis of a new mode of accumulation of capital. I believe that critical postmodern sociology should integrate the two aspects of political economy.

Many have argued that multi- or trans-disciplinary or multiperspectival approaches are needed in postmodern era. I believe that the core of these approaches is the synthesis of poststructuralist linguistics and Marxist political economy. I claim that this synthesis does not come from an abstract methodological interest in integrating the micro and the macro. Rather, it comes from the sensibility that the postmodern world is not only a world of play of differences, but also a Sadean world in which the strong exploits the weak ever efficiently. Poststructuralist linguistics is excellent at analyzing the aestheticized world of everyday life, but is relatively weak at investigating the institutionally-structured social injustice. Political economy situates the structured social
injustice within the economic and social contexts in which it is produced, distributed, consumed, and reproduced. In this sense, Marxist political economy is especially needed for analyzing the movement of capital which brings out a world full of tyranny and injustice. I hope that postmodern American sociology extends its horizon so as to be sensitive to the real issue of social injustice by utilizing both poststructuralist linguistics and political economy.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


289


Sixties without Apologies. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.


----------. 1983. Liberalism & the Origins of European Social Theory. Berkeley and Los
Angeles, CA: University of California Press.


VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Jongryul Choi

Home Address:
4312 Silver Bay Street
Las Vegas, NV 89117

Degrees:
Bachelor of Arts
Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea
1990

Master of Arts
The Academy of Korean Studies, Pundang, Korea
1993

Master of Arts
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1998

Dissertation Title:
Postmodern American Sociology: A Response to the Aesthetic Challenge

Dissertation Examination Committee:
Chairperson, Dr. David R. Dickens, Ph. D.
Committee Member, Dr. Simon Gottschalk, Ph. D.
Committee Member, Dr. Kate Hausbeck, Ph. D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. Colin Loader, Ph. D.