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MODERNITY IN POSTMODERNITY

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INTRODUCTION

Postmodernity has assumed as many theses as there are postmodern writers. Equally, various forerunners, from Nietzsche to Heidegger, even Adorno, have been credited with the title of FOUNDERS of this philosophy. The task of this essay is not to engage in polemics concerning which view of postmodernity is correct, but to find the transitional processes from modernity to postmodernity. The reason for this ploy inheres in the subject matter itself. If one is to understand the POST, one must at least have a rudimentary understanding of its counterpart, MODERNITY. The appearance of postmodernity must be sought in the problematic of modernity and its incapacity to find resolutions within its own context. At the same time the resolutions offered by postmodernity cannot completely transgress modernity. It might turn out that both rest on the same 'ground'.

This essay selects the 'transitional phenomena' that mediate between the two cultural domains; preeminent among such phenomena are discourse, contingency, system, science, technology, false consciousness, democracy, cynicism and power. These phenomena are transitional in that they comprise the field of mutual concerns and differentiations between modernity and postmodernity. It is important to be cognizant of the designation "cultural

domains”, precisely because postmodernity is not a successor to modernity: at least for the twentieth century, both are present in various guises and combinations. This is one major reason for the difficulties among postmodernists in defining themselves. And this is one reason why the transitional phenomena might be of help in understanding the concerns of postmodernity.

No doubt, many issues will have to be left out, and many excellent discussions will not be cited. The focus of this essay is basically philosophical because the controversies between the two cultural domains are philosophical despite the death of philosophy advocated by postmodern writers. The controversies also rest on various confusions concerning what writers attack which facets of modernity and which facets postmoderns take on uncritically as their own. For example, there is a tendency to take some current postmodern ‘discovery’ in psychoanalysis and employ it to ‘decipher’ all civilizations and even histories as having hidden such a ‘discovered’ phenomenon. Thus, Ulyses and Othello and many others have nothing to tell us apart from being texts of ‘domestication of women’. Despite all postmodern objections to ‘essentialism’ such pronouncements are essentializing. Moreover, one forgets that such ‘discoveries’ are a hermeneutical issue, and specifically an issue of one type of hermeneutics: historical. One cannot simply take contemporary historical meanings from their context and impose them on other historical or civilizational contexts. Hence, one must recognize the limitations of one’s theses. Yet as shall be seen subsequently, it is modernity that provides the discursive logic wherein one can say anything about anything without any criteria that would determine whether a discourse is appropriate or not.

THE ONTOLOGY OF DISCURSIVE POWER

“All discourse is fascistic”, announces Roland Barthes (Barthes 1977: 1). Of course this announcement is not to be taken as a universal rule; rather, it is comprehensible mainly within the context of Western modernity. In general, postmodern thinkers, from Lacan through Foucault to Derrida, are concerned with discourse and the way it structures human socio-political and ideological life and above all power relationships (Schiwy 1985: 21). If this claim is correct, we are still in the dark how discourse could assume such pervasive presence. To shed some light on this issue it is essential to consider the modern conception of the “given” in philosophical thought that underlies science.

From Descartes through Bacon, to Kant, modern thought shows a basic turn toward reflection of the subject of thought. This is to say, the given, the validity, and the certainty of experienced phenomena are being questioned. The questioning offers various reflective possibilities concerning

the methodological access to the world. Two major options are contrasted and evaluated by the major founders of modernity: qualitative and quantitative. What is important is that the choice of quantitative over qualitative methodology rests on valuation and volition. One makes a choice not on the basis of experience, but on the basis of reflectively instituted criteria of certainty, clarity, and ideality (Krueger 1962). This opens the door to the primacy of reflective valuation and choice over the experienced nature. The latter will be judged in terms of reflectively established criteria and selected method, and the method will determine how nature is to be regarded.

The choice of quantitative, formal methodology shifts the scientific undertakings away from direct observation to efforts of constructing an all-inclusive discourse, a *lingua universalis* that would be capable of treating all events in terms of formal procedures. The latter being beyond skepticism can comprise a system irrespective of qualitative ambiguities, concrete experiences, and perceptual relationships. The ideal of the formal system lies in its indifference to qualitative content; the latter is deemed to be purely subjective and arbitrary, while the former, despite the fact that it is equally a human invention, is posited to be objective. Thus it is assumed that the totality of the objective world must correlate to a formal-quantitative system comprised of univocal terms. Indeed, as Husserl points out, the quantitative procedures are taken not only as methodological procedures, but as founding for all theoretical thought (Husserl 1962: 26ff). The procedures can be formulated without any relationships to qualitative experience.

In order for the formal-quantitative system to gain concrete value, it must posit an essentially homogeneous nature accessible to quantitative methodology. This implies that human experience is irrelevant and must be transcended toward the methodologically required homogeneity of nature, and that there is no perceptual access to such nature. We should not be misled by the concept of homogeneity that might suggest a geometric, and hence perceivable content; yet geometry itself is quantified, closing perceptual access to homogeneity (Stroeker 1987: 258ff). In turn, the perceived world of shapes, colors, sounds, and multi-leveled interconnections of practical activities and tasks, must be regarded as distinct from the homogeneous reality. Thus, the plurality of experienced phenomena are neither identical with nor can they offer a basis for the theoretical-methodological constructions. Modernity, here, offers a fascinating conversion: what is present in experience is not what is actually given for science, and what is regarded as scientific objectivity, cannot be given in experience. Our experience is contingent, while the theoretical conceptions offer what is necessary; the former must be regarded as subjective, while the latter is given a status of objectivity. But what kind of necessity does this objectivity have? It is necessity of formal-

quantitative discourse, subjected to precise rules of analyses and procedures. This discourse forms a necessary system of objective understanding, while all else is to be subsumed under such a system. In this sense even the human, the experiencing and living subject, is to be regarded as part of the contingent world and, in order to be understood objectively, must be subjected to the formally structured theoretical system.

At this juncture modern thought encounters an irresolvable ambiguity. The positing of the homogeneous world as material, robs such a world of necessity; just as the experienced world, it too must be regarded as contingent. In this sense, the sole necessity is attributed to the formal-quantitative system. But this is precisely the problem: the system is not identical with the posited homogeneous world; the latter is material-contingent, while the former is necessary. Yet precisely this necessity not being a part of the material objective world must be subjective. But above it was suggested that the subject and its experiences are equally contingent. How does one obtain a necessity from a contingent subject? Regardless of the logistic tricks, this issue was not resolved by modernity. It was simply assumed that formal and quantitative structures lend themselves most readily to the construction of systems that are unaffected by vagaries of daily life.

The emergence of the priority of formal over the perceptual and even the posited material domains lends priority, in general, to the discursive practice. Since the latter is formal, it is capable of continuous formal analyses and divisions. Any break in the analysis is a matter of decision. Thus the formal swings in an ambiguity between formal necessity and will, freedom and rules. The importance of this indecision consists precisely in the option to regard the formal either as a priori necessity or as a free construction. Various expressions throughout modernity, from Pico through Galileo, Kant, to Fink's analyses, suggest the taking for granted of the latter option (Fink 1974: 9, 43). The significance of this option is multi-leveled, especially with respect to both, the political and the scientific enlightenments. If the formal discourses are distinct from the contingent subject and material world, then they are autonomous creations. This would mean that the source of all formal-quantitative systems and their laws is an autonomous will. In this sense, the human being is conceived as an autonomous 'law giver', both in the scientific as well as the political domains. Fundamentally, modern thinkers assume that the human is the source of laws, rules, and edicts, and thus all political laws must be reached by free consensus of individuals. This is to say, if the basis of formal systems and their laws is creativity, then there is no other criterion concerning which laws are selected apart from the individual's choice (Volkman-Schluck 1974: 141). Thus the individual is the master of his/her discursive practice, and is in a position to articulate

the discourse into various divisions and sub-discourses, sub-systems, each capable of assuming its own independence and of creating its own discipline. Luhmann's work in social philosophy has shown the way in which the horizontal articulation of the formal discourses lent itself to the division of the environment into disciplines, and a creation of numerous autonomous sciences (Luhmann 1979: 113-132).

The outcome is not only political freedom of thought, speech and self-determination, but also political equality. No one is higher or superior to others, and each is a creator of his/her own way of life and destiny. In principle, the concept of human autonomy calls for human equality, and demands only one type of political institutions: to guarantee human autonomy and to allow all members of a political community a full participation in public affairs. The laws of the political community stem only from the consensus of the autonomous individuals. The political domain becomes coextensive with the public domain, and all public matters are the concern of all social members. This means that in the final analysis all affairs, from science to economy, are to be adjudicated publicly (Kriele 1980: 57). The argument here is against various idealistic and materialistic readings of modernity. In principle, modernity assumes an ontology that demands the priority of the political-public decisions concerning all domains of social life. In this sense, what is known as "private economy" is a political decision and can be changed politically. The political domain is not only regarded as a concern of everyone, but also as universal (Gay 1977: 397). The fact that at times this is not the case does not detract from the principle of autonomy that subtends both political and scientific enlightenments. Even the great thinkers like Kant lapsed at times inadvertently into anti-enlightenment rhetoric (Gay 1977: 172). Yet this does not cancel his conception of autonomy. Given this conception, with the attendant freedoms of thought and speech, the question is: How such freedom of speech, of discourse turns into power?

Although there are various epistemological and ontological issues, we shall restrict ourselves to an inescapable solution that modernity could offer concerning the relationship between the formal-quantitative discourse and the posited matter behind the perceptual awareness. Since such matter is not perceptually present, the formal discourse cannot be perceptually related to it. This means that in principle no discourse can be regarded as a 'representation' of some reality. Thus there must be another avenue to connect the formal with the material. This domain is praxis. The only connection is the practical application of the formal to the material by an active intervention into the material and its restructuration along the formal-quantitative requirements. This is to say, the contingent material world is PRODUCED in accordance with human calculations. To access the material world by

modern understanding is to shape the world concretely by the rules of such an understanding. All other avenues being closed, the modern person must restructure the environment. This restructuring had assumed various names: production, technology, pragmatics, and praxis. Irrespective of the nominal variations, one underlying assumption persists: the human is an autonomous law giver not only in the public-political domain, but also in the material domain. In this sense, the formal-quantitative discourse obtains a concrete material shape, and the latter is a reflection of the former. Science, becomes applied science, and constitutes one variant of the relationship between formal discourse and the material world: instead of representing the world, discourses construct it.

It is instructive to note that modern thinkers did not view the posited material reality as having any necessity of its own. It had to be contingent. Its necessity originates from elsewhere: first, from the formal articulations comprising the theoretical domain, PRESUMED but not guaranteed to be correlative to material reality, and second, from an act of absolute creation, such that the formal theoretical discursive structure and its rules are the very rules by which the material world was created (Schabert 1978: 141). This is a mythical ploy to legitimate the relationship between the formal and the material. After all, if our invented discourses do not represent reality, then we must guarantee such a representation by mythical means. ‘Since’ the world was created by formal rules, then our formal discourse must correspond to the material world. Analogous mythical ploy was used by Descartes to guarantee the necessity of the objective world. This persistent insistence on securing mythical assurance for necessity of the material reality indicates a fundamental assumption that in its own nature it is contingent. Thus an appeal to an absolute “geometrician” is not an attempt to placate the ecclesiastics, but a mythological effort to avoid the gap between formal discourse and the material reality. If mythological legitimation is excluded, one is left with a contingent materiality, and the sole necessity resides in the construction of the formal discourse and its practical use for the reshaping of the material world. And this is precisely what the history of modernity reveals.

The previously mentioned horizontal division of the formal discourse into sub-discourses and the establishment of the latter as independent disciplines, correlatively extend the possibility of subdividing the materially conceived world in accordance with formal possibilities. By the eighteenth century, the real was the possible (Volkman-Schluck 1965: 63). This simply means an increased refinement of active reproduction of the material sphere along the possible discursive articulations. Such process yields two consequences. First, there appears a complete disregard of the concrete experience and its meaningful interrelationships in the world; these are regarded to be

totally subjective and contingent. Second, there is a removal of all the diversity of human ties to the world. What one is left with are formally designed discourses and the material reality, and both are detached from the lived experiences; this allows their arbitrary correlation. The term “arbitrary” in this context is quite complex; we shall take only the more significant meanings that pertain to modernity.

The following moments shall be considered briefly: First, an increase of formal complexities and differentiations is parallel to an increase in the contingency of the material facts, leading to more possible rearrangements of the material environment. As Hans Jonas suggests, every refined and produced material fact offers possibilities for further formal refinements, differentiations, and material rearrangements (Jonas 1979: 73-96). Second, the internal articulation of formal systems and their applied reworking of matter provide a basis for a variety of disciplines, each having its specific formal approach and each capable of constructing its own material realization. Third, this process maintains its basic principles of formal and material mediation through constructive activity, and progresses toward a differentiated inclusion of all events, both ‘natural’ and cultural. This leads to formally-materially divided world: semi-independent spheres call for semi-autonomous functions and work. The daily experienced life, the perceptually interconnected world, depends on, is subjected to, and becomes contingent upon the manner in which the formal systematizations articulate the human material: the human is a conjunction of economic, biological, psychological, chemical, sub-atomic, genetic, etc. discourses, where each research and its discourse deems its function to be definitory of the whole being and independent of others.

Some of the more obvious assumptions of this ontology can now be extricated. First, the creation and extension of formal systems is a matter of choice, as it is a matter of choice in the selection of formal-quantitative over qualitative methodologies, although the latter are now given credence although not equal to quantification. Second, the positing of the material, indifferent reality, is an ontological act, and it is basically a presumption. Third, the connection between the formal and the material has no necessity; it is provided by a choice of what the subject decides to make of the homogeneous materiality, and the will to make determines what formal system shall be used to calculate the possible material processes and results. And fourth, the human is a producer of the concrete material environment; its increasing refinement follows increasing formal articulations.

Because of the contingency and indifference of the material, the human assumes a discursive power by connecting the discourse to activity of reshaping the environment. Here emerges a society of semi-independent groups of experts, professionals, workers with functionally prescribed activities, beha-

vioral requirements, and tasks. Yet what is remarkable about the expert production of the material environment is that while each group's activities have no necessary connection with the work of other groups, the concrete results of one group can be calculated and used by most diverse groups, from art to military. This is to say the produced material results can be selected at will and applied in various domains on the basis of new projects and designs. The lateral differentiation decentralizes responsibility, and increases the contingency of the world and the arbitrariness by which one can treat the environment. Resultantly, every formal system and every material result produced as a fulfillment of the former, become increasingly arbitrary, offering formal and material combinations without end. Each specialty is released from the concrete, lived world implications, each has experts in its sphere who need not relate to any other sphere; each can claim that no conclusive evidence has yet been discovered, precisely because the very evidence is produced and can be rearranged per arbitrary design that bears no necessity.

The argument that this process can be explained on the basis of human needs can be countered by this argument's redundancy: 'needs' are also produced as part and parcel of the possibilizing processes that become at the same time needs and fulfillment. We can make it, therefore we want it; we want it because we can make it. The process of increasing contingency and arbitrariness are structures of power, comprise a self-referential systematization of increasing technical controls over the material environment. This means that there are no limits in the 'search for truth', since the search has lost the distinction between knowledge and object; a formulation of an epistemic structure is coextensive with a project to be made. One cannot find any trans-scientific, trans-discursive criteria to check this process. And each domain has no inherent reason to stop the proliferation of its form of 'knowledge' and praxis. There are no physical reasons to cease making more physical experiments and refinements, no biological reason to stop the remodeling of the living systems along new designs and codes, and no economic reason to stop the economic 'growth'. Limitations would be regarded as infringements on the 'autonomy of research', the 'needs of production', and the requirements to 'shape' the young for 'productive' lives.

At this juncture it is possible to surmise what is "discursive power". For modernity, its power lies in its realization in the material environment. This realization is what constitutes the concrete, material environment of the modern person. The latter faces a world which is an embodiment of the formal-quantitative discourses and the arbitrariness underlying its application. In this sense we are in a position to appreciate Lyotard's claim that post-modern age is confronted by a power capable of direct production of the proofs of its own truth. But this means that the production is technical and requires

vast technical means, affordable either by governments or by organizations possessing sufficient economic power. In this sense, 'proof' and truth are functions of wealth, possession of appropriate formal discourse, and the produced material results. Lyotard in fact extends this conjunction to include 'justice': thus, discourse, wealth, truth, and justice (Lyotard 1984: 45). Those in charge of wealth, of governments, are the persons who are in a position to exercise power and establish their truths, their justice, in order to maintain the 'system'. Thus, the system becomes self-legitimizing; it constantly strives to increase its efficiency, and thus the increasing ability to produce its self-verification. Its truths will have to coincide with its value, its good, and its justice. What once were deemed to be laws derived from the consensus of autonomous individuals, become now performances in a technical system. Indeed, Luhmann says that normativity of laws will be replaced by performativity of procedures (Luhmann 1981).

It is a peculiar kind of procedure: if reality is what provides the evidence of proof, and correlatively shows the prescription that includes normative, public, and private results, then mastering the rules of a discourse is equivalent to the mastering of the produced environment. And this is precisely what is afforded by modernity and followed by postmodernity. All these factors reinforce one another mutually and constitute self-proliferating discursive practices. If the discursive power is performativity, efficiency, productivity, wealth, and effective verification of its own proposed prescripts, then science is legitimated by its material efficiency, and the latter legitimates science. Governments and economic syndicates become eager subsidizers of scientific ventures. While radically pluralistic, with numerous semi-autonomous disciplines, the system tends to become self-generative and encompassing, of course under the modern-formal understanding of discourses where anything can be said about anything in any discourse. Legal discourse understands everything legally, moral does morally, religious discourse understands everything religiously, and economic discourse reads all events economically, as do all other social discourses. And each one is correct because it does not represent anything nor can it misrepresent anything. It is to be emphasized that all talk of representation is no longer valid and hence any talk of misrepresentation is equally irrelevant. In principle everything is an invented story and, by the background assumption of modern ontology, every story has power to make what it says.

AUTONOMY AND SUBJECTION

One creates the formal-quantitative and, as mentioned, even qualitative discourses and subjects the environment to its rules in order, thereby, to free

oneself from the natural and experienced phenomena. One aims at achieving autonomy by establishing and increasing technical power over the material environment. Indeed, all materiality is deemed subjectable to discursive rules of construction. Thus the human body also assumed two dimensions. First, the invention of the “mechanical body” dealing with the anatomical metaphysics, and second, the “political body” to be structured functionally in accordance with the requirements of the produced and productive material environment. The body is here structured by numerous regulations, calculations, controls that shape the functions of the body for utility, efficiency, miniaturization, refinement, and restriction. Military and workshop ‘training’ become equal functions. The training is observed, judged, supervised, graded, and compared, resulting in an increased functional individuation.

What is here formed is a social technology of coercion of the body, a strategy of power that breaks the body up into parts and rearranges its functions in accordance with lateral movements of spacious-temporal efficiency. The body is disciplined and the disciplinings are coextensive with the formal calculations of the production of the material environment into functional techniques and structures. These then locate the body and its functions with precision. The assigned machine, the job description, call for precise body movements and excise the wasted, the undisciplined functions. This is a countermovement to the autonomous process of individuation in modernity. Here the body, the thought, feeling, are individuated, singularized, correlated to technical means, judged, adjusted, and subjected. Each function of the body is divisible into numerous other functions of speed, duration, and skill, capable of being judged and ascribed to the individual. The latter can or cannot perform the required functions, deserves or does not deserve a prescribed degree of remuneration, is docile, correctible, or incorrigible, with a residuum of disruptive chaos.

While individuating, such performative functions are formed for exchangeability. Each not only occupies a place and time but is arranged in a hierarchy of coded skills. The place one occupies is dependent upon the rank in a system of functions, and one can assume such a rank if one accepts precise subjection to the functional requirements of the system. Thus discipline, here, assigns social status in accordance to the degree of subjection and acceptance of coercions, of increased adaptations. The system whips the chaos, the multitude, into shape, into individuality, under the universal law of modern discourse, whose increased subdivision into disciplines calls for an increased articulation and subjection of human functions. The meaning of this subject is SUBJECTION. Thus there appears an army of the fit and the unfit; the imbecile who fails to submit, to be subjected, also ceases to be a viable social subject (Foucault 1977). This view of Foucault, unlike the

views of numerous other postmodern thinkers, is both a critique of modernity and an effort to decipher the constitution of its power. No doubt, there are numerous issues in his work based on the assumptions of traditional logic. Is it possible for Foucault to resolve such issues?

Foucault's methodological undertaking to provide a critique of modernity hinges on the cultural-anthropological question of the possibility of deciphering one's own culture objectively while being caught in the language of the culture. This issue seemed to have been one of the methodological stumbling blocks. Foucault finds a way of circumventing this issue by implicitly accepting the modern production of the individual through disciplining. Our delimited double movement from formal-quantitative method to the production of an environment, to the restructuration of the lived world, and then to the structuring of body functions in accord with the efficiency required to correspond to the produced world, led to a shift from sign to signal. This means that communication between the human and the world is designed to be univocal. The more precise articulation of the human functions, their subjection to the exact environmental constructs, the more efficiently does the system function. It is a kind of militarization of society: a precise command calls for a univocal reaction, instituting a system of signals that must approximate a cause-effect sequence. Discourse is reduced to signalization, allowing no deviations of reaction, no horizon of a sign system, no slack. One perceives a signal and reacts to it without any intermediary of thought or of other signs. At the same time one is trained to deal with the technical world in the same manner: direct reaction to functional requirements.

Foucault has realized that he need not leave his cultural meanings in order to observe them from outside. The meanings have become redundant for modernity. The once autonomous enlightenment individual has been reindividuated by the system and its demands. One is measured, timed, clocked, examined, recorded, surveyed, observed, tailored, and hierarchized to assume precise functions and gestures, feelings and thoughts, required by a technological system. In turn, the system seems to lend an appearance and aura of 'naturalness' to such functions. Thus one is extolled and elevated if one is capable of abolishing signs, of restricting their slack, in favor of signals. In this sense, the cultural practices can be described and analyzed as if every sign were a univocal signal, as if the lived perceptual meanings and their interconnections were replaceable by unmediated and repeatable reactions to signals. Thus modernity for Foucault can be read as a text without meaning and without slack. Nominalism, behavioral theory, and explanatory theses of human action are variations on this fundamental conception. While discourses as systems of signals are modeled upon monastic and militaristic disciplines, they can also be regarded as a war upon the per-

son. Anything personal, loose, and autonomous, cannot be tolerated; it is too democratic, human, inefficient, wasteful, and uneconomical. The more meaning can be excluded, the more one is subjected to identify oneself with the functions of a given discipline, the greater are one's chances to advance in the prescribed hierarchy.

The fascinating point of this shift from sign to signal lies for Foucault in the diffusion of discursive practices. No one is in charge, although everyone is subjected to discursive powers without being cognizant of this subjection. True to the enlightenment, one is still looking for the outstanding individual who has power, who is in charge. Those in charge are equally if not more subjected to the strictures of their specific discourse. One could even say that they are totally dedicated to it. Their individuality, and their claims to being 'in charge' are completely subjected, produced, formed, and functionally individuated. Semiotically speaking, they are the most pronounced signs of 'success' in subjection; they bear the information concerning the systemic categories of hierarchic prestige.

Liotard, basing himself tacitly on our above considerations, follows out some of the implications concerning the preeminence of information in modernity. If the discursive domain is coequal to the productive-technical domain, then discursive knowledge and its praxis implications become most significant. It is not difficult to see how any discourse will have to be translated into quantities of information, and anything that does not lend itself to such a translation will be discarded. The producers and users of knowledge will have to perform this translation in order to continue producing and inventing. This requires not only a total exteriorization of knowledge, but also of its reduction to the system of signals, its militarization. Since the productive processes are already militarized, knowledge too will become a sought after product and will be used in new combinations and sold as any other commodity. It is no longer avoidable that, in this sense, information emerges as the major stake in the global competition for power. The battles range over information, as once they did over territories, raw materials and cheap labor. At the level of information one can find a conjunction of industry, wealth, military, and politics (Lyotard 1984: 46). Once again this confirms the initial claim of Barthes and our explication of modernity in postmodernity.

Characteristically, the "age of information" is coextensive with our explication and resultantly pervades the pedagogical process. While initial academic institutions of modernity were modeled on Berlin university, stressing "science for the sake of science", the shift to discursive 'signals' demands training in performative information, i.e. an acquisition of knowledge that empowers one to subject oneself to a function. Instead of universal, critical,

and emancipatory education, the university is shifted toward the applied, the professional, technical, and basically functional; although the 'humanities' are still part of the curriculum, they are tolerated as a part of the tradition and are periodically paraded under 'values' and opinions, or denounced as disruptions of 'serious education'. At any rate, their power is merely democratic and has little bearing on 'real' issues. Thus the university, in the true sense of the word, disappears; it becomes a contributor to the technical performance within the social system, and its funds are tied to its ability to produce subjected functionaries. This emphasis tends toward the abolition of emancipatory education in favor of subjecting pedagogy allowing no critical discourse. The latter is 'soft' and offers no tangible rewards. The subject of pedagogy, the student, is no longer concerned with the political domain, with human rights, dignity, meaning, and the general well being of the world. He is focused on narrow, technical expertise, private aggrandizement, and self-enhancement.

The moment knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, calling for emancipation, its transmission ceases to be the responsibility of scholars and students. The educational programs and decisions, the allocation of funds is decided on the basis of a hierarchy of functional needs; technocratic and materially productive programs are extolled financially by political states and private concerns. The academicians are then more concerned with obtaining funds for their technical production instead of discovery or transmission of knowledge. This is not an accusation, not the usual complaint about a loss of meaning and the experienced life world; rather, it is tracing of the results of modern ontological complex that interconnects language, science, autonomy, subjection, production and pedagogy. Moreover, it is a discovery of modernity and its results in the very heart of postmodernity. Indeed, if postmodernism is a critique of modernity, then the term critique means manifesting something that was there all along, although for the most part unnoticed. Once it has become noticed, modern multi-disciplinary multi-discursivity became self-conscious modernity in the guise of power-laden multi-discursivity of postmodernity.

THE DISCOVERY

Intermixed in the explication of the modern interconnections was the conception of power. Postmodern thinkers tend to credit Nietzsche for discovering power in the most self-righteous, pious, innocent, penitent postures, acts, and looks (Deleuze 1979: 80-107). Following his lead most thinkers who had any awareness of modern understanding, tracked down most diverse issues of power, all the way from Weber and legitimation to Sloterdijk and cyni-

cism. What must be added to these discoveries is the general LOGIC OF POWER and its modern ground. Given these two articulations, we shall be in a position to access post-modernity and its unavoidable philosophical option for the contemporary world. This is not to say that the world has not been living this option; it is simply to suggest that it was couched either in modern or even medieval jargon and thus failed to understand itself.

What, then, is the logic of power? Its first and pervasive mode is self-withdrawal. Great efforts are expended to create a semblance that power is not there and that it is not even an issue. Rarely is power manifest directly as force or violence. For the most part it carries masks of respectability, culture, and is offered reverence both by its possessors and its enemies. The enemies are equally interested in possessing power. History shows that the opponents of power, the liberators from oppressors, had no qualms in assuming power “in the name of the people” against the power hungry enemies. The second mode exhibited by power is its self-proliferation. It has no reason within its own process to limit itself. From Hindu, Greek, Chinese, modern, and current conceptions, there emerges a position that within its parameters power seeks to increase, that will to power is more power, that obstacles to power are enhancements and excuses for expansion of power, and that this increase appears in its most pervasive and diffused form in modern scientific discourse under the abstraction called objectivity. Third, not having any other ground apart from itself, power legitimates itself by success. It never fails. Any failure is attributed to extraneous factors, such as mistakes or confidence, strategies and tactics, and missed opportunities. The solicitation of power is unlimited; in this sense, modernity follows the unchecked proliferation of material power in numerous guises. Fourth, power is a bringer of prestige and esteem. Those in power positions are honored and their views praised. The very success makes the victor right and the defeated, if not wrong, then at least insignificant. Neither the ancients nor the moderns deviate from this claim: nothing succeeds like success (Straus 1975). The basic value is: whatever enhances power is good, whatever leads to its diminishment is evil.

While these general modes are pervasive, there is a specific modern way of exercising power with popular ‘consent’. This mode is ‘arbitrary necessity’. This is one of the first modes that break up the modern conception of power from within. The claim to scientific objectivity led to a legitimating ideology that daily lives are dictated by a system of ‘material conditions’ and the inescapable subjection of the individual to forces that are not under his/her control. What appears through this claim are some of the principle factors discussed above. First, the scientific methodology itself is undergirded by valuation and choice. These have no necessitation, since they constitute the valuation and selection what shall be necessary.

Second, 'material objectivity' is a human product of reconstruction of the environment; hence the reconstruction can either continue, be changed or abandoned. The human is facing a human world. Its only necessity is a habit and an insistence by those who have, for a moment, arrived at the zenith of the hierarchy, that this is the 'best system'. But that is already a valuation. Third, while one still maintains an aura of 'scientificity', the latter is an empty term; as noted above, the formal differentiations, producing numerous disciplines, can no longer be unified under one system. This is what opens the door to postmodern claims, such as Lyotard's, that "postmodernism means incredulity toward metanarratives" (Lyotard, 1984: 7). No spider webs of reason connect all things – to paraphrase Nietzsche. Fourth, the very ontology of contingency of the material world and the human not only abolish necessities and all encompassing systems, but above all reveal an arbitrary connection between the human and the world. The human does not grasp objective necessities, but invents connections from a vantage point of interest (Habermas 1970). Fifth, the arbitrary connections involve all the previous points: the selection of methodology, the designation of the world as purely material, the application of method and the transformation of the environment in accord with human designs, and the incrementation of material power and controls.

Thus as a result any discourse is premised on power, and the latter is equal to arbitrariness. The awareness of this arbitrariness comprises a pivot of postmodern call for democratization. The feminist movement, in its various guises, offers one common thesis: change the power relationships between genders where gender differences should not constitute social and political differences. The latter are arbitrary and rest on a tradition of a discursive associations, reflecting only formed habits and not cosmic necessities (Weedon 1987: 41). Postmodern awareness maintains one certainty: all the discursive designations, their hierarchical structurations, do not stem from any 'reality' but are arbitrary constructs (Guerin 1975: 15f). And the issue between modernity and post-modernity hinges on this arbitrary constructionism. One is aware of it, yet one must recon with the material power that such constructions have produced and institutionalized. The dislodging of them is a major undertaking. The onslaught of postmodernity goes under the rubric of CRITIQUE OF POWER (Honneth 1985) and can be read across all texts, whether feminist, proletarian, minoritarian, or aesthetic.

BUILDING OF DEMOCRACY

The postmodern building of democracy follows a different course from the one proposed by political enlightenment. Although the latter posited human

autonomy as the basis of the identity of freedom with equality, it failed to offer a clear understanding that hence all decisions of significance are to be treated publicly. It allocated politically too many 'necessities' to the 'private' sector and excluded a free public consensus in this sector, thus forcing a variety of important functions to be seen as 'natural necessities'. And the fulfillment of these became associated with material fulfillment and thus fell into the trap of scientific discourse and its promise of material well being and power. Indeed, such promises were a part of legitimation of an entire system of oppression, calling itself socialism (Levi 1977). One now is well cognizant of the IDEOLOGICAL USE of such promises. At the same time one is equally aware that the scientific claims, in the name of objectivity, were equally partial claims, laden with interests. The postmodern person is no longer taken in by the clean scientific facts and data, offered by the 'heads' in positions of power engaged in not so clean power politics. Such a person is at core CYNICAL (Sloterdijk 1983: 62).

What is this cynicism and why is it so well covered over by modernity, and how does it lead to democratization? First and most intellectualized form of cynicism appears quite innocently in the controversies concerning the above discussed process of subjection. In these controversies the subjection is elevated to 'objective status' in the sense of demonstrating that all social members and their views are results of material conditions. This leads to the vast critiques of consciousness and ideology. All critics of ideology assume the scientific-formal discourse and its ontology in order to claim legitimation for their discoveries of false consciousness. The explanatory mechanism is designed to demonstrate that the 'opponents' cannot help but maintain the ideologies they maintain, and thus cannot avoid being subjected to false consciousness. The opponents are not cognizant of the conditions that lead to ideologies and the mistaken acceptance of ideologies as truths. Thus each person must support his/her class position, and the partial interests that adhere to this position. But no one can espy totality and become free from the conditions. Thus the capitalist as well as the party member constitute the deceived epiphenomenon of production. And this is the crux of the issue: as soon as one necessarily assumes a false consciousness, the process of reification must continue. One must maintain the precise falsehoods in one's head in order for the real, material system to continue. Thus the dilemma: seen from outside, one espies in the ideologies false consciousness; seen from within, the ideologies are completely right. We are faced by a correct false consciousness. This is the cynical posture of scientific modernity.

Everyone accuses everyone else of being a product of blind and meaningless conditions, of a system of signals, and in these accusations each

proclaims to be the only one who is cognizant of and thus liberated from the conditions. We are confronted with an elitist cynicism. No one is allowed to escape through the cracks of scientifically established causalities – no one except those who point to others' restrictions. The elitist cynicism parallels other forms: all self-righteous pronouncements that only water is good for everyone, while the proponents of this doctrine drink wine; or that fornication is a mortal sin, while the elite can fornicate without being tainted by it. Everyone must produce in order to advance social well being and insure progress – everyone except those who surmise the grand purposes of other's labors, and enjoy their benefits by making the pronouncements concerning such purposes. False consciousness is a function of the very process under which elitism subjects everyone except itself – and does so by becoming a partial and interested view.

If each consciousness is as false as its position in the so called objective system requires, then each must be intrinsically locked in its falsehood. And this is what the critics of ideology proclaim: there is a necessary false consciousness. In this view the false consciousness is reified and inserted in the objective requirements of the system: falseness is a function of a system, and is necessary for its preservation. Systemic functionalism not only denies to consciousness an emancipatory right, but also rejects it as meaningless; after all, it might lead to autonomy, chaos, democracy, and even a transformation, if not an abolition of the system. These denials are necessary for the preservation of an aristocratic elitism of 'high culture'. They prescribe to others what they would not do themselves. They constitute the conservative element which is totally anti-democratic and insist daily that the ordered social existence can be best obtained in the context of functional lies paraded as grand purposes. Their cultural politics and ethical attire toward militarization of social existence and labor manifest their total cynicism toward freedom. The latter is reduced to barbaric parody by suppressions, invasions, and interventions, and all in the name of improving the material conditions – their scientization – for freedom and democracy. Obviously the conservative functionaries engage in planning minor deviations: jeans in Russia and Eastern Europe, hard rock in the West. Of course there might be minor surface differences between the East and the West, but as real systems, the nomenclature rulership of the East constitutes the image of paradise for the total law and order conservatives of the West. One practices, here, a schism of consciousness till it appears normal. This normalcy depends on the cynicism of correct mystification in the right heads which, after all, could not encantate their mystifications unless they were able to escape the enchanted circle of illusions and falsehoods pervading the rest of the population, unless the mystified become mystifiers and creators of false

consciousness. And this is precisely its transparent failure: the effort to be scientific, to explain the necessities of others and their proper place, transgresses the scientific posture and becomes postmodern.

There is no metanarrative; the prospect of an all-explanatory system, that would be, at the same time, coextensive with the practical affairs, has not been achieved. A multitude of theories abound, each proposing to be the 'basic science' capable of explaining the others, only to find itself being explained by the others. As Castoriadis depicts, even physicists such as Heisenberg was being ironic when dealing with the "elementary particles". There were so many of them and of such a variety, that one had to become a zoologist to classify them (Castoriadis 1984). Perhaps there are no elements, and perhaps their secret is precisely the modern discourse of formal and quantitative methodology that requires the construction of atoms, elements, and particles. Be that as it may, we should be able to show what sort of 'logic' emerges from this failure and how does it lead to democratization.

First, the modern tradition replaced a presumption of an all knowing, infinite being and truth by an effort to construct one system, to be identified as true. This attempt failed, and the truth, at least in the guise of an all-explanatory system, could not be had. The efforts to achieve it were, despite failures, not abandoned. One still was led by the BELIEF in it. But a belief without a proof is empty unless it has a different purpose than truth. This is to say, a belief can be propagated as truth to the extent that others are sufficiently gullible to accept it and to subject themselves to it. No doubt, such a belief could even be genuine and lend credence to one's otherwise meaningless and relative world. Some cannot envisage that there are many truths, thus making their truth neither better nor worse, but at the same time not the most significant. At any rate, the belief is no longer held on the basis of a demonstration but on the basis of a need. And this is what opens the door to the question: whose need among other needs? This is the hinge which shifts away from the acceptance of the claims that there is a system founded on truth, and replaces it with a multitude of beliefs based on a variety of needs. (Volkman-Schluck 1978) This variety reveals that the so called objective and self-generating system is founded upon someone's need.

Given a multitude of needs, the need that founds the system is one among others and comprises a value choice. Fundamentally, then, value choices are not material, necessary compulsions, but adjudicative decisions. In a society such adjudications require public participation and thus a political arena where all social members **MUST** participate. For as we have seen, modernity cannot maintain its pretense of an explanatory system without including false consciousness among those who purport to be subjected and having subjected others to its edicts. At this level such

false consciousness indicates a deliberate hiding of free valuation and a choice of the system. Thus the supporters of this choice open the gates to a plurality of choices. The matter of choices that would affect society must be, therefore, a question for public decision. This simply means that one 'expert's' or one group's self-appointed decisions on the basis of 'facts' are inadequate. Facts, after all, are chosen material constructs and not some natural inevitabilities. If the decision is to be acceptable to the members of society, then it must be political, and the latter is essentially public (Mickunas 1986: 335). That this is a postmodern view is obvious from the feminist movement, pointing out that gender differentiations are political and require political adjudication in a public discourse (Weedon 1987: 5). The discourse is not about facts, but about strategies for deposing the traditional values of social relations. The way of abolishing of such values requires the recognition that they have no natural, no material base, but are products of a discourse. Hence, only basic changes in discursive practice can 'deconstruct' the received meanings (Daily, 1979). But such a deconstruction cannot be merely private: it must be public.

The insistence on the public and the political by postmodern thought is tied to the modern forgetfulness that its reduction of the human to a factual-material person led to privatization, and at best to collectivization of private needs and the promise by the modern 'scientific systems' to fulfill such needs. The result is an emergence of a ruling political technocracy which assumes power both in private and state capitalisms. And this is precisely what is at issue for postmodernity: first, the concept of "private" and what belongs in the private sphere is based on a forgotten political valuation, and hence it is democratically decidable. Second, the reduction of all political affairs to a system of expert-technical decisions concerning the private wants of the social members, is a choice of methodology and material construction which is not compulsory but valuative. Resultantly, valuations should not be based on one group's choice; they must be a matter of public decision. Third, the question of current debate concerning legitimation crisis hinges on the technocratic privatization of the public, i.e. its materialization. The latter implies an acceptance of the *de facto* private individual material differences and inequalities, leading to the *de facto* conclusion of the different 'political' status of such individuals. In this sense, the political arena, designed for equal participation of all social members "irrespective of material-economic and power rank", becomes abolished. The only legitimation of political rule is a self-legitimation of rulership by material advantage and power. But as noted, the power rule, justified by an ideology of a 'scientific discourse' is a false consciousness that demands pluralization of views, and thus contains within itself the seeds of self-destruction. Fourth, the material environment,

pervading all 'private' lives is common to all. This environment turns out to be a human construct, design, product, formed on decisions and valuations, and resultantly calls for public adjudication. The constructed environment affects all social members and requires public monitoring. Public's participation is, thus, inevitable.

The postmodern call for democratic politics also accepts the premise that all human events are fundamentally political, and the meaning of politics is a mandatory public participation in all affairs. This is counter to the prevailing journalistic view of modernity that something is 'merely political' or that some social issues are too important to be politicized. For postmodern understanding, social issues are too important to be left out of politics; the latter after all is a public domain. The usual, and quite cynical, view is that the public is incompetent, that it is not an expert in the sophisticated and scientised modern world, and hence the decisions are to be left to the experts and not to chaotic process of democratic ignorance. But the ignorant public has an equally cynical answer: the sophisticated sciences, left to their own devices, have already prepared the annihilation of the planet, and all the public is asked to do is to wait for it to happen. The system-elitism is a factual idiocy that can be deflected from its private aggrandizements only by an insistent public mediation. Without democracy and its sphere of political access to all social members, the modern discursive praxis might be the end decided by someone's solitary value (Sloterdijk 1983: 252ff).

POSTSCRIPT

The conjunction of modernity and postmodernity opens a field of open debate that ranges across all registers of social issues and concerns. The claim of modernity to an all encompassing and explanatory discourse makes sense only in its valuative context and an effort to build a material domain. But the manner of building of such a domain is neither natural nor metaphysical aim but a humanly invented way and hence one among other possible human creations. The system that has been posited as objective turns out to be a power structure designed deliberately for the sake of its own illusory self-generation and self-legitimation. This design assumes the shift from sign to signal, with, in a final analysis, full cognizance that the shift is artificial and leads to false consciousness. At the same time, the invention of one system as true turns out to be a belief and not a proof, and resultantly a belief founded on need. These factors compel the reorientation of all social events toward democracy and political adjudication in the public arena. The latter is pluralistic and offers an equal participation to all social members, unless of course, they are prevented by illegitimate claims of those who are in power

positions in the presumed objective system. Yet the public is all too aware of such claims as partial, interested, and can be seen in their valuative context. The critique of power by postmodernity is coextensive to the process of democratization and equalization. The principle that underlies postmodern thought is the unsuccessful effort of modernity to maintain the identity between freedom and equality.

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MODERNYBĖ POSTMODERNYBĖJE

SANTRAUKA

Šiame straipsnyje svarstomi 'pereinamieji fenomenai', užimantys tarpinę padėtį tarp dviejų kultūrinių sričių – modernybės ir postmodernybės. Tarp jų galime išskirti diskursą, sistemą, mokslą, technologiją, melagingą sąmonę, demokratiją, cinizmą ir galią. Šie fenomenai užima tarpinę padėtį sukurdami lauką, kuriame modernybė ir postmodernybė abipusiai susiliečia ir išsiskiria.

Modernybės ir postmodernybės konjunkcija steigia atviros diskusijos lauką, nusidriekiantį per visus socialinių problemų ir interesų registrus. Modernybės pretenzija į visaapimantį ir viską paaiškinantį diskursą prasminga tikrai jos verčių kontekste ir reiškia pastangą sukurti materialią sritį. Tačiau šios srities kūrimo būdas nėra nei natūralus, nei metafizinis, o žmogaus sugalvotas ir, vadinasi, yra vienas tarp kitų galimų žmogaus kūrinių. Sistema, kuri buvo postuluota kaip objektyvi, pasirodė esanti galios struktūra, sąmoningai sukonstruota savęs gaminimo ir savęs įteisavimo labui. Šis konstravimas tampa perėjimu nuo ženklo prie signalo, galutinėje analizėje visiškai suvokiant, kad šis perėjimas yra dirbtinis ir veda prie melagingos sąmonės. Tuo pat metu teisingos sistemos atradimas pasirodo esąs įsitikinimas, o ne įrodymas, vadinasi, poreikiu grindžiamas įsitikinimas. Šie veiksniai verčia perorientuoti visus socialinius įvykius demokratijos ir politinio pripažinimo viešojoje erdvėje link. Pastaroji yra pliurali ir užtikrina vienodą visų socialinių narių dalyvavimą, nebent, žinoma, jiems kliudo neteisėtos pretenzijos tų, kurie užima galios pozicijas tariamai objektyvioje sistemoje. Vis dėlto visuomenė pernelyg puikiai nuvokia tokias pretenzijas esant šališkas, suinteresuotas ir interpretuotinas vertybiniame kontekste. Postmodernybės vykdoma galios kritika plečiasi sykiu su demokratizacijos ir lygybės reikalavimo procesu. Postmodernų mąstymą grindžiantis principas – tai nepavykusi modernybės pastanga išlaikyti tapatumą tarp laisvės ir lygybės.

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: modernybė, postmodernybė, diskursas, melaginga sąmonė, demokratija, galia, cinizmas.