

HOW TO UNDERSTAND MODERNITY?

***A Debate Concerning the Constitution of Self and the Public Sphere
in Modern Era***

“MODERNLİK NASIL ANLAŞILMALI?

***Modern Çağda Öznenin ve Kamusal Alanın Oluşumuna İlişkin bir
Tartışma”***

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with three different schools of thought in terms of the constitution of self and the public sphere in modern times. The first trend (e.g. Durkheim and Parsons) advocates that the self or individuality finds the best environment for its maximal realization within a rational-universal sphere that is the modern publicity. The second trend, “Marxian-Nietzschean radical-critical trend”, claims that individuality is oppressed by the modern public sphere and its socio-economic political environment. On the other hand, the third trend (e.g. Simmel and Habermas) insists that along with its disadvantages the modern socio-economic system brings its own advantages for the autonomy of self and individuality.

Key Words: Autonomy of Self, Modern Public Sphere, Parsons, Marx, Habermas, Communicative Action, Constitutional Democracy.

ÖZET

Bu makale modern zamanlarda özne olarak bireyselliğin ve kamu alanının oluşumu hakkındadır. Bu konuyu ele alan düşünce okulları arasındaki birinci okula (örneğin Durkheim ve Parsons) göre bireysellik kendisini en özgür bir biçimde evrensel-akli kurallara göre düzenlenmiş olan modern kamu alanında ifade eder. İkinci okula göre (örneğin Marx ve Nietzsche-türü eleştirel yaklaşımlar) birey, modern toplum ve onun ihtiva

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ettiği sosyo-ekonomik çevre tarafından baskı altındadır. Simmel ve Habermas tarafından temsil edilen üçüncü okula göre ise birey açısından dezavantajlar getirmesiyle birlikte modern toplum, bireysel özerklik için yeni imkânlar sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öznenin Özerkliği, Modern Kamusal Alan, Parsons, Marx, Habermas, İltişimsel Eylem, Anayasal Demokrasi.

This article basically compares and discusses three different sociological approaches on modernity in terms of the constitution of self and individuality and its position in the modern public sphere. Deriving from one of the classical sociological trends (Durkheim, Marx-Nietzsche, Simmel), three contemporary sociological schools (Parsons, Foucault, Habermas) are differentiated according to their view on the possibility of the maximization of individualistic capacity within modern publicity. Whereas the first approach advocates the optimistic opinion in terms of the realization of maximum individual capacity within modern society, the second view emphasizes the pessimistic idea and modern society's oppression on individuality. The third view points out both disadvantages that modern society brings out for individual authenticity and self-realization, and new opportunities for modern individualistic capacity.

1- Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons: the Structuralist Trend in the Understanding of Modern Society and the Modern Self:

1.1. Immanuel Kant and the Possibility of Science and Ethics:

In his epistemological inquiry concerning the sources of human knowledge, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), an eminent German philosopher, saw the possibility of science and knowledge of the external world in the unchangeable nature of human mind. He attempted to outline universal categories of the human mind in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1982; originally published in German in 1780). For him, the human mind, with its containing universal form, transforms the content of the knowledge coming from the external world into a knowledge whose form is universal to each individual. Therefore, this unchangeability of the human mind provides us

with objective conditions for the possibility of universal knowledge that is not relative according to differences in space and time. (Schwarz, 1982: xiii)

In addition to his solution for the possibility of objective knowledge by means of the unchangeable nature of human mind, in his Critique of Practical Reason (1956; originally published in German in 1788), Kant argued that there should be one “categorical imperative” which is universal to everyone as it supplies people with a universal ethical criterion against a chaos of different norms. Otherwise, permanent human behavior and order in society, which are actually observable by us, would not be possible. Because we do not see any chaos in society and human individualistic behavior, for Kant, this is only possible with the existence of a universal “categorical imperative.” In this manner, Kant says that “the maxim of your will could always hold at the same time as a principle establishing universal law” (1956: 30).

What this illustrates is that Kant takes a position, which is opposite to the utilitarian moral theorists. Despite Thomas Hobbes' idea of humanity with pure interests, for Kant, "private calculations of utility" (Münch, 1981: 716) would lead humanity to a social chaos if individuals are not directed by a transcendental imperative. Hence, this “categorical imperative” embedded in the human mind rescues humanity from a chaos of different norms and values as well as contradictory human interests as it supplies a universal ethical (on an individual level) and therefore moral (with respect to the social sphere) normative criterion for all individuals.

1.2. Durkheimian Sociology and the Problem of Social Order:

Like Immanuel Kant's quest to answer the question of “how pure mathematics or the science of nature is possible” (Kant, 1949: Ch.s.1-2), Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), in his sociological inquiries attempted to answer the question of “how social order as an actual fact becomes possible.” Durkheim saw the possibility of social order in the determination of wholeness of society over individualistic ambiguity. As Jonathan Turner states, “in conceiving of society, as reality, *sui generis*, Durkheim in effect gave analytical priority to the social order” (1978: 25). For Durkheim, because individualistic needs are infinite, "society imposes limits on human desires" (Coser, 1977:132). In this regard, whereas Kant's solution for universal-normative behavior for all people was a “categorical imperative”

which preserves humanity from a chaos of different norms, Durkheim saw the possibility of social order in the existence of norms, values, proscriptions, and imperatives in society that give an order to the individualistic indefinite-arbitrary sphere. Like Kant, for Durkheim individual motivations are directed not by pure utilitarian calculations but by normative obligations.

However, in addition to "the importance of obligation" (Münch, 1981: 728) for the preservation of social order, Durkheim insisted that order at the same time corresponds to "the needs and dispositions of individuals" (Münch, 1981: 728). Stated differently, individuals obligate themselves to norms consciously, or through a "collective consciousness" because they are motivated by their interests (Durkheim, 1984: 69-73). In this sense, "Durkheim goes beyond Kant in his recognition that individuals must abide by norms not simply because they must, but because they desire to do so" (Münch, 1981: 729). Therefore, in the process of the constitution of social order, individuals tend to preserve this order by abiding and obeying to norms and rules for their interests in the social order they are living in.

For Durkheim, although the modern type of solidarity (organic) imposes principles and rules over individuality, the independence of individuals created by the division of labor brings people more freedom in comparison to the dependencies and ties common to traditional societies. For him, in modern society, individualistic actions are exposed to a "freer, more extensive" moral life with "a source of spontaneous activity" (Durkheim, 1949: 347-8). In this sense, the independence of people is associated with "the relative freedom of choice and action of the individual" (Westby, 1991: 257). That is to say that Durkheim is optimistic about the modern society with its bringing a large degree of human freedom through its developed institutions.

1.3. Talcott Parsons and the Interpenetration of Individual and Social Spheres:

Parsons (1902-1979), an American sociologist, in his sociological approach, seeks to explain how social order as an actual fact emerges. For him, social order is considered as a given fact and he looks at social order as a "self-regulating system" (Ingram, 1987: 137). Hence, in order to understand Parsonsian theory of social action, we have to look at how he

conceptualizes the nature and origin of human ethics in accord with norms and values in society. In his inquiry of the possibility of social order, Parsons is basically inspired by Kant's search for a "categorical imperative" in the possibility of human ethics. In this sense, it can be said that "his general theory of action and his theory of social systems are themselves thoroughly Kantian" (Münch, 1981:712). According to Parsons the "position of Kant's is clearly of central importance to the general theory of action we hold that it is the laws of the most fundamental premises and assumptions of *social ordering* at the human level" (Parsons, 1978: 370-1; Italics from the original text).

The importance of Kantian thought to Talcott Parsons's theory of social action originates from Kant's opposition "to found moral principles on the subjective considerations of utility of individual actors" (Münch, 1981: 716). Again, we can see here Kantian-Durkheimian resistance to the utilitarian theory in approaching individual motivation and behavior. Parsons, here, emphasizes the importance of norms and values in individualistic action (Münch; 1982: 773).

Parsons in this respect, by fusing Kant's individualistic view of a categorical imperative and Emile Durkheim's view of a wholist normative social order, synthesizes individualism and social wholism. For Parsons, "order must also be compatible with the capacity of the actors for autonomous action" (Münch, 1982: 777). For Parsons universalism of a normative system gives individuals "a universal framework of values which transcends particularities" (Münch, 1982: 782). Hence, the rational social order with its structural-universal prescriptions corresponds to the moral imperatives of the mind. Therefore, we do not see any contradiction between particularism of individuality and social order as a whole in Parsonsian thought. In this sense, "the fusion of individualism, universalism, rationalism, and activism which characterizes modern society" (Münch, 1982: 776) brings a harmony between individual particularity and social whole through a compatible interpenetration between the social and personality systems. Thus, the most suitable social environment for the free actions of individuals is available in modern society.

Therefore, Parsons's search for how social order as an actual fact comes forth turns into the problematization of how individualistic and social levels interpenetrate each other:

Integration, both within an individual's value system and within the value system prevailing in society, is a compromise between the functional imperatives of the situation and the dominant value-orientation patterns of society. (Parsons and Shils, 1963: 142)

Here, the interpenetration of normative imperatives between the individual sphere and social system that brings forth a functional mechanism is critical for a proper understanding of Parsons' theorization of the constitution of social order (Münch, 1981: 728).

On the other hand, Parsonsian theory presumes a mutual understanding between those actors of a "shared culture." It does not deal with the problem of how those actors perceive the external world (Sharrock and Anderson, 1986: 33) or how they demonstrate those values. In the same words, "Parsons treats culture as if it were an ideal realm of immutable objects distinct from norms and persons" (Ingram, 1987:140). Since, one of the basic assumptions of Parsonsian theory is that actors in the social system internalize those norms and values by means of the socialization process (Hilbert, 1992: 21). In explaining social action, Parsonsian functional-structuralist sociology overlooks the problem of the commitment of subjectivity to this social order. It does not talk about how individuals in their daily life accept and commit to these values and norms in the social sphere.

2-)Radical-Critical Trend

2.1 Marx and Antagonisms of Market Economy

Thus far, it has become evident that for Durkheim and Parsons, modern self as a rational (ethical in terms of submitting to personal principles) and moral entity, finds suitable universal principles in modern society. Unlike Durkheim and Parsons, who were basically concerned with the problem of the possibility of social order as an actual fact and leave aside the inconsistencies associated with this order, Karl Marx's main problem was to expose the contradictions and struggles which are endemic to society. He attempted to investigate the antagonistic nature of the social order, rather than the idealization of social order through the problematization of the possibility of its existence. In this regard, he accused social sciences, such as economics, that dealt with the problem of how the social order comes forth

of being a bourgeois science in that it serves the bourgeois class interests rather than searching for the reality of social order. For him, because social reality is full of contradictions, struggles, such sciences cannot see the antagonistic nature of society through their investigation of how the social order emerges, i.e. the possibility of social order (Marx, 1978: 443-466). He attempted, therefore, to look at those contradictions by means of his historical materialist method. For Marx, unlike his predecessors such as Hegel, civil society in the modern era:

Should not be conceived as a unity, but rather as a contradictory entity composed of classes that are necessarily antagonistic to one another. Like Hegel, Marx presupposes a radical separation of civil society from science, but unlike his idealist predecessor; he sees the public sphere as an arena of conflict. (Holub, 1991: 5)

Looking at antagonisms and contradictions resulted out of private property; Marx held that the constitution of the public sphere in the modern era oppresses both the individual without property (worker) and the individual who owns property (capitalist, bourgeois). Bourgeoisie methods of production result in oppression and restrictions over individualistic capabilities. These capabilities are only realizable in a communist society where private property relations have been discarded. According to Marx “a person is determined by his class status one really says that man becomes a predicate of his property” (Avineri, 1969: 27).

As private property dominates, the state enters into the full influence of private property. Bourgeoisie democracy is always for the sake of the ruling- bourgeoisie class as they possess the most, if not all, of the economic power (Marx, 1978: 160-163). For Marx, the existence of a true democracy in bourgeoisie society is not conceivable. In the same words, for him, true democracy is possible only by the replacement of the bourgeois society with a communist society without private property. As capitalist relations of production bring out their internal contradiction through antagonistic class relations, it necessarily transforms itself into a classless society in which there is no longer a contradiction among individualistic interests and production relations (Marx, 1978: 160-163).

2.2. The Anarchistic Trend: Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel Foucault

Unlike the compatible unity of form (norms, rules, rational principles etc.) and content (individual wills, desires) in Durkheimian sociology, Nietzsche argued that through rationalistic culture in modern society, our authentic feelings and desires, are transformed into "tame and civilized" behaviors with "a *household pet*, out of the beast of `prey man'" (Nietzsche, 1994: 26, Nietzsche's italics). Unlike Immanuel Kant who insisted on a universal "categorical imperative", "Nietzsche wanted to indicate that in the modern world it is no longer possible to identify a moral principle that will give a uniform, coherent and unquestioned authority to some general pattern of life and society" (Turner, 1996: xiii). However, he did not address how it is that humanity can be rescued from this oppression. Unlike Marx, who proposed that a communist revolution would eliminate the oppressive public sphere determined by capitalist relations, Nietzsche was very pessimistic about the oppressive character of the modern society and the effect it would have on individuality.

Inspired by Nietzsche, Michel Foucault (1926-84), a French philosopher and social scientist, also grappled with the question of how the human self in society in its modern form is oppressed (Power/ Knowledge (1980) and Discipline and Punish (1979)). In this manner, he did not intend to investigate the Durkheimian and Parsonsian paradigmatic question of "how social order as an actual fact becomes possible." Foucault dealt with the question of how human desires, wills that constitute the inner nature of human identity, are formalized through institutional prescriptions, sanctions, penalties etc., in their modern form. In addition, Foucault also tried to understand the production of knowledge as a type of "the Will to Power", namely, as a tool to subjugate "human subjects" (Foucault, 1980: Ch.6). Since, for him "the exercise of power demands special knowledge about how to entangle human bodies in a system of subjection, and it demands the ability to manipulate a technology of body" (Kemp, 1984: 95). Therefore, Foucault aspires to discover how power is applied to the social arena and over people. For him, power relations are realized "according to rules which are or are not explicit, fixed or modifiable, with or without the technological means to put all these things into action" (Foucault, 1982: 223).

Hence, consensus cannot exist in the social order, for Foucault. Because power brings sanction without questioning in social order,

consensus appears *not before* but *after* the subjugation of individuals to the authority of who is the most powerful. As Foucault states: “the relationship of power can be the result of a prior or permanent consent, but it is not by nature the manifestation of a consensus” (1982, 220).

According to Foucault, this subjugation of human subjects in society appears through the prevailing power relations between people and order, which is represented by government. Participants in the social order are exposed to some principles and laws. When people are exposed to laws, which require obedience, they are subjugated by those laws and, as a necessary consequence, government. In this regard, for Foucault there is no difference between modern constitutional regimes and ancient sovereignties (Foucault, 1979: 13).

3-) The Third Trend: The Possibility of the Manipulation of the Modern Public Sphere for the sake of Freedom of Modern Self:

As already proposed, Durkheim and Parsons argued that modern society is the best form for the authenticity of individuality because it supplies the individual with a suitable environment for the realization of individualistic capacity. However, the Marxian and Nietzschean tendency emphasized the integral role of the modern public sphere in the suppression of the human self. But here, whereas Marx envisioned emancipation from this oppressive system in the communist society, Nietzsche and Foucault proposed that *all* types of societies produce oppression for individuality. For them, society and social order *per se* means the suppression of human feelings and the manipulation of human identity so that people can live together in social life. On the other hand, social scientists like Simmel and Habermas have thought that although modernity, with its special form of the public sphere, leads to a constriction of individuality, it brings at the same time advantages for individual authenticity (Simmel) or political instruments that enable persons to manipulate the modern public sphere for the sake of individual freedom (Habermas).

3.1. The Sociology of Georg Simmel:

In terms of the content and form of society, Durkheimian sociology insists on the determination of a social whole over individuality and evaluation of the possibility of social order through its bringing unity of content and form in society (Frisby, 1984: 141).

In this regard, Simmel (1858-1918), concerned himself with the relation between content (individual arbitrary desires, wills, personal decisions etc.) and form (social rules, principles) in society, namely the relation between individuality and the social whole. For Simmel “society is the universal, which, at the same time, is concretely alive” (Simmel, 1978: 101). Looking at society and social relations as a dialectic between society and individuality, he “seeks to show how group ties are progressively loosened, thereby permitting the greater development of individuality” (Frisby, 1984: 79).

In this manner, when Simmel analyses the monetary economy in modern society, he tackles the problem of how money affects the daily life of the modern individual. For him, whereas money loosens ties and face to face relations in society, at the same time, it, “more than any other form of value, makes possible the secrecy, invisibility, and silence of exchange” (Simmel, 1978: 385). Therefore, it gives modern man more freedom from the dependence on other people which is the characteristic of feudal society. Whereas he points out the disadvantages of the money economy, he proposes at the same time, that it creates opportunities for human freedom.

3.2. Habermas and the Constitution of the Modern Self and Public Sphere

As indicated above, Marx was pessimistic concerning the modern public arena in terms of how it constrained human freedom. For him, it was under the absolute influence of its economic form (capitalism). Marx argued that the only way to escape from this oppressive system was through a radical change in property relations. However, Jürgen Habermas (1930-) in his early study The Structural Transformation of Civil Society (1989, in German, Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit, in 1962) proposed that the modern public sphere and civil society provides an opportunity for human freedom through their ability to bring democratic instruments to the modern state. According to Habermas, the market relations, which developed in the

West, have strengthened the Western civil society as they empower civil rights and the individual against the power of state (Habermas, 1989: 74).

Here, Habermas' concern does not seem too far removed from Karl Marx's, or in general, German intellectual tradition's (Kant, Schelling, Nietzsche, Heidegger) concern with individual authenticity (Holub, 1991: Ch.1). However, Habermas does not share the pessimistic ideas of Karl Marx or other members of the Frankfurt school, such as Adorno and Horkheimer. For him, the liberal public sphere in the early years of the emergence of capitalism which Marx speaks of, no longer exists because of the intervention of the state into private sphere. Habermas is optimistic about contemporary parliamentary democracy, which emerged during the transformation of civil society in the West, in terms of its ability of bringing about human freedom and civil rights (Habermas, 1989: 230-5).

In his later studies, essentially in the Theory of Communicative Action (1987, German Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns in 1981), Habermas sees the possibility of authenticity of individuality through the protection of the life-world where individuals can freely communicate their intentions to each other. Therefore, meaning and understanding without restriction along with rational-justification principles can come forth instead of the restricted or interfered meaningful world of individuals. As "communicative actors are always moving *within* the horizon of their lifeworld" (Habermas, 1987: 126; Habermas' italics), each individual can freely interpret what others say. In their meaningful world (life-world), individuals come together around a mutual understanding and he or she can preserve his or her individual uniqueness (Habermas, 1984: 86). "Coming to an understanding [*Verständigung*] means that," for Habermas:

Participants in communication reach an agreement [*Einigung*] concerning the validity of an utterance; agreement [*Einverständnis*] is the intersubjective recognition of the validity claim the speaker raises for it. (Habermas, 1987: 120)

On the other hand, this free interpretation and communication between individuals cannot be considered apart from an "objective reference" to their living world. According to Habermas, the interpretation between individuals is tested in a reference system constituted by "the objective, the social, and the subjective worlds" (Habermas: 1987: 120). In this manner, Habermas, opposed to universal rationality, proposes that truth and rationality come

forth in social relations through the communicative action of individuals and consensus process, rather than through a mythical, idealized context. He proposes a de-centered rationality in the field of inter-subjective relations in the social arena (Habermas, 1984: 72).

Here, Habermas asserts that in order to reach a free-consensus between individuals, the communication sphere (life-world) should be protected from restrictions because “the concept of lifeworld... suggests that culture is independent from external constraints” (Habermas, 1987: 149). In this sphere, subjects in their communication constitute their universal validity claims, which are not forced on them by the external market or state force. In this regard, “state and economy are thus both crucial topics for and rivals of the democratic public sphere” in which free communication of individuals is possible (Calhoun, 1992: 6). Thus, Habermas’ theoretical point of view searches for the ideal conditions of communicative action in which subjects can communicate with each other without constraint from economic restrictions or state power. Then, he tries to find out “the formal conditions of possibility for concrete utterances” (Holub, 1991: 11). “These formal conditions” prevent the interference between the life-world and the sphere of economic and power relations and protect the life-world from those sources of oppression, or from what Habermas refers to as ‘the colonization of the life world’ or ‘internal colonization’ (Habermas, 1987: Ch. 8 Part 2). As Ingram states:

the modern state guarantees the general conditions of production by maintaining law and order, providing systems of education, transportation, and communication, and so on, while leaving inviolate the market as an autonomous mechanism of exchange and distribution. (Ingram, 1987:122)

Here, Habermas opposes Parsons’ “frozen” understanding of the functionally intermingled relationship between the life-world and social system. He attempts to discover how these spheres interact and interfere with one another in our living socio-economic political system. Stated differently, Habermas’s critical theory devotes itself to investigating *whether or not* the life-world, the meaningful world of the individual, is at stake with restrictions or coercion coming from economic and power relations in the public sphere or vice versa, *whether or not* the economy and power relations are affected by the interpretative-subjective meaningful sphere of the life-world. As we mentioned before, some critics of Parsons argue that although Parsons dealt with the constitution of the social order as a system, he was not

concerned with how individuals commit to norms and values in this social order. In this sense, Habermas argues that Parsons evaluates the social system as an objective fact “rather than as communicative conditions of possible action” (Ingram, 1987: 141).

According to Habermas, because of the neo-Kantian influence in Parsons that directs him to analyze society through dualities, these dichotomies in society transform into an order through a “functional integration” (Habermas, 1987: 241). Therefore, it removes any possibility of inconsistencies or tensions between the world of values and meanings and the world of “empirical motivations” (Ingram, 1987: 142). This idealization of the integration between cultural values and the empirical world overlooks the possibility of the collapse of this integration, namely dysfunctional positions. For Habermas, these two worlds come together not spontaneously, but through a consensus between social actors. In this manner, here Habermas' critical theory is quite different from Berger and Luckmann's position in The Social Construction of Reality (1966) which, despite dealing with how the meaningful world of individuals are constructed, fails to consider how this world interacts with economic and power relations.

For Habermas, precondition for the possibility of the ideal speech situation, therefore, is the preservation of conditions for free communication between subjects against coercion of power relations or restrictions of economic relations in the market economy. Otherwise, constraint over subjects disregards their free communication, namely authenticity, whereas for Habermas, the authenticity of subjects is only possible through the preservation of the life-world.

In addition, he takes a position opposite to that of the anarchistic trend of Nietzsche and Foucault who proposed the idea of the freedom of self in opposition to the imperatives of social order. Habermas argues that the anarchistic approach to knowledge and social order relativizes all truth-seeking procedures and communication processes between subjects by looking at science, knowledge, and all communication procedures as the products of power relations. Therefore, they pave the way for absolute power relations without truth and justice, namely, an authoritarian social order dominated by the powerful where the authenticity of individuality no longer exists (Habermas, 1987b: 307-8). Opposed to “the problematization of internal nature” by Nietzsche and Foucault, Habermas argues that individuality cannot be considered apart from society individual lives in.

In terms of the protection of authenticity and individuality, for Habermas, modernity provides the possibility for modern man to preserve his individual authenticity. Since, it supplies conditions for communicative action through the constitutional democratic mechanism of the modern state against, for example, the state power in *ancien regime* or the power of the market economy in the early years of capitalism. For Habermas “instead of giving up modernity and its project as a lost cause, we should learn from the mistakes of those extravagant programs which have tried to negate modernity” (Habermas, 1983: 12-3)

Therefore, Habermas argues that modernity has the potential to bring about individual authenticity in contrast to the post-modern critiques of modernity for the sake of the absolute freedom of self. He holds that such ideas may pave the way to pre-modern authoritarian societies through a ‘colonization of external world’ in which the economy and the legal order is stifled by ideological-irrational instruments coming from the interpretative meaningful sphere of the life-world (Habermas, 1987: 107-101). In that sense, he calls them anti-modernist as opposed to post-modernist (Habermas, 1983: 14)

According to Habermas, the authenticity of subject is possible in order and through reason¹, namely in a rational social order. For the sake of freedom of self, the elimination of both these concepts in society results in disorder, or the authority of the powerful. The emancipatory aspect of rationality, manifested in modern society as the definition of citizenship rights and obligations in a constitutional democracy, can provide communication for modern men, in which their authenticity is possible. This interactive communication can preserve individual authenticity against domination and the restrictions of economic and power relations.

CONCLUSION

This article has compared three different trends in classical and contemporary sociological theory in terms the construction of self and its place in the modern public sphere. In the first trend, referred to as the Durkheimian- Parsonsian structuralist trend, inspired by Kant's search for the ground of a universal knowledge and ethics, we are introduced to the problematization of the possibility of social order. Whereas Durkheim saw

this possibility through norms and values in society over individualistic arbitrariness, Parsons brings forward the interpenetration of values and norms between the individualistic arena and social sphere. For Parsons, the social order emerges by means of harmony and integration of the individual and social spheres in society. At the same time, for these social scientists, because individual autonomy is realized in rationally organized societies, modern society supplies the best environment for maximizing individual freedom.

In the Marxian-critical-radical trend, there is an emphasis placed upon the oppression of self by the modern social sphere. Karl Marx focused on the antagonistic nature of society. He argued that market economy with its dependency on private property puts limitations on and, therefore oppresses both the owner of private property and laborers in terms of their individualistic capacities. Marx saw a hope for the elimination of this modern society that comprises an antagonistic and oppressive nature with the establishment of a communist society.

On the other hand, Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel Foucault insisted that society *per se* brings its own type of system of oppression for individual autonomy. Whereas Nietzsche emphasized modern society's role in the suppression of human inner feelings, desires, turning them into a "civilized" form, Foucault tried to understand how modern society in the social as well as knowledge-production sphere brings its own type of authority over individual autonomy.

Opposed to the first trend, which viewed modern society as the best social environment for the realization of human interests, and the second trend that brings out in full-relief the oppressive side of the modern public sphere over individual autonomy, the third trend, stressed both advantages and disadvantages of the modern public sphere for the realization of the individual capacity. Whereas Simmel emphasized both the positive and negative aspects of the modern public sphere for individual freedom, Habermas pointed out the role of emancipatory instruments in modern society for securing individual freedom.

Simmel, looking at the tension between individuality and social order, argued that the money economy had an important role in generating these

¹ In Habermas' point of view, de-centered reason.

positive and negative consequences. Unlike Simmel, who did not address any political strategy for the sake of human freedom, Habermas argued that the contemporary constitutional democracies create possibilities to preserve individual freedom and autonomy from the market economy and state power. Through democratic tools available in the modern public sphere, the life-world in which individuals can freely communicate with each other can be protected and cultivated as a shelter for individual autonomy. This life-world at the same time supplies the possibility for preserving material interests as well as the meaningful world of individuals living in the modern public sphere. For Habermas the possibility of authenticity of individuals in the modern world is dependent on the preservation of the life-world in which individuals can freely interpret, justify and test others' utterances, namely, communicate with each other in a manner which is unconstrained.

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