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# The role of value in Karl Mannheim's sociology of knowledge

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Dissertation

THE ROLE OF VALUE IN KARL MANNHEIM'S  
SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. The Problem of the Dissertation

The problem of this dissertation is to discover the axiological basis, or value orientation, upon which Karl Mannheim has developed a social philosophy. A crucial issue in such an investigation is the question of the link between Mannheim's sociology of knowledge and his axiological assumptions. This question of the link between sociology and value theory raises a number of questions with respect to the work of Mannheim. Are there axiological implications in the sociology of knowledge? What are the basic epistemological claims which Mannheim makes on behalf of the sociology of knowledge? What is the relation between these epistemological claims and the problems of value theory? Do "facts" and "values," in other words, have a common ontological source, or do they arise from completely different sources? Does Mannheim draw the axiological conclusions which are implied by his sociology of knowledge? What are the axiological presuppositions of his social philosophy? In short, is value theory possible and,



if so, under what conditions?

These questions suggest, in a rudimentary way, the procedural outline through which it will be possible to explore the thought of a man who has encompassed within his work the concerns and problems not only of the sociologist, but also of the social philosopher and the philosopher of knowledge.

There is here, as is the case with most problems, a problem-behind-the-problem, the awareness of which may serve to point up more clearly the significance of some of the issues involved. The problem-behind-the-problem in this case is posed in an article by Alfred Stern.<sup>1</sup> After discussing at some length the value systems of Nicolai Hartmann and Friedrich Nietzsche, Stern observes that Nietzsche's extreme axiological relativism and subjectivism insist that everything depends upon the individual, whereas in Hartmann's extreme axiological absolutism almost nothing any longer depends upon the individual. Consequently, it becomes clear that an absolutistic theory of values may be as dangerous as a relativistic one. Values which are presented as transcendent, as absolute and independent of the individual, are also independent of the individual's

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<sup>1</sup>Alfred Stern, "The Current Crisis in the Realm of Values," The Personalist, 31(1950), 245-253.

protest. Values which are seen as relative only lack any unitary principle, and the result is a chaos of values.

Stern concludes:

If we saw before that integral axiological absolutism leads to totalitarianism, we see now that integral axiological relativism leads to anarchy. This is, in my opinion, the critical issue in contemporary philosophy of values. It is also the critical issue of our whole civilization.<sup>1</sup>

The question must here be faced as to whether there is a constructive alternative to the above alternatives. The dominant mood today would seem to favor very strongly the tendency toward axiological relativism. This may be seen to a large extent in the utilitarian and instrumentalist emphases as well as in the ethical skepticism which is implicit in some existentialist positions. The mood of axiological relativism is due in large measure to the development of ideological analysis, psychoanalysis, sociology of knowledge, and the extreme functionalist orientation which has characterized much of contemporary anthropology and sociology, from whose ranks have emerged what Robert K. Merton calls "the professional debunkers." All of this historical and intellectual development has undercut the stabilizing bases of civilization, including the axiological bases, and has led to an emphasis upon relativism in the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 253.

area of value.<sup>1</sup>

However, there is another side to this, another sociological and anthropological approach which has played and can continue to play a constructive role, or at any rate not a nihilistic role, in the area of epistemology and axiology. Such men as David Bidney in anthropology, Karl Mannheim in sociology, and Gordon Allport in psychology, have made attempts to deal with some of the philosophical implications of their respective disciplines, and to deal systematically with the problem of the presuppositions of their own disciplines.

This dissertation is expressly interested in the figure of Karl Mannheim because he has done an extensive job of attempting to relate his own field of specialization, "Wissenssoziologie" (the sociology of knowledge), to other disciplines, especially philosophy and the philosophy of knowledge. Mannheim's main thrust in this area has been to point up especially what he considered to be the epistemological implications of Wissenssoziologie. In short, Mannheim claims, the facts which the sociology of knowledge turns up require new epistemological foundations. This leads logically to the problem of the dissertation as

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<sup>1</sup>Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1949), p. 219.

formulated in the opening paragraph. Implicit in the claims of Mannheim's supporters is the claim that he has proposed a line of thought, a sociological approach, which is a way through the axiological dilemma posed by Alfred Stern. The problem of this dissertation is to discover whether this is so.

The intent of this study is to examine the role of value in Mannheim's whole system. Such an inquiry inescapably involves epistemological issues as well as the presuppositions of sociological theory. However, beyond this presuppositional level, this study will not attempt to deal with the wide range of detailed questions of sociological theory, nor with secondary epistemological problems. Both the epistemological issues and the questions of theoretical sociology have received extended attention by many of Mannheim's critics. Mannheim's sociological theory and his epistemological conclusions are the given, the starting point of this inquiry into the problem of value, and its role in Mannheim's system of thought.

Even in the field of value theory, this study claims to be examining but a small portion of the many complex and important issues that pervade this field. It does anticipate, however, that some of these issues may be seen more clearly through an intensive study of a figure such as Karl Mannheim and the problem which his thought poses. It

is in this sense a sort of "microscopic" rather than a "macroscopic" approach.

The study will thus involve an intensive analysis of Mannheim's own writings, subject to the limitations declared below. Secondary sources will also be used, primarily for clarification of the problem, and for clarifying the present status of certain issues that have evolved in the historical development of Wissenssoziologie.

## 2. Previous Research in the Field

Almost all of the previous research on Karl Mannheim's Wissenssoziologie has been undertaken from the perspectives of either sociological or epistemological concerns. The main attention given to Mannheim has been that of his fellow sociologists, raising theoretical problems concerning Mannheim's historicism, or the scientific relevance of imputation, or other kindred issues.<sup>1</sup>

Considerable attention has also been given to the epistemological problems raised by Mannheim. Jacques J. Maquet has examined the epistemological significance of Mannheim, and has described a series of "metaphysical

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Merton, op. cit., for a summary of the sociological issues involved in Wissenssoziologie, Chs. 12 and 13.

presuppositions" which he claims give coherence to Mannheim's whole system. These metaphysical presuppositions include: a dialectical conception of reality; dialectical historicism; the world comprehended as a complex of processes constantly in flux; man's rationality emerging from an interaction between man as organism and the exterior world.<sup>1</sup>

Others such as Arthur Child, Virgil G. Hinshaw, and E. Williams, have criticized Mannheim's epistemological conclusions.<sup>2</sup>

Werner Stark, in an introductory text on the subject of Wissenssoziologie, deals with the problem mainly as a historian of ideas. Stark's concern with the analysis of presuppositions is again primarily in terms of the historical relativity of truth.<sup>3</sup> His preoccupation is mainly with "facts" and "ideas," not with "values."

<sup>1</sup>Jacques J. Maquet, The Sociology of Knowledge, trans. John F. Locke (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1951), p. 87f.

<sup>2</sup>Arthur Child, "The Problem of Truth in the Sociology of Knowledge," Ethics, 58(1947), 18-34.  
 Virgil G. Hinshaw, "The Epistemological Relevance of Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge," Journal of Philosophy, 40(1943), 57-72.  
 E. Williams, "Sociologists and Knowledge," Philosophy of Science, 14(1947), 224-30.

<sup>3</sup>Werner Stark, The Sociology of Knowledge (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1958). See especially Chapter 4 on the "Consequences of the Sociology of Knowledge."

Values are treated only incidentally, in terms of their ideological character. This is, in fact, true of practically all of the work in the field, namely, that values are considered only as incidental to a particular ideology or socio-cultural pattern.

Almost the only attention Mannheim's work has received from philosophers has been negatively-critical, in the form of response to his proposals for epistemological reconstruction. No one to date has approached his work in terms of the problems of value theory, and an analysis of his axiological presuppositions. Hence, the reason for the present study.

### 3. Limitations of this Study

The sources of information for this study include those writings of Mannheim which are available in this country, both in German and in English. Through the efforts of some of Mannheim's former students and colleagues, three collections of essays have been published, thus making available in English virtually all of Mannheim's theoretical studies in sociology, social psychology, and the sociology of knowledge. After 1933, the year of his emigration to England, his works were published in English. Only a few of Mannheim's published articles and manuscripts

are not available in this country and are not included in this study.

Articles not available for this study include the following: "Beiträge zur Theorie der Weltanschauungsinterpretation" (1922), "Die Bedeutung der Konkurrenz im Gebiete des Geistigen" (1929), "Zur Problematik der Soziologie in Deutschland" (1929), "The Place of Sociology in the Social Sciences" (1936), "Adult Education and the Social Sciences" (1938), "Mass Education and Group Analysis" (1939), "The Function of the Refugee" (1940), "Democratic Planning and the New Science of Society" (1944), "The Meaning of Popularization in a Mass Society" (1945).

The primary sources utilized in this study include the three collections of Mannheim's essays, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, and the following works of Mannheim: Systematic Sociology, Ideology and Utopia, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, Diagnosis of Our Time, and Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning. Additional articles consulted, both in German and in English, are listed in the Bibliography.



#### 4. The Method of the Dissertation

The method of the dissertation will be as follows:

##### i. Exposition

Chapters II and III will be primarily expository, setting forth the main outlines of Mannheim's approach to the sociology of knowledge and the epistemological conclusions he has drawn. An attempt will be made to discover from Mannheim's own writings the answers to the questions formulated in the foregoing problem of the dissertation.

##### ii. Analysis

Chapter IV will be primarily analytic. The problem of determining the value components of Mannheim's sociological system is basically a complex problem in content analysis. This content analysis will be undertaken through a series of categorial analyses. The categories of analysis have been derived in part from a comparative study of contemporary value theory, and in part from Mannheim's own writings. Contemporary literature in the field of value theory reveals certain perennially recurring problems and pervasive issues. These same issues are reflected in the language and structure of Mannheim's sociology and social philosophy. It is a constellation of such issues that is suggested as the basis of this analysis.

The categories here proposed reflect certain of these basic issues in contemporary value theory. It is supposed that the kinds of answers supplied to these categorial problems by Mannheim's writings will yield the value components that are implicit and explicit in those writings. There is no inherent hierarchical priority so far as these categories are concerned. It is readily evident also that there are certain immanent relations between various categories that make for apparent "overlapping," and obvious difficulty in finding absolutely discrete and exclusive categories. Nevertheless, in the process of analysis, an attempt will be made to set forth (in the context of Mannheim's own discussion) the distinguishing emphases of each category, and their relation to the basic problem of the dissertation.

These categories of analysis are:

1. Value--Intrinsic and Instrumental
2. Value--Inclusive and Exclusive
3. Value--Permanence and Change
4. Value--Causality and Spontaneity
5. Value--Egoism and Communitarianism
6. Value and Personality
7. Value and the Ought
8. Value and the Meaning of Freedom
9. Value and Religion

### iii. Comparison and Synthesis

Chapter V will involve mainly critical comparison and synthesis. The results of the categorial analysis will be subjected to critical and comparative study, for the purpose of inquiring into the consistency and coherence of his value presuppositions and his sociological conclusions, and to offer a synthesis, or "profile," of his basic axiological presuppositions, educed from the foregoing analysis.

On the basis of such analysis and comparative study, the answers to the questions put forth in the opening paragraph of the dissertation will be sought.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF MANNHEIM'S THINKING

#### 1. Brief Account of Mannheim's Life

Karl Mannheim was born in Hungary in 1893, into a Jewish middle-class family. During his university life in Budapest, he moved largely among the socialist intellectual circles which assumed a leading role in the post-World War I revolution. Hegelian and Marxist thought had profoundly shaped his way of thinking during this period of his study. Georg Lukacs was the source of two major influences:

(1) demonstrating the general value of sociological method in all fields of social-intellectual history, and (2) showing that Marx was the only one who truly grasped Hegel's idea of self-alienation, and pointing out that Marx had transferred the redeeming function of philosophy into the processes of the social revolution.<sup>1</sup>

When subsequent political reaction in Hungary frustrated his desire for free intellectual development, he

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<sup>1</sup>Albert Salomon, "Karl Mannheim 1893-1947," Social Research, 14(1947), 350.

migrated to Germany. In 1920 he went to Heidelberg, and there he continued to revise his Marxist theories in the direction of relativistic historicism, primarily under the influence of Emil Lederer, Max Weber, and Wilhelm Dilthey. His doctoral dissertation on The Structural Analysis of Knowledge, published in 1922, was an outgrowth of philosophical issues raised by Heinrich Rickert and Edmund Husserl in the field of epistemology.<sup>1</sup>

Lederer transformed the Marxist theme of forces of production into the formula of the whole of the social context. From Weber, Mannheim learned a greater refinement of technique and methodological principles. Mannheim took up Dilthey's differentiation between explanation (Erklärung) and comprehension (Verstehen), affirming with Weber that sociology is a discipline of interior comprehension.<sup>2</sup>

In 1929, Mannheim left Heidelberg to take up a professorship at the University of Frankfurt where he remained until 1933. Upon Hitler's accession to power and with it the end of intellectual freedom in Germany, Mannheim accepted a lectureship at the London School of Economics. In 1945 he was appointed to the chair of sociology of education

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<sup>1</sup>Louis Wirth, "Obituary," American Sociological Review, 12(1947), 356.

<sup>2</sup>Maquet, op. cit., p. 40.

in the University of London. He died in London on January 9, 1947.

## 2. Mannheim's General Sociological Orientation

Mannheim followed, with significant modifications at many points, a sociological line of thought evolving through Marx, Lukacs, Lederer, Dilthey, Troeltsch, and Weber. This approach constituted essentially a far-reaching historicism which views thought categories as a function of the social, class, and group structure. It included also a dynamic conception of knowledge, and a concentration on the development of a concrete sociology rather than a sort of vague and speculative imputation of abstract qualities to the abstract individual. From Dilthey and Weber in particular he derived an emphasis upon affective-volitional elements within the thought processes. From phenomenologists such as Husserl, Jaspers, Heidegger, and Scheler, Mannheim was challenged to a constant emphasis upon a strict and accurate observation of the elements of human experience.<sup>1</sup>

Eclectic in many respects, he nonetheless fought a constant battle against the neo-Hegelians and morphologists

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<sup>1</sup>Merton, op. cit., p. 490.

of his day, as well as against the contemporary extreme empiricists and individualists, such as Bertrand Russell and F. A. Hayek.<sup>1</sup>

His eclecticism was not of a casual or mechanical sort, but rather a diligent search for the most comprehensive and systematic synthesis of the numerous sciences of man. Basically, his sociological method is an attempt to apply psychological analysis in the interpretation of social and historical situations. His systematic sociology avoids the either/or of generalizing vs. individualizing methods. He utilizes both methods, allotting to each specific tasks in the various spheres of sociology. His efforts are all directed toward the development of a socialized-psychology or a psychologically-oriented sociology. Mannheim was always impatient with American sociology for being what he termed an "isolating empiricism," always meticulous, always exact but, in the end, of doubtful significance or help in understanding or solving man's crucial and crushing social problems. "Lost is the totality of society, the dynamic forces, the process of integration."<sup>2</sup> He was convinced that isolated empirical

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, edited by J. S. Eros and W. A. C. Stewart (London: Routledge, 1957), p. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Mannheim, "German Sociology (1918-1933)," Politica, February (1934), p. 30.

"facts," apart from any understanding of their inner meaning, their inner relatedness to human life and the meaning of the social process, were useless.

To his own sociological framework and method, he added the tools of analytic psychology. His emphasis upon structure and relationism led him also toward gestalt rather than connectionist or associationist theories.<sup>1</sup> In short, Mannheim sought a genuine synthesis between the methods of modern dynamic psychology and those of sociology: the generalizing, the individualizing, the historical, the economic-dialectical, the formal, and the socio-cultural.

In this largest sense of the word all the cultural sciences belong to the field of the social sciences; for instance, philology, the history of literature, the history of art, the history of knowledge, economics, economic history, political science and anthropology. But this huge amount of material must be formed into some coherence by a central discipline which has both a point of view and a subject matter of its own. In the field of social sciences the central discipline is sociology. It is on the one hand a synthetic discipline, trying to unify from a central point of view the results of the separate disciplines; and it is on the other hand an analytic and specialized discipline with its own field of research. The specialized subject matter of sociology is the forms of living together of man, the sum of which we call society.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. xiv.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 1.



Having set forth this rather large responsibility as the task of sociology, Mannheim points out that these "forms of living together" can be described and explained along two divergent lines. Hence we have two main sections of sociology: (1) systematic and general sociology; (2) comparative sociology. Systematic and general sociology is so-called because it deals with general forms and tendencies as they may be found in every society. Comparative sociology deals primarily with the historical variations of the same phenomenon, such institutions as marriage, family, law, education, and government.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. Mannheim's Approach to the Sociology of Knowledge

Mannheim was as much aware as anyone that his discipline was in its earliest infancy, theoretically primitive, and yet he had great hopes for what it might accomplish. At one point, for example, he described as the primary objective of sociology "the rational mastery of the universe of human relations."<sup>2</sup> He saw in it the possibility

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, edited and translated by Ernest Mannheim and Paul Kecskemeti (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), p. 19.

of overcoming the "vague, ill-considered, and sterile form of relativism with regard to scientific knowledge which is increasingly prevalent today."<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he declared: "Our task, therefore, is not to engage in prophecies, but to find a clue to the systematic study of the fundamental social factors in their bearing on culture."<sup>2</sup>

According to Mannheim, the task of the sociology of knowledge is to be defined by two major aspects. It is on the one hand a theory, and as such seeks "to analyze the relationship between knowledge and existence." On the other hand it is "historical-sociological research," a method for tracing the various forms which this relationship has taken in the development of human thought.<sup>3</sup> Both of these discussions provide the background to Mannheim's claims for the epistemological consequences of the sociology of knowledge.

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, translated by Louis Worth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1940), p. 264.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Mannheim, "The Crisis of Culture in the Era of Mass-Democracies and Autarchies," The Sociological Review, 26(April, 1934), 106.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 264.

i. Wissensoziologie as Theory Concerning the Relationship Between Knowledge and Existence

(1) Distinguished from Theory of Ideology

Mannheim distinguishes his approach from the theory of ideology and its proponents, whose task is seen as the unmasking of more or less conscious deceptions and distortions of human groups and their patterns of thinking. A propos is the query of Hans Speier who asks what has become of truth in this age when it is easier to unmask the ideologist than to state a type of thinking which does not result from some subtle influence. He critically observes: "On being asked what our values are, we are tempted to tell how we got them! Aren't we likely under these conditions to lose the ability to proceed from the extrinsic conditions of ideas to their intrinsic meaning and philosophical significance?"<sup>1</sup> Mannheim is concerned not so much with distortions and deceptions as he is concerned with the varying ways in which objects actually present themselves to various subjects according to the differences in social settings. His main preoccupation is with the problem of how mental structures, thoughts, ideas, etc., are inevitably differently formed in varying social and historical contexts. He thus

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<sup>1</sup>Hans Speier, Review of Ideology and Utopia, by Karl Mannheim, American Journal of Sociology, 43(July, 1937), 155.

makes his alliance at the outset, not with the "professional debunkers" of Merton,<sup>1</sup> whose main preoccupation is with unmasking illusion, deceit, delusion, and falsehoods, but rather with a positive and sympathetic and appreciative understanding of the nature of human perception and the ultimate human quest for truth.

He not only restates and redefines the problem and the meaning of ideology, but utilizes for the most part a new term, "perspective," for the avowed purpose of relieving his terminology of any moral or denunciatory intent.<sup>2</sup> By speaking of the perspective of a thinker, Mannheim refers to the subject's whole pattern of conceiving things.

## (2) The Meaning of "Determination"

In speaking of the existential determination of knowledge, Mannheim insists upon leaving open-ended the meaning of "determination." He does not mean a mechanical cause-effect sequence. "We leave the meaning of 'determination' open," Mannheim states, "and only empirical investigation will show us how strict is the correlation between life-situation and thought-process, or what scope exists

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<sup>1</sup>Merton, op. cit., p. 220.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 266.

for variations in the correlation."<sup>1</sup> The German phrase "Seinsverbundenes Wissen," he cautions, has a meaning which leaves open the exact nature of the determinism.

Such a determination is to be regarded as a demonstrated fact in those realms of thought in which it can be shown (a) that the process of knowing is influenced by extra-theoretical factors, i.e., by existential factors rather than by an autonomous "inner dialectic," and (b) if these factors can be shown to penetrate into the concrete content of knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

With the growing evidence of weaknesses connected with the a priori assumption of an "immanent intellectual history," independent of the social process, it becomes increasingly evident to Mannheim that

(a) every formulation of a problem is made possible only by a previous actual human experience which involves such a problem; (b) in selection from the multiplicity of data there is involved an act of will on the part of the knower; and (c) forces arising out of living experience are significant in the direction which the treatment of the problem follows.<sup>3</sup>

### (3) Relationism

In short, the results of Mannheim's studies in the sociology of knowledge lead him decisively to the conclusion

<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 268.

that the position of the observer influences the results of thought. This fact leads to one of Mannheim's basic doctrines, that of "relationism." Relationism refers to the fact that thought manifests itself as an instrument of action; as such, it is socially conditioned and its validity is linked to this social perspective. "Relationism," he writes, "does not signify that there are no criteria of rightness and wrongness in a discussion. It does insist, however, that it lies in the nature of certain assertions that they cannot be formulated absolutely, but only in terms of the perspective of a given situation."<sup>1</sup>

#### (4) Particularization

The doctrine of relationism leads to another doctrine, that of "particularization." Having described the relational process, the relational aspect of knowing as conceived by the sociology of knowledge, Mannheim then faces the inevitable question: "What can it tell us about the validity of an assertion that we would not know if we had not been able to relate it to the standpoint of the assertor?" In other words, have we said anything about the truth or falsity of a particular assertion when it has been demonstrably imputed to liberalism or to Marxism or to some

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 283.

other perspective? This question brings the discussion to what is perhaps the most critical issue of all, insofar as the epistemological implications of Wissenssoziologie are concerned. Three answers have been made to this question by various students of the sociology of knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

(a) The first answer, and one which is utilized predominantly by extreme functionalists and ideological analysts, proposes that the absolute validity of an assertion is denied when its structural relationship to a given social situation has been demonstrated. Those who accept this position assume that the demonstration of this sort of relationship is ipso facto refutation of the opponent's assertion. Those who accept this position generally utilize this method as a device for annihilating the validity of all assertions--except perhaps their own.

(b) The second answer is in complete opposition to the first. This view asserts that the imputations that the sociology of knowledge establishes between a statement and its assertor tells us nothing concerning the truth-value of the assertion, since the particular manner in which a statement originates does not affect its validity.<sup>2</sup> That is to say, whether an assertion is liberal or conservative,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 283f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

fanatical or neutral, in and of itself gives no indication of its correctness. This view, in fact, denies any ultimate relevance for the findings of the sociology of knowledge, so far as the problem of validity is concerned, and to this extent sees no implications for epistemological pursuits. Such an attitude as this is expressed by J. W. N. Watkins in his assertion that "the sociologist of knowledge reveals that a skeptical epistemology is the product of rootless, urban intellectuals like Socrates and Descartes, whose faith has been shaken. . . . (These social explanations are sheer bluff)." <sup>1</sup>

(c) In contrast to the two foregoing views, Mannheim suggests a third alternative, a third possible way of judging the validity of an assertion. <sup>2</sup> This view sees all assertions as being made from a given perspective, inasmuch as there is always "a close bond which connects the social process itself with intellectual development and the formation of the mind." <sup>3</sup> The perspective of an observer,

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<sup>1</sup>J. W. N. Watkins, "Massification," Review of Essays on the Sociology of Culture, by Karl Mannheim, Spectator, 197(August 24, 1956), 258.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 284.

<sup>3</sup>Karl Mannheim, "Utopia," Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, ed. Edwin R. A. Seligman, XV(1935), 201.



therefore, must always be considered but a partial and limited perspective. It should be noted that an important consequence of Mannheim's position is that an idea cannot be refuted solely by laying bare its genesis. Once the interests have been uncovered through the efforts of the sociology of knowledge, it still remains to refute it directly, or to affirm its probable or limited validity. The positive contribution of the sociology of knowledge, in this connection, is that every complete and thorough sociological analysis of knowledge delimits, in content as well as structure, the view to be analyzed, enabling one to observe the limitations and specific context of any given perspective.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of validity, in contrast to the two opposing views, lies in an intermediary position, the criteria for which will be discussed in a subsequent section. The point to be made here is simply that Mannheim makes no claim whatsoever that sociology of knowledge will supplant epistemological inquiry, but rather that it has made certain discoveries which have "more than a mere factual relevance," and which have, in fact, "specific implications for the epistemological enterprise, seen from whatever

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 284.

angle."<sup>1</sup> He declares that "the function of the findings of the sociology of knowledge lies somewhere in a fashion hitherto not clearly understood, between irrelevance to the establishment of truth on the one hand, and entire adequacy for determining truth on the other."<sup>2</sup>

## ii. Wissenssoziologie as Historical-Sociological Research

### (1) Historical Reconstruction

A second aspect of the task of sociology of knowledge is concerned with the problems of methodology and the development of techniques for historical-sociological research. Mannheim considers this to be the most urgent and immediate task, to demonstrate its ability to engage in actual empirical research and to work out various criteria for assuring exactness and control over the empirical truths issuing from this historical-sociological research. He believes that there is much to be learned methodologically from the philological disciplines and from the methods used in the history of art, particularly with reference to stylistic correlations of various periods.<sup>3</sup> In these two areas of study the methods of "dating" and "placing" the various artistic, linguistic, literary, and cultural

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 307.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

phenomena are especially advanced and have much to offer to the sociology of knowledge.

(2) Typological Analysis

The basic task of research in the sociology of knowledge is to find a means of determining the various perspectives or viewpoints which gradually emerge in the history of thought, and to observe the process of change and transmission in the social process. This involves the reconstruction of integral modes of thought and perspectives, and the discovery of the underlying unity of outlook for the respective modes. Following this initial step, the reconstructed "ideal types" or modes or perspectives arrived at through the above procedure then become indispensable hypotheses for research, through the comparison of individual concrete cases with these ideal types.<sup>1</sup>

(3) Problem of Imputation

Both of these steps are integral phases of the method of "imputation," which is the main clue to the methodological aspects of the sociology of knowledge, the successful carrying out of which will eventually produce the concrete picture of the development of thought which has actually taken place. "This method," Mannheim asserts,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

"offers the maximum reliability in the reconstruction of intellectual development, since it analyzes into its elements what at first was merely a summary impression of the course of intellectual history, and by reducing this impression to explicit criteria makes possible a reconstruction of reality."<sup>1</sup> This is accomplished chiefly because the sociology of knowledge seeks to single out what were previously "anonymous, unarticulated forces" which are operative in the development of thought.

The controversies concerning the problems of imputation (e.g., the problem of the ambivalent character of "mixed types," and the question of which mode they are to be imputed) are not to be seen as a refutation of the historical-sociological method, but are seen to reinforce his position. Mannheim points out, for example, that when questions arise as to whether the work of certain artists is imputable to the Renaissance or to the Baroque period and style, this controversy by its very nature emphasizes the existence of specific, articulate modes of artistic expression, which themselves are the categories of analysis.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 308.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Mannheim has been criticized for not delimiting specific types of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Thus he has raised problems, it is pointed out, regarding methodologies for dealing with such heterogeneous phenomena. Mannheim was very much aware of the methodological complexities, but was insistent upon maintaining the continuity and comprehensiveness of thought. For him various types of mental activity are continuous and contiguous, and he continually opposed any tendencies to treat the problem in a fragmented manner. The following statement is an expression of this concern:

By constantly taking account of all the various types of knowledge, ranging from earlier intuitive impressions to controlled observation, the sociology of knowledge seeks to obtain systematic comprehension of the relationship between social existence and thought. The whole life of an historical-social group presents itself as an interdependent configuration; thought is only its expression and the interaction between these two aspects of life is the essential element in the configuration, the detailed interconnections of which must be traced if it is to be understood.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Merton, op. cit., p. 496f. for a discussion of this issue.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 309.

## CHAPTER III

### EXPOSITION OF MANNHEIM'S EPISTEMOLOGY

#### 1. Mannheim's Claims for Epistemological Relevance

Mannheim insists that it is possible for one to accept the empirical results of the sociology of knowledge without drawing any epistemological conclusions. He does not say that this is a logical path or a desirable one, but merely that it is possible for one to do this. It simply means that on this assumption all epistemological problems have been avoided or pushed into the background, and this procedure involves a very artificial separation. The evidence presented under the discussion of particularization "scarcely permits an easy intellectual conscience on this matter." The facts of particularization do not remain as mere facts, Mannheim contends, "but transcend bare fact and call for further epistemological reflection."<sup>1</sup>

The empirical observation that the position of the observer influences the results of thought must sooner or

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 286.

later lead one to raise the question as to the significance of this observation for the field of epistemology. It should be emphasized at this point that Mannheim is not "anti-philosophical" or "anti-epistemological," as has sometimes been claimed by Watkins and others.<sup>1</sup> Mannheim approaches this problem as one whose first intellectual love was philosophy, and for whom to the end of his life, the implicit concerns of philosophy held his attention, even though at times he vigorously declaims certain kinds of philosophy.

The claim is not that the sociology of knowledge will replace epistemological inquiry, but rather that it has made some relevant empirical discoveries which cannot be adequately dealt with until there has been a basic revision of some of the current conceptions and prejudices of present-day epistemology. The sociological fact of particularization, which requires that we attribute only partial validity to particular assertions, provides that "new element" which compels the revision of fundamental presuppositions of modern epistemology.<sup>2</sup> "We are thus implicitly called upon," Mannheim insists, "to find an

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<sup>1</sup>Especially critical in this connection are the articles by J. W. N. Watkins, op. cit., pp. 258-59, and Hans Speier, op. cit., p. 155.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 289.

epistemological foundation appropriate to these more varied modes of thought. Moreover we are required to find if possible a theoretical basis under which can be subsumed all the modes of thought which, in the course of history, we have succeeded in establishing."<sup>1</sup>

Along with this claim is an argument for the recognition of reciprocity between epistemology and the special sciences. Mannheim rejects as untenable the claim that epistemology must develop autonomously and independently of the progress of the special sciences. New forms of knowledge, arising out of the social conditions of life, do not have to be first "legitimized" by an epistemology to demonstrate that they are possible. The reverse is actually true, according to Mannheim,<sup>2</sup> since the development of the sciences and their respective theories grow out of the actual working with empirical data, and the fortunes of epistemology reflect the shifts and changes and realignments already necessitated by revolutions in the empirical procedures for getting knowledge.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 290.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 289.



## 2. The "Positive Role" of Wissenssoziologie in Epistemological Issues

Mannheim sees the sociology of knowledge as having a positive role concerning epistemological issues, not merely a negative role as most of his critics have assumed.

Once we realize that although epistemology is the basis of all the empirical sciences, it can only derive its principles from the data supplied by them, and once we realize, further, the extent to which epistemology has hitherto been profoundly influenced by the ideal of the exact sciences, then it is clearly our duty to inquire how the problem will be affected when other sciences are taken into consideration.<sup>1</sup>

Several lines of argument then follow from this observation, and these Mannheim submits as legitimate epistemological implications deriving from the sociology of knowledge.

### i. Inevitability of the "Human Equation"

First, it calls for a "revision of the thesis that the genesis of a proposition is under all circumstances irrelevant to its truth."<sup>2</sup> This, he believes, is a radical challenge to the abrupt and absolute dualism between "validity" and "existence," and between "fact" and "value" which is characteristic respectively of most idealistic and positivistic epistemologies. In these two traditions such a dualism is regarded as impregnable and is, according to Mannheim, "the most immediate obstacle to the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 292.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

unbiased utilization of the findings of the sociology of knowledge." Mannheim's assertion is merely a plea for the recognition that the "human equation" is always present, requiring a new understanding of the knowledge problem. But it is not a weakness of our minds which prevents us from finding the truth: "even a god could not formulate a proposition on historical subjects like  $2 \times 2 = 4$ , for what is intelligible in history can be formulated only with reference to problems and conceptual constructions which themselves arise in the flux of historical experience."<sup>1</sup>

ii. The Need for a New "Thought Model"

Second, the revised epistemology calls for a new model of thought. The old epistemology was built upon the axioms taken over from the quantifiable sciences, and is for the most part an extension of the tendencies characteristic of this limited form of knowledge. What is needed is a thought model which is appropriate to the qualitative sciences. This new model will be, presumably, inclusive of the wide range of types of knowledge (including the quantifiable sciences) which are at the disposal of the epistemologist. The present model, that based upon the quantifiable sciences, is exclusive, in that it is limited

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

only to a select type of knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

### iii. The Activistic Element of Thought

Third, a revised epistemology will take into account the activistic element of thought. The objective is not to attempt to eliminate this activistic, selective character of the process of thought, but rather to become aware of this activistic factor and to raise it into the sphere of the controllable.<sup>2</sup>

### iv. Rejection of "Sphere of Truth" Notion

Fourth, the proposed revised epistemology would discard as its primary tenet the notion of a sphere of truth as such.<sup>3</sup> Mannheim objects that this positing of an "as such" sphere of truth virtually strips humanity of everything vital, corporeal, historical or social, since it is these very elements which current theory attempts to submerge in its effort to deal with the problem of knowing. Mannheim's observation on this matter is very much to the point:

<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, ed. and trans. by Paul Kecskemeti (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 189.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 295.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 297.

It is necessary to raise the question time and again whether we can imagine the concept of knowing without taking account of the whole complex of traits by which man is characterized, and how, without these presuppositions we can even think of the concept of knowing, to say nothing of actually engaging in the act of knowing.<sup>1</sup>

#### v. Relevance of the Perspectivistic Element

Fifth, the revised epistemology will take fully into account the essentially perspectivistic element in certain types of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Thus, in certain types of historical-social knowledge it will be considered not only as quite natural but quite inevitable that a given conclusion should contain the traces of the existential position of the knower. "The problem," according to Mannheim, "lies not in trying to hide these perspectives or in apologizing for them, but in inquiring into the question of how, granted these perspectives, knowledge and objectivity are still possible."<sup>3</sup> He states this affirmative position in still another way:

The problem is not how we might arrive at a non-perspectivistic picture but how, by juxtaposing the various points of view, each perspective may be recognized as such and thereby a new level of objectivity attained. Thus we come to the point where the false ideal of a detached, impersonal point of view must be replaced by the ideal of an essentially human point of view which is within the limits of a human perspective constantly striving to enlarge itself.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 297.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 297.

### 3. Objectivity Redefined

What is here proposed is what might be termed a highly refined subjectivity, freed as far as possible from the illusion of "absolute objectivity," as sensitized as possible to the subjective and human elements which are inherent in it, as internally coherent as human limitations permit it to be. Thus refined, it offers a new orientation toward the meaning of objectivity, newly defined by a humanized epistemology. Mannheim makes it emphatically clear that this solution does not imply renunciation of the postulate of objectivity.<sup>1</sup> It does not deny the possibility of arriving at decisions in factual disputes. It does not involve the acceptance of fictionalism or illusionism. It does not assert that objects are non-existent. It does not conclude that reliance upon observation is useless and futile. And finally:

The result even here is not relativism in the sense of one assertion being as good as another. Relationism, as we use it, states that every assertion can only be relationally formulated. It becomes relativism only when it is linked with the older static ideal of eternal, unperspectivistic truths independent of the subjective experience of the observer, and when it is judged by this alien ideal of absolute truth.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 300.

These claims are not a denial of the importance of epistemology, for Mannheim insists that epistemological presuppositions are basically involved in every scientific pursuit, and he urges that persons in the respective sciences proceed with the business of examining these presuppositions upon which they operate. He makes this interest explicit by asserting that: "To every factual form of knowledge belongs a theoretical foundation."<sup>1</sup> Mannheim is prepared to examine his own theoretical position, and makes a serious effort to hold himself accountable for the epistemological implications for which he has insisted that others be held accountable. This is evident in the proposals which he has made for the new lines of epistemological development. Most significant in this regard are the directions which he has pointed with respect to the problem of "validity," the meaning of "objectivity," and the possibility of a new orientation to the problem.

#### 4. Perspectival Validity

Mannheim's position, it was noted, offered a mediating position with respect to the problem of interpreting the "validity" of a given "perspective." "Perspective,"

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 290.

as here used, signifies the manner in which one views an object, what one perceives in it, and how one construes it in his thinking; it is something more than a merely formal determination of thinking. The problem is now to see how, in terms of Mannheim's conception of knowledge, one may identify the perspective which is valid from the ones which are not valid. What are the criteria to be utilized in this new conception of truth? Mannheim discusses several such criteria.

#### i. Criterion of Unanimity

Insofar as different observers are identified with the same perspective, and utilize the same conceptual and categorial apparatus (as in a highly controlled experiment), they will be able to arrive at similar results and be in a position to eradicate as an error everything which deviates from this unanimity.<sup>1</sup> It is supposed that what will be seen by all observers sharing the same point of view really exists in the thing being observed, and thus is merely a means of suppressing the personal equation and establishing "authentic socially conditioned knowledge."<sup>2</sup> Mannheim assumes that "sharing the same point of view" is possible, within limits, and this is a methodological problem which

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

is not beyond solution.<sup>1</sup>

## ii. Criterion of Perspectival Synthesis

The problem here becomes more difficult, since we now have several views of the same thing emanating from different perspectives. Mannheim attempts to show how we attain a certain objectivity by comparing different perspectives. In such a case, what has been correctly but differently perceived by the different perspectives must be understood in the light of the differences in structure of these varied modes of perception. He maintains that an effort must be made to find a formula for translating the results of one into those of the other and to discover a common denominator for these varying perspectival insights. "Once such a common denominator has been found, it is possible to separate the necessary differences of the varying views from the arbitrarily conceived and mistaken elements, which here too should be considered as errors."<sup>2</sup>

Does this procedure of seeking a common denominator leave one with a residue (i.e., what can be seen from any point of view) or, on the contrary, does it imply the creation of a new, larger perspective which will synthesize the previous ones? Mannheim appears to conceive of an

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 300.



integration of points of view into a dynamic synthesis, an emerging ever-more-comprehensive progressive synthesis. He is not at all clear concerning just how this is to come about.<sup>1</sup> He refers this, presumably, to his dialectical historicism, which might be proposed to resolve the problem.

### iii. Criterion of the Best Perspective

One is still facing the problem of "objectivity" when he is confronted with different perspectives. He must then ask which of the various points of view is the best. For this, too, Mannheim suggests a criterion: "As in the case of the visual perspective, where certain positions have the advantage of revealing the decisive features of the object, so here pre-eminence is given to that perspective which gives evidence of the greatest comprehensiveness and greatest fruitfulness in dealing with empirical materials."<sup>2</sup>

The best point of view will then be that which is the broadest and the most fruitful. He has already defined the broadest perspective as the one which, going beyond oppositions, permits a synthesis. On the other hand, the point of view which is most fruitful is the one which

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 301.

allows the most adequate adjustment of the action to the objective we wish to obtain. According to Mannheim's position, it would appear, moreover, that an idea may be said to be fruitful, or efficient, when it allows either conduct adapted to the situation in which it develops or, on the other hand, when it permits the effective preparation of a future social order. "A theory then is wrong," Mannheim writes, "if, in a given practical situation, it uses concepts and categories which, if taken seriously, would prevent man from adjusting himself at that historical stage."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, lacking unanimity in perspective, that perspective is the best one which, at a given moment of history, gives the possibility for the broadest synthesis, and permits the best adaptation to the situation. At this point again, however, this formulation in terms of making the "best adaptation to the situation" begs the question at hand, which is now: "Best with reference to what objectives?" Mannheim has here thrown open the whole axiological question which is to be dealt with in subsequent sections of this dissertation. Does he, at this point, throw the reader back upon a set of metaphysical presuppositions? This axiological question can only be resolved upon further examination of Mannheim's own sociological

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

perspective and a critical analysis of his social philosophy, to discover what really are his presuppositions with regard to value, and the connection, if any, between these axiological presuppositions and his sociological presuppositions.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF VALUE COMPONENTS IN MANNHEIM'S  
WRITINGS

Introduction

This chapter will present an analysis of the value components in Mannheim's writings. A preliminary word should be said about the semantic problem involved in such an analysis of Mannheim's work, especially as it pertains to the problem of value and to the many substitute terms which Mannheim uses to refer to the value dimensions of human experience. A brief summary of the terms which he uses to designate the value aspects of experience would include the following: value, valuation, aim, goal, goal-direction, attitude, objective, interest, virtues, qualities, cultural aspects, morals, sentiments, proper ends, social codes, conduct patterns, way of life, ideology, utopia. Some of these terms may appear to be rather spurious items to include in such a list, and yet their use by Mannheim in specific contexts reveal that he is referring to the valuational side of experience, and he often uses the above terms interchangeably with the word

value.

In the more detailed analysis that follows, the contextual use of these terms will be evident. The very ambiguity of the terms themselves, and Mannheim's interchangeable use of such terms, constitute a real part of the problem.

The following analysis of categories will attempt to establish as clearly as possible the context of Mannheim's own usage and his intended meanings. The purpose of this analysis is to attempt to extract from Mannheim's sociological system the value components that are evident, and operative, in that system.

### 1. Value--Intrinsic and Instrumental

The instrumental character of value is readily apparent in much of Mannheim's writing. In much of his discussion about "the value situation" or "the value-generating situation," value is largely identified with goal-seeking activity.

Mannheim at one point distinguishes what he claims to be "the philosophical" and "the sociological" interpretation of values.<sup>1</sup> After asking "What are values?" he then

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, Systematic Sociology (New York: Philosophical Library, 1958), p. 131.

proceeds to explain that "to the idealist philosopher--even to the man in the street--they present themselves as eternal qualities, as gifts or commands from Heaven, as transcendental forces." On the contrary, to the sociologist they are "part and parcel of the social process--functions of the social process." Further he states that to the sociologist values are "neither abstract entities nor intrinsic qualities" of an object.<sup>1</sup> In short, one cannot meaningfully talk about values at all apart from a valuing subject.

In Mannheim's basic setting of what he terms the value-generating situation, he sees three factors: organism, situation, and object.<sup>2</sup> The "object," he explains, refers to values, goals, or interests, which he does not basically differentiate. The organism is necessary to give real meaning to the idea of value. The situation provides the necessary context for action, within which the organism makes a particular act of judgment and selection. Mannheim gives a further elaboration of this goal-oriented or interest-directed activity of the individual.

We can start by considering an object of interest from the point of view of its subjective element. Once my interest has focussed on the object, however, the objective relationship between the object and me becomes more and more important. In this broader

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

sense we can speak about interest in cultural objects, like a philosophy. In this case interest means objects which enlist our attention.

From interest, in the sense that I am "interested in" a thing, we must distinguish interest which has the special implication of personal advantage, which we sometimes call self-interest. As an instance of this I may want to get the greatest amount possible in the fields of power, prestige or economic gain. It is principally the wish for advantage which urges me to purposive activities. This means that interest compels me to organise my behaviour to attain this given end of calculation, and in this case we can speak about the second sense of interest mentioned earlier, rational interest. This implies calculation and striving for a given end and is a complex form of adjustment, because calculation implies choosing the means which lead most effectively to that end in the shortest way with the greatest economy of effort. "It implies a positive control over the sources necessary to carry purposes into effect and possession of the means to satisfy desires and the trained powers of mind and particularly of initiative and reflection required for free preference and for circumspect and farseeing desires."<sup>1</sup>

In this rather definitive statement by Mannheim, he has set the problem very clearly in terms of a means-ends situation. He has further suggested a differentiation of the means-value and the end-value. There is not only the question of determining the ends to be sought, but there is, simultaneously, the question of determining the proper means of achieving those ends.

The value of the means is determined by the nature of the ends, which require a certain kind of organized

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 37. Mannheim's quoted source is not identified.

of the term intrinsic in that instance was equated with independent, that is, independent of a valuing subject. This he firmly rejects. He does however, use the word intrinsic on other occasions to refer to the goals and values which individuals or groups are seeking to fulfill. He refers, for example, to certain cultural patterns which are "intrinsically good," or to certain attitudes as "intrinsically worth while." He speaks of "doctrinal disputes and fights for intrinsic values."<sup>1</sup> Again, he sees the task of modern education to be the cultivation of types which "have the capacity to sublimate, to strive for intrinsic values."<sup>2</sup> He thus uses the word intrinsic as identifying a certain value category, without at all implying any independence of such intrinsic value from a valuing subject. Hence, it seems appropriate to use his word to designate the category of ends, goals, interests which appear in the value-situation, not as independent of any valuing subject, but also as not necessarily externally related to other values or other objects of valuation. In short, there are goods and there are goods for achieving those goods. Intrinsic values appear to refer generally to

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1954), p. 67.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 203.



actual qualities of experience, in contrast to normative values, which will be discussed later.

Is there further evidence that Mannheim involves in his thinking, consciously or not, implicitly or otherwise, the category of intrinsic values? He speaks of "cultural products as they are given in immediacy."<sup>1</sup> Also, in the same paragraph he refers to cultural products "as they present themselves when we grasp them adequately as value objects in the immediate, unreflected approach to the value in question." Then he continues by discussing the structure of the "cultural product taken in immediacy," and outlines the characteristic features of this "immediately given structure."<sup>2</sup> He appears to be saying that such cultural products, such "value objects," (literary, aesthetic, technological, or otherwise) present themselves as immediate, unreflected value to a valuing subject, i.e., the valuer prizes them for their own sake.

Is there an intuitive theory operating here? Is this compatible with an earlier-quoted statement that values are "part and parcel of the social process--

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

functions of the social process"?<sup>1</sup> Does Mannheim mean that values are exclusively functions of the social process, totally dependent upon and varying with the social process? Or can they be both?

The problem of the relation between his intrinsic and instrumental values is reflected most clearly in an illustration which Mannheim uses in an introductory study of value, in a chapter called "The Philosophical and Sociological Interpretation of Values." The illustration is intended to demonstrate his approach to the understanding of value, as contrasted with the theological and philosophical approach "which appeals to the thought habits of men accustomed to act under authority."<sup>2</sup>

Let us take a very simple concrete situation in which valuation occurs. I wish to drive a nail into a piece of wood and I therefore look at everything in terms of its "hammer value"--that is to say, measure its capacity to meet the special situation. I try out different objects; some of them are effective and become active factors in the context of my life. In this case, as in other cases, there is no abstract value, but certain things become valuable in the context of a certain activity, through performing a desired function. As a matter of fact the "hammer value" corresponds to an emotionalization of certain functions which become important in our lives. That is to say, the value is not inherent in any object or activity as such, but each may become valuable if it becomes necessary and therefore emphasized in the context of life.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

It is important to note that in the context of this discussion, no attention whatever is paid to the purpose for which the nail was to be driven into the wood. What is the end, the goal, the structure prized for its own sake, for which "hammer value" or instrumental value is sought? The most significant clue to his understanding of the value situation, in this instance, is the conclusion which he draws above, viz., that "the value is not inherent in any object or activity as such, but each may become valuable if it becomes necessary and therefore emphasized in the context of life."

It would be a mistake to infer too much from a single such illustration, but this example is submitted as basically representative of Mannheim's areas of emphasis and of de-emphasis. Basically, he tends much of the time toward a predominantly instrumentalist approach. Meanwhile, as in the above illustration, the intrinsic value (of house, or whatever the nail and hammer were intended for) is only implicit.

Moreover, because Mannheim feels convinced that sociology is the discipline which can analyze the "hammer value," the instrumental values of society, he concludes that this discipline should thus become the rightful custodian of the values of society.

What will really happen will be that the theological and philosophical obligation will be replaced by a sociological one. The theological and to a large extent the philosophical justification of values appeals to the thought habits of men accustomed to act under authority, whilst the sociological approach appeals to the democratically educated man because the social obligation can be reasonably tested. Another advantage of the sociological concept is that it both explains the obligation and opens the door to reforms, whereas the old absolute conception rendered reform slower.<sup>1</sup>

Immediately the questions arise: "Social obligation" to what? and, "Reasonably tested" against what?

Mannheim has a somewhat unsteady confidence in just what achievements sociology is capable of producing. In contrast to the above-quoted confidence in the sociological justification of values, he mentions in another place the difficulty which his sociological historicism does encounter in determining the proper goals or ends of human beings.

Now we do not want to deny that historicism does encounter difficulties--and they arise precisely at this point. For while we can see the meaning, the goal-directedness of the overall development in so far as closed periods are concerned, we cannot see such a goal-meaning for our own period. Since the future is always a secret, we can only make conjectures about the total pattern of meaning of which our present is a part; . . .<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 172.

What then is to determine these goals or end-values? Mannheim seems on the one hand to be saying that they are mere conjectures. On the other hand, he seems to be declaring that sociology can somehow provide a "sociological justification."

Mannheim has set forth, in numerous discussions of value and the value-generating situation, both the instrumental and intrinsic character of value. He appears at times to be a thoroughgoing functionalist or instrumentalist, somewhat indifferent to the existence of intrinsic values. At other times, he seems to give attention to both the instrumental and intrinsic values of human experience. Basically, he appears to recognize an organic connection between the two.

Human nature as a whole will always be determined by the structure and nature of the goal which man sets himself to attain, since out of this goal comes the thread which links together the whole chain of his conduct.<sup>1</sup>

Man's goals, and the thread of conduct which constitutes the means orienting the individual toward those goals, are organically related. These are the intrinsic and instrumental values of his system. Mannheim is generally very conscious of the polarities of existence, and he recognizes that instrumental values are inconceivable apart

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 258.

from some intrinsic goods or ultimate values toward which they are aimed at producing or achieving. Contrariwise, he is very conscious of the fact that intrinsic values, sheer goals, apart from any actualizing process, are meaningless abstractions. This is evident in his rather forthright reaction against certain abstract idealistic systems, which, as noted earlier, he tends to equate with all philosophy.

In assessing the instrumentalist character of Mannheim's thought, and his frequent tendency to rely heavily upon a functionalist approach, there are nonetheless occasional remonstrances against functionalism and pragmatism. Here Mannheim passes his own critical judgment upon the limitations and the dangers of functionalism.

The Romantics and their contemporary disciples were defending the unsophisticated immediateness of human experience, the desire to accept things simply as they presented themselves. People and things exist in their own right and not simply as functions of other entities. Their very existence is a fulfillment of their inner nature. The only proper way to treat them is to approach them directly and not by roundabout routes, as a function of something else. In the same way, spiritual experiences, whether moral or religious, once revered as transcendent realities, are in the modern approach deprived of their true nature when they are conceived as artefacts. The functional approach no longer regards ideas and moral standards as absolute values, but as products of the social process, which can if necessary be changed by scientific guidance combined with political practice.

This Romanticist criticism is undoubtedly a profound one, and will still preserve its value in the future. Its task is to remind us continually of the

limitation of the functional approach and of the danger of its becoming universal. The functional approach is only one of the many the human mind has created, and the world would be the poorer if it were to replace our more genuine ways of approaching reality.<sup>1</sup>

As conscious as Mannheim was of the limits and dangers of universalizing the functional approach, the question remains as to why he then proceeded to universalize it himself, thus subsuming at times the domains of philosophy, theology, and other specialized disciplines, and replacing what he called "our more genuine ways of approaching reality" with a sociological approach.

Nevertheless, the inquiry into the intrinsic and instrumental character of value has thus far given no indication of how intrinsic values, or goals, are to be selected, judged, or identified. What has been suggested by Mannheim on occasion is a self-revealing immediacy of such values. Alongside of this, there is his assertion of a sociological justification, but thus far no indication by him as to how this justification is to occur.

## 2. Value--Inclusive and Exclusive

Mannheim gives considerable attention to what may be termed the inclusive and exclusive character of value.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 241.

Again, as in the discussion of instrumental and intrinsic character of value, Mannheim's thought ranges widely across the whole field of cultural products (intellectual, religious, aesthetic, and technological). The terms inclusive and exclusive are not here being set over against intrinsic and instrumental values, as if it were an either/or situation. The point is not to suggest that values are either one or the other, but rather that all are, in one way or another, varying dimensions of the value experience.

The term inclusive is here used to suggest values that encompass other values, as a whole encompasses its parts, and as shared experience of values encompasses the experience of more than one person. Hence, inclusive refers not to any supreme set of values in an absolute sense, but rather to varying levels of comprehensiveness, as varying wholes may be parts of larger wholes. Exclusive values, on the other hand, refer to the particularistic character of value. Such values are limited to a particular person, or serve a partial or particular end, or are embodied in and experienced by a particular and limited group. In the sense here indicated, these terms refer to an important aspect of Mannheim's understanding of the value situation.



For example, in discussing the values of democratization, Mannheim points out that the vertical relationships involved in a stratified society may produce an inclusiveness on certain limited levels. The social values of a given professional group, such as doctors, provide a cohesive element and sustain the life of that particular group, i.e., they are inclusive of that professional group. However, they are simultaneously exclusive and particularistic, in that they do not encompass other social groups, other persons in society. Democratization, on the contrary, involves the value of the person-to-person relationship--a horizontal rather than a vertical relationship--and as such involves value experiences which transcend (i.e., they are inclusive of) the vertical relationships and the limited inclusiveness that was involved in that stratification. "The real opportunity that democratization gives us," he writes, "consists in being able to transcend all social categories and experience love as a purely personal and existential matter."<sup>1</sup>

Elsewhere, in a discussion of the value of competition and cooperation, he points out that competition has its own range of inclusiveness, in producing certain

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 243.

positive structural tensions in certain types of social settings. But, on the other hand, competition also is "a force which compels people to act against one another," i.e., to seek values which are exclusive and particularistic.<sup>1</sup> Cooperation, Mannheim believes, is essentially inclusive, encompassing and embracing other values, such as "like-mindedness, sympathy, mutual helpfulness," which are "important integrating forces."<sup>2</sup> But all of these in turn, Mannheim acknowledges, have a more ultimate value referent, a "common external purpose" which can guide persons to a more complete integration.<sup>3</sup>

The valuational side of experience is often expressed by Mannheim in terms of general social forces and processes "which either bring people together (these are the integrating forces) or urge them to act against one another."<sup>4</sup> But these should not be taken to mean that inclusive values are to be strictly equated with "good" and that exclusive values are to be equated with "evil." He recognizes that certain levels of inclusiveness may involve simultaneously both positive and negative elements.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 103.

Speaking of the fascist countries, he acknowledges not only their "brutal methods" and "primitive impulses," but also points out that "in one respect the Fascist countries are superior to the liberal states."

The crisis through which they are passing has compelled them to make some attempt to solve the psychological problems of modern mass society, particularly unemployment . . . [Fascism] does at least try, however brutal its methods, to remove the psychological effects of permanent unemployment.<sup>1</sup>

He cites the instance of the German authorities who succeeded in abolishing the hatred of Poland "for as long as they wished in a very short space of time" as an example of the "positive value" of German fascism.<sup>2</sup> He comments also upon the values of a particularistic cultural heritage, and the unifying positive values which may accompany the level of inclusiveness manifested by fascist society.

As regards the modern movements of mass ecstasy, an entirely negative policy towards them would be futile. It is unlikely that there should be no positive values compatible with such unifying emotions on a large scale. They represent a kind of shared experience, and the proper question to ask is whether their spiritualization instead of sheer emotionalization would be feasible. After all, a Cathedral Mass is also a spiritualized collective ecstatic experience. The problem, therefore, is rather to find new forms of spiritualization than completely to deny the potentialities inherent

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 260.

in the new forms of group existence.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Mannheim does not equate exclusiveness or inclusiveness with negative or positive value, as such, but seeks rather to find the kinds of inclusiveness and the kinds of particularism which are ultimately compatible. What is desired is the "emancipated individual." Such a person is one who can discriminate between and among the various levels of inclusiveness and the different kinds of particularistic values, and move toward a more "comprehensive integration of the world."

We may call a person "emancipated" who does not think in terms of "my country--right or wrong," who is not a chauvinist expecting his parish church to be the most magnificent in the world. He achieves emancipation by partial uprooting, by selecting for personal identification only certain traditions and values of his community. [Italics mine.] In so doing he does not shut out the character-forming influences of community participation, nor does he sacrifice his right to independent thought and personal development. He is emancipated because he is always ready to move toward a more comprehensive integration of the world but he does so without turning cosmopolitan by denouncing his solidarity with his nation. The emancipated person shares the fate of his country but his vision reaches beyond the sacro-egoismo of modern nationalism. An increasing number of emancipated citizens in all camps can help to bring about an integrated world for all.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 161.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 63.

Further aspects of these levels of inclusiveness and types of particularistic values, are discussed by Mannheim in regard to the values of asceticism,<sup>1</sup> democratization and commercialism,<sup>2</sup> laissez-faire and social disorganization,<sup>3</sup> social coordination and conformity,<sup>4</sup> limited valuational perspectives,<sup>5</sup> pacifist virtues and militarist virtues,<sup>6</sup> BBC programming and class stratification.<sup>7</sup> In each of these instances the problem of inclusiveness (or shared values), and exclusiveness (or particularistic values), is a significant part of Mannheim's discussion, even though set within varying frameworks of discussion.

This discussion of the inclusive and exclusive character of value is not intended to imply any kind of

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 264.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, pp. 262-263.

<sup>5</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 152.

<sup>6</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 355.

<sup>7</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 45.

static character in the value of experience. On the contrary, this entire discussion has to be seen against the background of what Mannheim refers to as a "dynamic social ontology," with its constant flux and change of human experience. This aspect of change will be more fully elaborated in a succeeding section, but it is important to note at this point the relationship of inclusiveness and exclusiveness to this flux and change of human experience. It is this multi-faceted character of value, inclusive and exclusive, with positive and negative implications, which constitutes the core of tension and conflict which is at the heart of human value experience, and of which Mannheim is very much aware.

He notes the "disturbances in the process of valuation" caused by "the contacts between formerly separated value areas."<sup>1</sup> Various political forms and varying social patterns, representing cultural values, "arise in the dynamic unfolding of conflicting forces."<sup>2</sup> He insists that we can no longer view democracy as "the sum-total of ideal aspirations contrasting with an imperfect reality," but rather as a dynamic struggle between competing values, the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 171.

advanced form of which is a "constantly renewed attempt at synthesis of all the existing perspectives aiming at a dynamic reconciliation."<sup>1</sup>

Competition, like struggle, is a universal category of life--in biology we speak about a struggle for life--and it is a general category of social life. Many people believe that competition is a purely economic phenomenon mainly represented by barter. But nothing could be more wrong than this limitation of the meaning of the word. The principle of competition is equally at work when any kind of race takes place, the common end being for each of several competitors to try to reach the the goal first. But there is also competition when two different scientific schools attempt to solve the same problem, or if two men wish to marry the same woman. It is important to see that these different things all belong together because competition is at work in all these fields.<sup>2</sup>

Competition, then, is seen by Mannheim to be a major facet of the basic dimension of conflict in the social matrix within which human valuation occurs. Value conflicts also occur between the varying norms established by groups and institutions within society, producing a valuational schizophrenia within the members of that society.

The Church, for instance, preaches that it is wrong to kill; the State, that to do so may sometimes be a man's highest duty. The family teaches the idea of brotherly love, whereas society presents the same individual with situations to which egotism, if not hatred, is the only adequate response. Indeed,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 76.

it is not wholly wrong to speak of our times as a "neurotic age," neurosis being its characteristic illness, provoked by a series of institutionalized conflicts.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Mannheim's conception of value appears to be anything but a static view, but rather one of conflict, competition, integral cooperation, struggle for survival, within the context of a constantly changing social reality.

Having acknowledged these aspects of tension within the human value experience, Mannheim also insists that these forces cannot of themselves resolve the conflict that has resulted. Society organized in a hierarchical manner, based upon inequality, rooted in perpetual conflict of interests, and aiming at conflicting goals, "cannot last long, because these inequalities will create so great a tension in society that it will be impossible to establish even that minimum of tacit consent which is the conditio sine qua non of the functioning of a system."<sup>2</sup> Such tension, indefinitely perpetuated and perennially unresolved, leads to chaos, loss of meaning, and a moral or valuational

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, ed. by Paul Kecskemeti (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 259.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 364.



sickness of the individual and the entire social organism.

In seeking for a solution to this problem of "displacement and disturbance in our value systems," Mannheim suggests that "synthesis" and "integration" and "dynamic reconciliation" are possible, and that these are the desirable alternatives. These valuational processes each presuppose the goals of "unity," "wholeness," and "harmony," which are, in fact, Mannheim's valuational presuppositions in this entire discussion.

As he seeks to set forth the problem of conflicting values and their reconciliation, it is evident that Mannheim has his own order for the hierarchy of values. He introduces certain ultimate values, upon which hinge his hierarchy of values and his judgment in ordering the "cultural products" of society, and toward which point the processes of "synthesis," "integration," and "dynamic reconciliation."

Communists and Fascists also plan society, but they destroy the values of Western civilization and abolish Freedom, Democracy and respect for Personality. In contrast to this solution, the democratic form of planning will do everything to make planning compatible with these values.<sup>1</sup>

It is important, he points out, that as many keen minds as possible be brought together, in order that their

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 144.

perspectives be brought into a synthesis and their "isolated activities correlated through an integrating vision of the pattern as a whole." Even so, it is his values (his assumed "ultimates" of freedom, democracy, personality, unity, harmony, wholeness) which inform his proposed method for arriving at a truly integrated vision. Elsewhere, he writes that nothing can be saved from the "wreckage of liberalism" except "its values, among others, the belief in a free personality." "Thus the old ideal of freedom can only be attained by the technique of planning for freedom."<sup>1</sup> These values are Mannheim's own ultimately inclusive values, and the basic starting points of his social theory. But, being inclusive, they are also particularistic. Being universal in their inclusiveness, they thus pertain to every person in a specific and particularistic way. "Democracy as a political institution," Mannheim writes, "is a projection on to the organizational plane of the principle of brotherhood, everyone being equal at least in political rights and opportunities."<sup>2</sup> The broader the base of inclusiveness, the more universal are the possibilities of particularistic values.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 364.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 151.

Mannheim suggests that the awareness of different levels of inclusive and exclusive values can help lead to the rational mastery of these values, through a sustained and articulate attempt to bring "synthesis," "integration," and "value reconciliation." Again, he sets forth a large task for sociology in asserting that "political sociology in this sense must be conscious of its function as the fullest possible synthesis of the tendencies of an epoch."<sup>1</sup> Further, it is the task of sociology "to teach what alone is teachable, namely, structural relationships; the judgments themselves cannot be taught but we can interpret them."<sup>2</sup>

He urges a greater emphasis upon "the appreciation of those fundamental values which ultimately integrate groups, and on those fundamental values which are the products of the historical life of the community, and on new ideals which aim at the just reconstruction of society."<sup>3</sup> But what are the difficulties if varying groups disagree about which "fundamental values" are the genuine

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 357.

legacy of the historical life of the community? What is to resolve the problem of synthesis and integration when certain groups do not begin with the axiomatic values of freedom, democracy, and personality? Mannheim notes that the authoritarian personality which strongly emphasizes the exclusive and dogmatic values of status and role "could never embark upon the venture of integrating various groups," that is, seek ever-more-inclusive values. There is finally, in Mannheim's assumptions, a voluntaristic requirement for the resolution of the value conflict arising out of the multi-leveled value experiences.

Only a society that deliberately sets out to create personalities who feel sufficiently secure to take the risk of losing themselves will be capable of regeneration in the process of socialization. The dynamic idea of socialization is therefore not based exclusively on strict conformity and rote, as was the case in tribal societies, but on a continuous search for an emergent new truth in the dynamic process of co-operation for the common good.<sup>1</sup> [Italics mine.]

### 3. Value--Permanence and Change

Mannheim recognizes an organic unity between the factors of change and permanence, as these factors reveal themselves in the goals and values of human life, and in

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 245.

the social, political, economic, and cultural processes which constitute human history. "The substance of history--whether we call it life or reality--does not occur intermittently but as an unbroken stream of actions."<sup>1</sup> This is true, Mannheim states, whether we are talking about revolutions inspired by utopian values, or scientific discoveries aimed at the solution of given problems, or legislative acts oriented toward social goals, or literary events, or any human "activities which provide for food, shelter, health, education, safety, the maintenance of order, and so forth."<sup>2</sup> Continuity of life is possible only through an articulation of these value-laden "permanent functions." History is not merely a record of events, not merely a listing of discrete happenings, but "the narrating of events in the particular context of continuing functions," thus making the account of change continuous.<sup>3</sup>

The farther we get away from the world of rigid "things," the closer we get to the actual historical substratum of psychic and intellectual reality, the more we shall doubt the validity of such ostensibly supra-temporal attempts at splitting up reality which concentrate all change on one side and all permanence on the other.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 92.

Mannheim protests against any tendency towards a "disembodied notion of history" which "bedevilled the 'dialectics' of the post-Hegelian reflections on history."<sup>1</sup> While he agrees that the "evolving mind is the spark and substance of history," he is not willing to speak of the "dialectics of history per se, without any thought of what it is that moves or evolves in the stated antithetical forms."<sup>2</sup>

History is then not a substantive, but an attribute of an evolving collectivity; it is not only a record of change, but also an account of that which changes. History conceived without its social medium is like motion perceived without that which is moving.<sup>3</sup>

Speaking specifically of values, Mannheim points out that by "stability" he does not mean uneventfulness or mere personal security of individuals, but rather the "relative fixity of the existing total social structure, which guarantees the stability of the dominant values and ideas."<sup>4</sup>

Values which stabilize or conserve the social structure are not necessarily positive or negative; they may be either, or both. Such values are positive insofar as they preserve the ongoingness of life and the maintenance of

<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>4</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 85.

identity and continuity, in persons and in social groups. Most of the values embodied in custom and law, and representing certain norms of social life, function in such a manner, providing cohesion and stability. They provide the basis for personal valuations, and in varying degrees the source of authority for such valuations.<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim points out that the positive values of a given tradition can only be fully realized when one both lives in it and at the same time is sufficiently distant from it to see those elements of the past that are relevant to the present, as well as those which are not relevant. "It may be well worth heeding a tradition, not for the sake of its venerable character, but because it stems from past situations which may arise again."<sup>2</sup>

Speaking again of the positive role of traditional values, he notes that in stable social groups the actions and behavior of the members are shaped by definite group traditions, inhibitions and ethical standards, which are a prerequisite for tolerable human life.

Nobody can expect a human being to live in complete uncertainty and with unlimited choice. Neither the human body nor the human mind can bear endless

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 82.

variety. There must be a sphere where basic conformity and continuity prevail.<sup>1</sup>

Sheer change, and the rapid expansion of culture leading to an inadequate assimilation of its meanings and its values, destroys rather than enhances the rich possibilities for human life. "Both Mass Democracy and Totalitarianism show that this really happens; that democratization of culture will benefit mankind only if the quality of culture is preserved."<sup>2</sup>

In addition to these positive aspects of conservatism and traditional values, there are also negative aspects. They may become obstacles to change. In the face of new goals, and the seeking of solutions to problems, these stabilizing values may thus offer resistance to change. These seeming "permanences" in the social and cultural fabric may become incongruous with the action required for achieving new values.

The moral interpretation of one's own action is invalid, when, through the force of traditional modes of thought and conception of life, it does not allow for the accommodation of action and thought to a new and changed situation and in the end actually obscures and prevents this adjustment and transformation of man.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 95.



Mannheim's entire study of "ideology" constitutes a massive array of evidence concerning the negative value of "ideology." While he claims that the word "ideology" is essentially "non-valuational," his study of ideologies reveals that a particular ideology can degenerate to the point where its function "is to conceal the actual meaning of conduct rather than to reveal it."<sup>1</sup> It is to this extent negative, because it blindly perpetuates an outmoded and antiquated system of values, and inhibits the coming of "newer and more genuine values."<sup>2</sup>

Just as the stabilizing and seemingly permanent values of experience may be positive or negative, so also there are both positive and negative aspects to change. While ideology is seen to be a maintenance social function, utopia is seen by Mannheim to be functionally related to change.

For in human mentality it is not always the same forces, substances, or images which can take on a utopian function, i.e. the function of bursting the bonds of the existing order. We will see in what follows that the utopian element in our consciousness is subject to changes in content and form. The situation that exists at any given moment is constantly being shattered by different situationally transcendent factors.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 206.

Utopian values and utopian elements thus have a positive role to play in the transformation of social life, and in the movement toward greater justice. But these same utopian elements, if combined with revolutionary strategy rather than reform, become negative and destructive of the very values they are trying to achieve. "If a new system starts with the destruction of the older leading groups in society, it destroys all the traditional values of European culture as well."<sup>1</sup> Revolution also brings with it discontinuity and disruption between successive elites, in whom is embodied the pervading cultural values and norms. Such discontinuity, resulting from rapid change, obstructs the flow of values and ruptures the value systems which provide coherence and unity to a given culture.<sup>2</sup>

Given these various aspects of permanence and change in the social process, how is one to understand the dynamics of change? Where is the real locus of change, and who or what is responsible for the transformation of values, attitudes, goal-orientations, and intentions? Mannheim observes that the dynamics of change may in

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 84.

certain instances "take an antithetic course and invert a given trend."<sup>1</sup> But he believes that change through opposites is by no means a universal feature of history, and he claims that the Marxist view of the inevitable process of structural inversions is not at all adequate. "The thesis that capitalism is the dialectical opposite of feudalism is as questionable as the corresponding prognosis that the trend of capitalism points towards its antithesis."<sup>2</sup> Mannheim is willing to accept the hypothesis of the class struggle, not as a dogmatic necessity, but as a tendency, in order to be better able to understand the great upheavals and structural changes in society. But, he insists upon looking for a more comprehensive hypothesis, and an "elastic way of thinking which is always ready to adapt the hypothesis to the new realities."<sup>3</sup>

Mannheim's basic approach to an understanding of social transformation and valuational changes is to be found in his study of "The Problem of Generations."<sup>4</sup> The clue to the historical character of thought processes and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 146.

<sup>4</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, pp. 276-320.

valuation, Mannheim claims, is "evidenced not only by the individual consciousness, as it appears from within, phenomenologically as it were, but also by the fact that men cogitate as members of groups and not as solitary beings."<sup>1</sup> The thought of individuals is "historically relevant," he claims, only to the extent that the groups to which they belong continue through time. Differing values occur in different social strata, although there is a common field of "germinal" values in which all strata may share. Different social strata produce variations in values insofar as they are positionally situated in the social process and are able to "project new directions of intentionality," to envision new goals, and to seek new resolve of the "vital tension which accompanies all life." They are not "manufactured," they are "produced" as new generations emerge within the evolutionary unfolding of the life processes, and as "developing social reality introduces something incalculable, creatively new into the intellectual process."<sup>2</sup>

How much of the "creatively new" which Mannheim refers to is dependent upon the individual, and how much

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 188.

upon the social process? He has already acknowledged that it is both. But in discussing novelty as it appears in the evolution of a new "generation style," he declares that such novelty "depends entirely on the trigger action of the social and cultural process," perhaps operating predominantly "through the agency of the economic or of one or the other 'ideological' spheres."<sup>1</sup> Change and novelty thus appear to be characteristic primarily of successively emerging generations, observed as trends or currents of goal-actualization within the social process.

Genuine entelechies are primarily displayed by the social and intellectual trends or currents of which we spoke above. Each of these trends or currents (which may well be explained in terms of the social structure) evolves certain basic attitudes which exist over and above the change of generations as enduring (though nevertheless constantly changing) formative principles underlying social and historical development. Successively emerging new generations, then, superimpose their own generation entelechies upon the more comprehensive stable entelechies of the various polar trends; this is how entelechies of the liberal, conservative, or socialist trends come to be transformed from generation to generation.<sup>2</sup>

Change is thus seen to be of a more microscopic nature, rather than a cataclysmic series of cultural or valuational ruptures, or isolated disturbances. Even in so-called revolutionary periods "the old and the new are

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 310.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 314.

blended."<sup>1</sup> Change is not to be thought of in terms of absolute synthesis, but rather one must see the constructive values and emerging goals even in "trivial microscopic processes."<sup>2</sup>

It is not clear just how open-ended this process of social transformation is, so far as Mannheim is concerned, or, on the other hand, to what extent the social forces and historical processes are beyond the control of individual persons. He asserts on the one hand that "a democratizing trend is our predestined fate," in politics as well as in intellectual and cultural life as a whole. "Whether we like it or not," he writes, "the trend is irreversible, and hence it is the supreme duty of the political thinker to explore its potentialities and implications."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, he argues for the "re-education of the whole man" toward a "conscious appreciation of values that appeal to reason."<sup>2</sup>

In a society where the value controls were traffic lights directly appealing either to conditioned responses or to the emotions and the unconscious mind, one could bring about social action without strengthening the intellectual powers of the ego. But in a society in which the main changes are to

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p. 171 <sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture,

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, P. 23.

be brought about through collective deliberation, and in which re-valuations should be based upon intellectual insight and consent, a completely new system of education would be necessary, one which would focus its main energies on the development of our intellectual powers and bring about a frame of mind which can bear the burden of scepticism and which does not panic when many of the thought habits are doomed to vanish.<sup>1</sup> [*Italics mine.*]

Here Mannheim has introduced the principle of rational control. "Collective deliberation," as well as "intellectual insight and consent" presuppose the principle of rational coherence as the condition which makes these possible. While the general drift of the social processes may be in the direction of an "irreversible" and predestined "democratizing trend," techniques of control based upon rational values are the clue to determining the continuing directions in which the modern society can develop.<sup>2</sup> Mannheim cannot mean "irreversible" in an absolute sense, otherwise his insistence upon rational value controls over the social process are meaningless. Basically, he is confident of human rationality and its capacity to guide the social processes toward the goals it has set for itself. But both value systems and social techniques are necessary for rationally guided social change. In discussing, for example, the problem of reorganizing the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

institutions surrounding the meaning of property, he points out that both values and social technique are necessary.

It is not enough to give a conscious reinterpretation of the value system organized around the idea of property; a complete reform is needed if the original intention, that the value of social justice should prevail, is to be put into practice again.<sup>1</sup>

What is the basis of change in social life? Not just value systems, not just conscious reinterpretation of value systems, not just the norms of social justice, but all of these combined with the will to re-direct, through rationally determined social techniques, the institutions and cultural patterns of society--this is the ultimate basis of social transformation. At the bottom of Mannheim's social theory is a voluntaristic emphasis that ultimately calls for the active penetration of reality by the participating historical subject.

#### 4. Value--Causality and Spontaneity

Mannheim's understanding of the nature of causation and of spontaneity in the social and cultural world begins with the assumption of the possibility of discovering general trends and predictable series of events more

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.



or less analogous to those found in the physical world. But his understanding of this causal relatedness is far different from that involved in traditional mechanistic or behavioristic theories. He is convinced that a hypothetical interpretation of causal relatedness "only serves its proper purpose as long as it is able to order facts in a certain limited field of experience without distorting their inner nature."<sup>1</sup> Theories of causality must not be generalized, he states, even by sociologists, and he points to the Marxian system as an over-extension of the causal hypothesis. Causality, moreover, may have varying aspects within different epochs, and with different variables, economic or otherwise.

In certain epochs the onward course of events, the sequence of cause and effect, may fit in with the scheme, because the mainsprings of the age are technical and economic. But there can be other epochs in which vital changes with powerful repercussions arise in spheres other than that of economic technique, or spring from violent shocks to human consciousness.<sup>2</sup>

Mannheim thus bars the way to a strictly naturalistic or deterministic explanation of human valuations and social phenomena, and he refuses to study man and society as if they were nothing but parts of external nature.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

His basic point of departure is avowedly that of Hegel, namely, "his collectivistic, and potentially sociological, understanding of ideas."

It was Hegel who set the pattern for the structural view, and it was he who sensitized later German sociologists and humanists to the total context of historical things . . . The spurious dichotomy of the immanent evolution versus the social history of ideas was the upshot of a split in the ranks of Hegel's successors. Such a dichotomy was alien to Hegel's thinking.<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim differentiates his meaning of the word causality from a type of genetic, historical, causal explanation. As against this attempted "explanation" of moral and cultural phenomena, he proposes to call his own approach that of "interpretation" (Deutung), the analysis of the inner meaning of events. This inner meaning of events is further to be understood against a larger "frame of reference--that of Weltanschauung."<sup>2</sup> Weltanschauung, as Mannheim uses the term, involves a valuational as well as a contentual or factual character. It is impossible, Mannheim states, to construct a theory of Weltanschauung by explaining one merely as the causal product of the other, but "solely by showing both to be parts of the same

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 80.

totality: by disengaging, step by step, the common documentary import contained in both."<sup>1</sup>

In terms of the specific problem of values and the present disruption of value systems, Mannheim sees a multiple series of social conditions and a complex set of circumstances which lie behind the outward problem, and which must ultimately be understood before the problems in valuation can be resolved. But he is impatient with any attempts which oversimplify the problem or which ignore these complex conditions.

According to the Marxist, you have only to put your economic house in order and the present chaos in valuation will disappear. In my view, no remedy of the chaos is possible without a sound economic order, but this is by no means enough, as there are a great many other social conditions which influence the process of value creation and dissemination, each of which has to be considered on its own merits.<sup>2</sup>

In Mannheim's view, any discussion of spontaneity or novelty or uniqueness in the area of human valuations and goal-orientations must take place against a total background of structural pre-conditions. Whether it be the uniqueness of the individual personality and its value system, or emerging institutional norms, or the moral norms of a community, this newness or uniqueness does not

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 16.

emerge from a vacuum, but is rooted in and conditioned by a complex existential base.

Mannheim states that "the unfolding of reason, the ordering of impulses and the form taken by morality, are by no means an accident, nor do they involve primarily only single individuals and the characteristics they happen to have."<sup>1</sup> These emerging forms of morality and social impulse "depend on the problems set by the existing order of society." Emergence of "new human beings" always occurs within the context of "accumulated cultural possessions," a context which alone makes "fresh selection" possible. This continuous emergence of new individuals and new "generations" is actually what "facilitates re-evaluation of our [cultural] inventory and teaches us both to forget that which is no longer useful and to covet that which has yet to be won."<sup>2</sup>

The category of innovation is as basic to the social ontology of the mind as is tradition and its disruption. How do new things break through the "cake of custom"? The familiar reference to the genius is not sufficient. To repeat, one need not ignore the role of leading individuals to consider the psychology of the pioneer secondary to the sociological question of what situations provoke new collective expectations and individual discoveries.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 294.

The answer is almost implied in the question: innovations arise either from a shift in a collective situation or from a changing relationship between groups or between individuals and their groups. It is such shifts which father new adaptations, new assimilative efforts, and new creations.<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim observes that the "craving for social awareness" and the new norms of social justice which are arising in English society, have not arisen by sheer chance. The fact that persons are questioning the norms of social organization, and are seeking new value orientations in regard to man's social destiny, is "hardly mere curiosity." This awakening of man's consciousness, Mannheim states, is occurring "exactly at a juncture when this transformation is taking place in reality."<sup>2</sup> In short, he sees a conjunction between man's process of re-valuation and the social, political, and economic sub-stratum of human existence. This substratum is not merely a deterministic element, but also a "releasing factor" as well.

In the evolutionary idea, although unfolding still rests upon the inherent growth of personality, environment comes more into its own since it acts at least as a releasing factor. Certain potentialities cannot be realized without certain environmental stimuli.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 262.

Innovations in valuation, value systems, goal-orientation take place as part and parcel of the complex phenomena of mental processes, which include the basic sociological categories of "continuity, discontinuance, regression, the stereotyping process," as well as the all-important category of "the historical dynamics of thought." Since these categories are conceived as "interdependent parts of the same social process," Mannheim prefers to speak of "dynamic change" rather than of "mutation."<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim goes yet a step beyond the deterministic and releasing character of these existential pre-conditions. While cultural values, morality, art, religion, and so forth, are shaped in part by social relations and the structural conditions of existence, it seems that these social factors possess a "creative energy" of their own. They are, in fact, more than mere structural conditions, passively influencing human life, but have an actualizing power of their own.

Perhaps it would also be fruitful to ask ourselves whether society in fact can produce nothing more than "influences" and "relationships," or whether, on the contrary, social factors also possess a certain creative energy, a formative power, a social entelechy of their own. Is it not perhaps possible that this energy, arising from the interplay

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 85.

of social forces constitutes the link between the other entelechies of art, style, generation, etc., which would otherwise only accidentally cross paths or come together?<sup>1</sup>

With this view of Mannheim's dynamic social ontology, where is the basis of individuality? Spontaneity and individuality are by no means to be equated. Spontaneity exists at all levels of existence, individual and social as well as the varying levels of the existential substrata. An understanding of individuality, Mannheim states, cannot be had simply by the method of "generalizing abstraction," by merely "juxtaposing different types" to arrive at a "set of general repeatedly encountered properties." Having done all this, one "has still not penetrated to the most essential core, to the unique individuality."<sup>2</sup>

If, however, one has experienced the fundamental feeling--a feeling first made articulate by romantic thought--that contained in every psych~~ic~~-intellectual-historical phenomenon there is something absolutely unique, a creative principle whereby the historical individual is more than a peculiar combination of general properties, then one may risk the paradoxical undertaking of reducing this very uniqueness to a theory. This could hardly be achieved by using a generalizing typology (since such a theory considers on principle nothing but the general); hence the only remaining possibility consists in accounting for the temporal uniqueness of the phenomenon from its own position within a historical sequence.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Mannheim attempts, in this way, to bring "the whole depth of the problems of dialectic" into view, and to apprehend the uniqueness of "dynamic totalities" from within. These dynamic totalities may be comprehended as parts of a total "historical movement toward a spontaneously evolved concrete value irradiating the body of history concerned, toward a meaningful goal."<sup>1</sup> The individual, the historical subject, can reflect upon the meaning of his position within the total temporal sequence, can (within limits) differentiate himself from that process, and can finally, become a specific and unique spark of that "spontaneously evolved concrete value" irradiating the historical process.<sup>2</sup>

In short, Mannheim states that human beings and their values and meanings, are both determinate and self-determining. To be self-caused means also to be involved in a complex system of determinate causal sequences. Mannheim's dynamic ontology posits levels of creativity and spontaneity not only at the individual and the social-historical, but at all levels of the substrata underlying human existence. Individuality involves a dimension different from other objects in nature, namely motivation. That is to say, human beings are self-caused, hence, able to reflect upon and to participate in a spontaneously

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



evolving "concrete value" immanent in the historical process.

Certain problems are raised at this point, however, in regard to the questions of human freedom and responsibility. What specific factors delimit the range of discretion or choice? For example, if value is ultimately rooted in action (that is, in participation in the social process) and is contingent upon the social-historical context, how does the individual determine the relevant context for his own goal-actions or values? What levels of consciousness are available to the individual historical subject, in exercising his creativity and freedom? When Mannheim occasionally introduces an illustration of causal relatedness with the oft-repeated phrase "It is never an accident that . . ." how firm or how open-ended does he intend this causal connection to be?<sup>1</sup> This phrase illustrates the sort of ambiguity that is typical of Mannheim's discussions on causal relations. He apparently tries to resolve the question by simply declaring that "at one moment man has the upper hand, and at another human understanding bows to the actual social situation."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For examples of this usage, see Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, especially the discussions on page 248 and page 127.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 151.

## 5. Value--Egoism and Communitarianism

While the preceding categories were of a broader and more general nature, dealing with the widest possible context of human value experience, the present polar categories of egoism and communitarianism provide a transition to a more specific locus of the value experience in terms of the personal and inter-personal conditions involved. The term egoism is not used in any narrow psychologically sectarian sense, but only to identify the pole of self-reference, self-consciousness, self-interest, the locus of individuation. Communitarianism, similarly, refers to the pole of sociality, group-centeredness, inter-personal involvement.

Mannheim clearly sets forth a theory of organic interdependence. Self-consciousness of persons includes judgments and valuations which have both a self-reference and a reference to other persons. A self-centered person is one who is "less able to see things and relations from someone else's viewpoint." By "socialization," on the other hand, Mannheim understands a process of the "expansion of the self" in which values and judgments are made with reference to other selves.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 73.

Actually, Mannheim's point of departure is even more fundamental than this. His view of the personal and interpersonal is rooted in the thought of Buber and Hegel. His point of departure is Buber's "I-Thou" as the fundamental reality behind the more outward social phenomena, and underlying the actual processes of individuation.<sup>1</sup> Experience of "community" and of "persons" is increasingly stifled by social development, and because of their scarcity and our dread of their disappearance, we tend to romanticize them and embellish their memory. Our very "ideological beatification" of such experiences indicates a "certain loss of reality."<sup>2</sup>

To be a "person" is to be related to other persons at this deep level, according to Mannheim, and what Hegel's Geist implies is that the role of the person is structured by a collective framework in which individual goals, values, and actions take on meaning.<sup>3</sup>

Our previous insistence that the individual is the primary locus of reality need not make us forget the fact that human relations, however complex, are also

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 68.

real. (To be sure, the group does not absorb the individual and the person does not completely assimilate and reflect his society, but there are common areas in which the actions of the individual become socially and historically relevant and, conversely, group structures become the primary<sup>1</sup> determinants of the actions of single persons.)

What is important, Mannheim believes, both in Hegel and in his own sociological approach, is that it puts an end to the "fiction of the detachment of the individual from the group," this interpersonalism providing the matrix within which the individual person thinks, and acts, and values.<sup>2</sup> This organically interdependent view of persons and community Mannheim sometimes refers to as "democratic personalism."<sup>3</sup> This ideal of democratic personalism always involves a dual direction, whether it is applied to educational efforts or to any other facets of human life and social organization. It fosters both socialization and individualization. Socialization should never proceed so far as to stifle individualization, and individualization should never proceed to the point of producing social chaos and anarchy.<sup>4</sup> "There must arise a general sense of

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 244.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

interdependence--of the interdependence which binds the single experience to the stream of single individuals and these in turn to the fabric of the wider community of experience and activity."<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim, like Marx and Hegel before him, was very much concerned with the problem of alienation. He proposes that in his approach, i.e., in his analysis of the cognitive and valuational processes, a "new sort of life-orientation is at work, seeking to stay the alienation and disorganization which arose out of the exaggeration of the individualistic and mechanistic attitude."<sup>2</sup> In the historical legacy of economic liberalism, massive competing units confound the individual and in the midst of the bewildering complexity of institutional structures "the individual no longer sees his way to meaningful contributions to the common end."<sup>3</sup> In the midst of chaos and disintegration of behavior, both flight from responsibility and deep doubt of former values prevail. Whole groups of persons within society may find themselves cast-offs from

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 177.

that society, either because they are too old, or too young, or too middle aged. Young persons may find themselves emancipated from family life, but without finding an alternate role of responsibility within the pattern of society. Social mobility and massive economic dislocations may be causes for whole groups "dropping out of the social structure."<sup>1</sup> All of these forces of disintegration and alienation can only be combatted by the practical application of the ideal of democratic personalism to specific problems in social organization, restoring persons once again to the social fabric and reintegrating them in an organic manner. Democratization is the only basis on which persons are no longer compelled to meet other persons solely in their role, either as social superior or inferior, but can in fact "establish pure existential contact" with them as human beings. "This form of relationship between the 'I' and the 'thou' can become a general pattern only on the basis of democratization."<sup>2</sup>

Mannheim refuses to treat the issue as one between the "great personality" and the "mass," but develops a viewpoint which seeks from the beginning to interpret

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 242.

individual valuations and goal-seeking activity in all spheres within the context of group experience.<sup>1</sup> The process of valuation is not simply the free-wheeling motivation of the outstanding individual, nor is it merely the leveled-out mass of humanity. The process of valuation is to be seen as a "coherent system of social and psychological activities," among which are value creation, value dissemination, value reconciliation, value standardization, and value assimilation.<sup>2</sup> There are definite social conditions which favor or upset the smooth working of these processes.

For the individual life-history is only a component in a series of mutually intertwined life-histories which have their common theme in this upheaval; the particular new motivation of a single individual is a part of a motivational complex in which many persons participate in various ways.<sup>3</sup>

Conscious acknowledgment of this mutuality and solidarity provides the basis of community, and the common life and common values are "crystallized and elaborated into an ethical code," remolding and reshaping the values and attitudes of various persons who come within the range of

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, pp. 27-28.

this social grouping.<sup>1</sup> No society can be built, Mannheim contends, without some substratum of conformity. "Individualization is only sound where it reflects differentiations or variations from a communal norm and is not built on air."<sup>2</sup> Only through such a communitarian understanding of society, Mannheim believes, can men once again discover values which eluded them in an age of unlimited competition: "values of identification with other members of the community, values of collective responsibility and its consequent impositions . . . personal refinements of attitude."<sup>3</sup>

Far removed from my intention is any deliberate provocation to propaganda. The desideratum in my view is a reasoned planning in the direction of social techniques, so clearly a necessity of the time, and further that these techniques should be in terms of the human sciences incorporating all the most enlightened values in our age.<sup>4</sup>

Once again Mannheim raises the problem of how these "most enlightened values in our age" are to be known, and by what manner they are to be judged. They certainly

<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Mannheim, "Recent Trends in the Building of Society," Human Affairs (London: The Macmillan Co., 1937), p. 298.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 299.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 300.



are differently judged, depending upon whether one is a member of communist, capitalist, or socialist society, or of varying religious background and orientation, or depending upon any of numerous patterns of social differentiation. Mannheim is certainly aware of these varying patterns of perspectival differentiation, as he appears to be aware of the problem of judgment in human valuations. He speaks of the "riddle of changing human valuations," and proposes eight hypotheses which he believes will help to solve this "riddle."<sup>1</sup>

The first hypothesis is that valuations are originally set by groups, i.e., "the real carrier of standards is not the individual, but the group of which he happens to be the exponent." Second, the valuational standards of varying groups reflect to a large extent their respective social structures; e.g., the values of a warrior group as different from the values of agriculturalists, etc. Third, valuation is not an isolated psychological act, but is inherently social and serves an integrating function in the life of the group. Fourth, conflicting valuations occur when groups are "co-ordinated or super-imposed" on one another, posing "counter-values" set up

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 236.

against one another; e.g., when values of the warrior caste are set against the tribal rules of conformity. Fifth, social differentiation and stratification involve different value systems, which either become separated and insulated, or else clash or mix, "depending on the nature of the social integration." Sixth, in static societies value systems become fixed by elites, who then subjugate other strata of society and the values they represent. Seventh, in dynamic societies differentiated groups in society can challenge the values and prestige of the dominant elite. Eighth, the value-generating function is not confined to social groups only, but to broader "social forces and social processes which determine and change the group-forms themselves."<sup>1</sup>

The above hypotheses are helpful in interpreting the dynamics of changing valuations, in demonstrating that valuations do undergo certain shifts under certain kinds of circumstance. These hypotheses point out the basis of conflict as a function of differentiated social groups and their respective value systems. They do offer a functional analysis of society as it is, and as it may be observed sociologically. They do not offer an answer to the question of what are "the most enlightened values in our age."

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 236-68.

They do not suggest any clue to the nature of the "ought-claim" or criterion of judgment, a fundamental factor which is presupposed by every one of these hypotheses. If the valuational norms are "originally set by groups," as Mannheim points out, what legitimizes these norms in the first place, and what criteria of judgment can be offered to distinguish the genuine from the spurious? If the "individual is the primary locus of reality," what role does the individual have in the process of "value creation, value dissemination, value reconciliation, value standardization, and value assimilation"? These questions all remain, even with due acknowledgment of the hypotheses which Mannheim puts forth to help "solve the riddle of changing human valuations."

## 6. Value and Personality

Whereas the preceding category established Mannheim's view of the reciprocity of valuational processes between the poles of self and community, the present category will indicate more specifically the nature of individual consciousness, and the role of value in differentiating and individuating personality. If the individual is the "primary locus of reality," as Mannheim states, what role does the individual have in the creation of new values, the reconciliation

of conflicting values, and the judgment or standardization of values?

Mannheim approaches this question with reference to certain observations about the nature of the cultural process. New participants in that process continually emerge, as former participants continually disappear. Any such participant can engage in but a limited segment of that historical-cultural process, but is nevertheless a bearer and transmitter of the accumulated cultural heritage which links generation to generation in a continuous process.<sup>1</sup> Basic to every new participant in that process is the fundamental question of identity.

Different as man in various ages may be, he posits similar questions about himself: he wants to know how to think of himself in order to act. Some conception of the world and the self, unspoken though it may be, accompanies every move we make. The question, Who are we?, has always been asked, but it is always through the medium of different objects that such questions are faced.<sup>2</sup>

Again, Mannheim insists that a man can become a "person" for himself only to the extent that he is a "person" for others and others are "persons" for him.<sup>3</sup> "In the light of this approach," Mannheim points out,

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 244.

"no one is either too humble or too poor for his soul not to have had its own experiences and triumphs which are even more important than great empires."<sup>1</sup> Self-valuation is, for Mannheim, the starting point of individuation. The collapse of medieval civilization took with it a meaningful frame of reference, a center to which one could relate experiences and a meaningful destiny for the soul of the individual person. A new ultimate source of values had to be discovered, and this new source of values was the concept of an "internal life and internal life history."<sup>2</sup> All differentiated values and goals and meanings of this "internal life history" are built upon the fundamental experience of self-worth and self-esteem, the experience of valuing one's self as a "person."<sup>3</sup>

Self-consciousness arises, not from mere self-contemplation, but through the individual's struggles with the world, in actual confrontation with real problems.<sup>4</sup> The "impulse to act" makes the objects of the world accessible to the emerging consciousness of the acting subject.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 292.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 293.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 297.

<sup>4</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 169.

In this confrontation of the person with the world, goals are set and must be approached "through a concatenation of intervening ends." In this differentiation and diversification of goals, and selectivity of values, the individual is continually involved in a "multipolar situation."<sup>1</sup> He is involved in an economic role, a familial role, and any number of other social and institutional roles, each representing certain complexes of value. In a relatively simple society, the process of individuation and selectivity of values is less complicated, for individuation is derived from fewer roles. In a complex society, the multiplicity of roles may tend toward a conflict of competing roles.<sup>2</sup> Within this context, individuation of personality is "that kind of organization of the mind, specific to each individual, by which, through his mutual interaction with the environment, he develops a pattern of inner organization which is unique in itself."<sup>3</sup> By "environment" Mannheim means not only external factors, and social and economic organization, but also the highly

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 278.

important symbolic environment of language, meaning, norms, beliefs, and values.

Individuated personality arises as the individual person appropriates and internalizes the meanings and values and goals of the groups with which he interacts, thus creating a dynamic pattern which is both unique in its total configuration, and yet is a bearer of a "basic inventory of group life" whose values and norms are rooted in the social process.<sup>1</sup> The process of growing self-consciousness and self-valuation includes the responsibility for accepting, refusing, or integrating, these values and goals of the groups with which he interacts.<sup>2</sup>

Values, for Mannheim, constitute the basis of identity and the basis of personality; conflict of values, likewise, constitutes the basis of disintegration and loss of identity. The individual person is oriented to the world through a dynamic structure of values, and a rupturing or dislocation of this basic value structure results in disorientation of the individual.

Although we may know a great deal about the conditions under which conflicts arise, we may still know nothing

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 304.

about the inner situation of living human beings, and how, when their values are shattered, they lose their bearings and strive again to find themselves. Just as the most exact theory of cause and function does not answer the question as to who I actually am, what I actually am, or what it means to be a human being, so there can never arise out of it that interpretation of one's self and the world demanded by even the simplest action based on some evaluative decision.<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim also makes frequent mention of the necessity for "privacy" and "inwardness," by which he understands the desire of a person to "withdraw certain inner experiences from the control of the outer world and to claim them for himself."<sup>2</sup> Privacy and inwardness, he contends, are the strongest factors in individuation and growth of an independent personality. "It is in this realm of seclusion and partial isolation that our experiences gain in depth and that we become spiritually different from our fellow-men."<sup>3</sup> The right to introversion and privacy is, moreover, one of the strongest guarantees of a reorganization of society, provided the spheres of internalization are not completely cut off from the social order.<sup>4</sup> England, he notes, is a country in which the

<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 299.



"cult of privacy" was most fully developed, solitude being a virtue that was rooted in the Protestant principle of immediate relationship between man and God.<sup>1</sup> Speaking specifically of values, Mannheim defines privacy as the "withdrawal of a set of values from public control."<sup>2</sup> This withdrawal enables the "inner core of the secluded self" to differentiate itself and frequently to "set itself against the public norm and the stereotypes" which operate in society. Privacy has a productive significance for culture only if it represents a partial and not absolute withdrawal of values. Being one of the primary factors of individualization, privacy must thus be guaranteed by the conditions of social organization. Collectivism in extreme forms denies, or at least thwarts, this need for privacy. Rationally organized society, on the other hand, seeing the profound value of privacy, can and should structure society so that spheres of privacy are not only possible, but are nurtured as the basis of a creative and stable community of persons.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 298.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 63.

Anxiety, a mass phenomenon in contemporary man, results from the fact that man embodies within himself and his value system the most heterogeneous and contradictory influences. To this is added the fact that there is no technique for mediation between these antagonistic valuations, nor is there time for real assimilation.<sup>1</sup> Basic necessary processes of value assimilation and selection are overrun by social mechanisms and impersonal social forces. Man finds himself living in a "shapeless society," forced to choose between various patterns of action and valuations without proper sanction.<sup>2</sup> The result is anxiety, occurring not merely on the level of his outward behavior but at the deepest levels of the self, in the "inward revaluation of himself."<sup>3</sup> In short, alienation at the social pole equals anxiety at the personal pole.

In his basic understanding of the process of individuation, Mannheim distinguishes four different aspects. First, individuation begins with self-valuation, which proceeds through a process of new and changing attitudes

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 309.

of self-regard, or self-valuation. Second, individuation involves differentiation, the distinguishing of one's self from other selves, or internalization. Third, individuation proceeds through goal-determination and acceptance or rejection of social patterns and group value-orientations. Fourth, it involves what Mannheim refers to as a "deepening into ourselves, that is a kind of introversion, which implies receiving into our experience of ourselves and sublimating the individualising forces around and within us."<sup>1</sup>

Self-valuation, i.e., perceiving one's self as an "I" and experiencing one's self as "value," is fundamental to these further processes of individuation and differentiation. Anxiety, resulting from the shattering of varying levels of self-valuation, and the internalization of antagonistic values, is the basic problem of modern man. It is the business of a responsible and intentional community to help "manage" values, by providing the conditions within which persons can participate in the process of value creation, value dissemination, value reconciliation, and value assimilation.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 66.

## 7. Value and the Ought

Having examined Mannheim's basic conception of personality and individuation, it is necessary to deal in a more specific way with how he understands the nature of the ought-claim in human experience. He objects that Kant's formalistic ethics, which is historically "nothing more than an elaboration of the Protestant idea that conscience is the essential thing in action," places an exclusive emphasis upon intention and corresponds only to a social order in which it is hardly possible to foresee the concrete patterns of right action.<sup>1</sup> This sort of idealism tends to make of conscience a purely personal affair. For Mannheim, the development of conscience is not exclusively a personal matter, but is "bound up with a continual give-and-take, a joining with others for the purpose of common discovery of fresh fields of activity for which new norms must be found by common effort."<sup>2</sup>

Consistent with his general view of personality, the conscience of the individual has its roots in the continually emerging conscience of the community. He

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 214.

acknowledges that his views in this regard are very similar to those of T. H. Green, that the "terminus a quo forms a common experience, and the terminus ad quem, the aim at which we tend to arrive, is also embedded in a common field of expectations and possibilities."<sup>1</sup> A changing community cannot satisfy the requirements of its ongoingness by a set of inflexible commands, but rather by a continual search for new norms which can express these changing experiences. Persons involved in that changing experience likewise must shape the content of conscience in a new and relevant way.

For Mannheim, the educated conscience is more than super-ego or ego-ideal, although both of these dimensions of personality are important parts of the total picture. Mannheim's view seeks the creation of a conscience in which "the system of principles which will be considered as the roles of conduct, the hierarchy of values by which we want to be guided, is subject to our conscious criticism."<sup>2</sup> The need for an ego-ideal is a part of this, with its value-patterns to serve as a model or goal of personality. The super-ego, far from being merely an inhibitive

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 275.

force preventing a-social behavior, is a constructive power that is capable of creating a whole system of values in elaboration of the ego-ideal. Conscience, in Mannheim's terms, embraces both of these, and functions to attain "an individual responsible ego which is both able to discern good from bad, healthy from unhealthy influences, and to revise the values of its environment, and gradually to transform its behaviour appropriately."<sup>1</sup>

The future presents itself to us, Mannheim notes, only in the form of possibility, as it comes into conjunction with the now, the present moment in which we must choose. It is the imperative of the "ought" that tells us which of the possibilities we should choose, and what directionality should be given to momentary acts and decisions. Knowledge of that future is not possible in any absolute sense, for it appears in experience as a more or less "impenetrable medium."<sup>2</sup> At this point, man needs a moral imperative, a utopia, to drive him onward and to give him a meaningful relationship to history, guided by goals, values, and purposeful striving. But such a utopia, or complex value structure providing the guidelines of his strivings, must not be unrelated to the social context in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, pp. 260-61.

which man finds himself. Mannheim proposes what might be termed a functional idealism, as regards the relation between values and social context. Quoting and concurring with S. C. Pepper, Mannheim writes:

Whilst societies co-operate in the service of certain purposes, "those purposes are nothing other than ideals . . . ideals that actually function in morality. But for an ideal to function in morality, it must be more than a mere ideal. There must be co-operation of individuals about it, and that co-operation must be in some degree crystallised into a social structure. It is the action of the social structure that makes the obligation categorial. Until an ideal takes root in a social structure it can claim nothing, but hypothetical obligation . . .<sup>1</sup>

But while the roots of conscience are in the social structure, Mannheim acknowledges that the final arbiter and judge of values is the individualized conscience. He seems to have a somewhat ambivalent view regarding the rationality or irrationality of different values. He contrasts, for example, the religious value of "loving one's neighbor" with the values of "democratic" or "dictatorial" organization. The former is fundamentally irrational, he claims, based simply upon the belief that this is a demand of God. The latter however, the values of democratic versus dictatorial social organization, is a "decision which has to be argued." Even the debate itself may

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, p. 25.

presuppose some irrational value or values, he adds, but this does not preclude the necessity for rational deliberation and the search for conscious control of values.

Even if we agree that finally the preference might rest upon some irrational decision, persuasion has to go through the stage of conscious deliberation, and new techniques of conscious value appreciation are continually in the making.<sup>1</sup>

What Mannheim refers to as the stage of "conscious deliberation" is basically the principle of rational coherence, as the judge and arbiter of value. It should be noted that Mannheim introduces the coherence principle in a somewhat casual manner. He occasionally uses the word "coherence" itself, but more frequently uses such equivalent meanings as "dynamic integration" and "congruity" as a principle of judgment. While the coherence principle is a pervasive element of Mannheim's thought, he rarely singles it out in any calculated way. The coherence principle is frequently implied in his discussions of value and value-judgments. He mentions, for example, that moral and ethical responsibility dawns at the point where one realizes that the world of social relations is no longer "in the lap of fate" but is in some measure capable of being guided and controlled by rational judgment. This rational principle, Mannheim notes in applying

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 22.



it to the ethical principle of responsibility, involves several factors:

Its chief imperatives are, first, that action should not only be in accord with the dictates of conscience, but should take into consideration the possible consequences of the action in so far as they are calculable, and, second, which can be added on the basis of our previous discussion, that conscience itself should be subjected to critical self-examination in order to eliminate all the blindly and compulsively operating factors.<sup>1</sup>

While opening the way for a deliberative, debatable, socially-interactive view of value, where values and decisions are to be "argued" on the open competitive market of ideas, Mannheim nevertheless has in mind a very definite conception of the properly educated conscience. "Our task," he states "is to define the ideal of democratic personality as the educational goal of our society."<sup>2</sup> Further, he declares that "the type of conscience corresponding to the democratic pattern is bound to be the communal one."<sup>3</sup> "Integrative behavior" is the functional ideal that is most relevant to the democratic personality.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 230.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

The problem of politics and social strategy, according to Mannheim, is to "organize human impulses in such a way that they will direct their energy to the right strategic points, and steer the total process of development in the 'desired direction.'"<sup>1</sup> The assumption here is that the sociologist, as sociologist, somehow knows what that "desired direction" is, in contrast to some psychologists and other behavioral scientists who try to conceive of "man in general" on the basis of what man is.<sup>2</sup> Mannheim protests that merely looking at what man is is not adequate for determining what man ought to be. He does not, however, explain how sociology provides the answer to what man ought to be, nor how he, as a sociologist, arrived at the basic value presuppositions which he imposes upon his social theory. The bearing of his value presuppositions upon his sociological theory is certainly consistent with his doctrine of "total ideology," i.e. that every observation is perspectively and valuationally conditioned, including his own. However, the objection at this point is that he leaves the impression that it is sociology which somehow provides him with his value assumptions, thus giving them

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

a sort of scientific sanction.

Perhaps the reason for this ambiguity is the fact that Mannheim continually fuses the role of the social researcher and strategist on the one hand, and the task of theoretical ethics, on the other. These areas of responsibility are virtually indistinguishable in Mannheim's writing. This is but a logical consequence of his claim that sociology would replace philosophy and theology, in providing a justification for any normative values. At one point he almost reaches a distinction between the role of researcher-strategist and axiologist, but does not quite recognize it. He mentions that the sociologist

inherits something of the humility of the religious mind in that [he] does not pretend to act as a creator of these forces, but rather as a strategist, who only watches over the factors at work in society in order to detect the new possibilities which are coming to the surface at the proper moment, and to reinforce them at those points where vital decisions must be made.<sup>1</sup>

But he proceeds to say that the sociologist not only examines the factors at work in society, but determines which goals are possible or desirable, and the means suitable for attaining them. In Mannheim's view, the sociologist not only "charts the way man has come" and examines the present conditions, but plots out the "horizon of expectations"

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

which man may now approach.<sup>1</sup> Value theory is here fused with social theory, and Mannheim thus never feels called upon to give a detailed accounting of his value presuppositions as prolegomenon to his social theory.

In short, for Mannheim healthy society requires healthy and differentiated conscience. Differentiated conscience, while intolerable in a totalitarian society, is a basic ingredient of democratic society. "It is a part of the democratic vision that there should be some people swimming against the current and part of democratic education that there be good swimmers among them."<sup>2</sup>

#### 8. Value and the Meaning of Freedom

Mannheim differentiates his view of freedom from that of nineteenth century conservatism, which regarded freedom as the right of each estate to live according to its privileges, and from the view of the romantic-conservative and Protestant movement which regarded freedom as the right of each individual to live according to his own unique personality. He differentiates it also from the nineteenth century liberal equalitarian conception of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 213.

freedom which maintained that all men have the same fundamental rights at their disposal. He does not deny these equalitarian premises, but rather takes them as his starting point in the development of a socially oriented concept of freedom.<sup>1</sup>

The ethics of the Enlightenment, Mannheim claims, purposely left the inner nature of freedom undefined, with no answer whatever to the simple question "freedom for what?" Freedom was only negatively defined as non-intervention of the state in private affairs, or in terms of maxims which aimed at preventing encroachment on the freedom of others. All the important social dynamics were ignored, and the state or the community evaded responsibility for making important decisions.<sup>2</sup>

Mannheim understands by freedom "not so much freedom of action but the possibility of self-expression."<sup>3</sup> This self-expression involves a "continual give and take of emotion," an emotional harmony founded upon a common experience, the spontaneous discussion of events and meanings and values. He insists that freedom is more than the

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 346.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 371.

deciding of one's own destiny and the disposal of one's own property, but encompasses as well the "influence one is able to exert in determining the aims which are to be realized by collective action."<sup>1</sup> Freedom has meaning only within the context of a matrix of social and historical circumstances, and only if the conditions of social organization are oriented toward the democratically agreed goals and values of the community. But these conditions can prevail only if the community "has a vision of aims to be achieved and a knowledge of the means by which they can be achieved."<sup>2</sup>

Social conditions can be rationally ordered and organized in such a way as to encourage the expression of the active self, or they may be so organized as to thwart or suppress that self-expression. It is this active part of the self, according to Mannheim, which is "the ontological foundation of freedom."<sup>3</sup> The idea of freedom, moreover, presupposes an ontological equality of all human beings. "The point is not that all men are equal as to their qualities, merits, and endowment," Mannheim writes,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 373.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 190.

"but that all embody the same ontological principle of human-ness."<sup>1</sup>

To be free, then, is to be a participant in the community or communities where values, goals, and the "vision of aims to be achieved" are decided. The problem of human freedom is the problem of maintaining the equilibrium between the possibilities of individual choice in a given situation and the necessities of group control which maintain and protect the conditions for the exercise of that free choice. The concrete elements of these many possibilities of choice and social restraint, provide a matrix within which the character of individuals is shaped, and from which emerge the concrete norms and values of a particular cultural group.<sup>2</sup> Forms of freedom can only be formulated in terms of a given society, and the conditions which exist within that particular society. Types of freedom and self-expression which are possible in one society cannot be demanded from or superimposed upon another society, which itself may have other forms of freedom at its command.<sup>3</sup> Freedom to select or choose values, or to

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 369.

discriminate between competing value systems, is inextricably rooted in the social matrix. Moreover, values offered as options to the participants of a given community must be relevant to the social conditions and circumstances of the participants in that community.

What is the use of freedom in teaching and learning to a poor man who has neither the time nor the means to acquire the necessary education? What use is the freedom to choose our own philosophy of life, to form our own opinions, if the sociological mechanisms of our society create insecurity, anxiety, neuroses, which prevent us from making sound and rational decisions?<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim's phrase "planning for freedom" is perhaps the best single clue to understanding his social strategy. This frequently used phrase does, in fact, sum up his whole social theory. Caught between the disintegrating effects of mass society on the one hand, and eager totalitarianisms on the other, a third way will seek to find new ways to consciously "free the genuine and spontaneous social controls"<sup>2</sup> and re-shape values according to the new vision of democratic society.

Planning for freedom does not mean prescribing a definite form which individuality must take, but having both the knowledge and experience to decide what kind of education, what kind of social groups and what kind of situations afford the best chance

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 377.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 25.



of kindling initiative, the desire to form one's own character and decide one's own destiny.<sup>1</sup>

Planning, in Mannheim's view, is not fundamentally a matter of coercion or suppression or restraint. A positive view of planning sees it as a releasing factor and an enabling condition, releasing the creative tendencies in society, and enabling ever wider areas of self-expression. Planning for freedom has a positive value only "if it controls living forces without suppressing them."<sup>2</sup>

Most important of all, Mannheim believes, is that a society which plans for freedom provides for the discovery of new values, which were formerly lost to mankind in an age of unlimited competition. To plan for freedom, i.e., to provide for "citadels of self-determination in a regulated social order," means to open the door to the values of community, of identification with other members of society, of corporate responsibility, and of the shared values of a common experience, as well as many other new levels of value experience.<sup>3</sup> There is, moreover, a calculated risk in this sort of democratic freedom, where all individuals are considered as "vital centres," not merely in abstract principle but in fact. This "vital selfhood"

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 265.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 264.

(Eigenlebigkeit) is not only the creative, vitalizing agent of democracy, but also its greatest potential danger "for the life of a democratic society always skirts chaos owing to the free scope it gives to the vital energies of all individuals."<sup>1</sup>

Freedom thus involves risk, and there is no pre-established divine harmony that guarantees the outcomes. Harmony is possible, not because of any cosmic guarantee, but only through faith in human reason and a coordinated collective will. It is precisely at this point where Mannheim acknowledges some of the difficulties sociology confronts in trying to understand human freedom. Sociology basically seeks to discover regularities of behavior in a particular homogenized field, but attention to these regularities alone leads to a mechanistic view. Whereas, beginning with the individual and his vital selfhood and the semi-autonomous initiative manifested in his actions and choices, Mannheim acknowledges the difficulty of sociology in doing justice to this aspect of human nature. "Each individual is the centre of his own universe and is free in this sense."<sup>2</sup> To this extent the individual is

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

inaccessible to sociological inquiry.

What then can the sociology of knowledge add to an understanding of the problem of human freedom? Is there a positive role that can be taken by sociology? Mannheim admits that there is one question which the sociologist can never answer scientifically, namely: "What are the unique and individual paths which a given person must follow to attain a rational and moral way of life?"<sup>1</sup> Sociology can determine which social structures and which conditions will lead to self-centeredness and irresponsibility, and which social conditions will foster a capacity for responsibility and communitarian values. Sociology can analyze the social process and probe the social determination of ideas and values, not that men may excuse their behavior and absolve themselves of responsibility, but rather that they may refuse to let the anonymous social process make decisions for them, and instead assume the responsibility for a decision for themselves.<sup>2</sup> The sociology of values enlarges man's responsibility rather than contracting it. Mannheim offers, in effect, a new sociological charter of freedom:

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 275.

The fact that the sociology of knowledge gives us a certain foundation does not free us from the responsibility of arriving at decisions. It does, however, enlarge the field of vision within the limits of which decisions must be made. Those who fear that an increased knowledge of the determining factors which enter into the formation of their decisions will threaten their "freedom" may rest in peace. Actually it is the one who is ignorant of the significant determining factors and who acts under the immediate pressure of determinants unknown to him who is least free and most thoroughly predetermined in his conduct. Whenever we become aware of a determinant which has dominated us, we remove it from the realm of unconscious motivation into that of the controllable, calculable, and objectified. Choice and decision are thereby not eliminated; on the contrary, motives which previously dominated us become subject to our domination; we are more and more thrown back upon our true self and, whereas formerly we were the servants of necessity, we now find it possible to unite consciously with forces with which we are in thorough agreement.<sup>1</sup>

What Mannheim seeks is a progressively more rationalized world, in which all the conditions of living come under the sovereignty of rational values. He seeks a world where individuals exercise a maximum amount of freedom, through their ever-increasing awareness of the irrational social factors which had heretofore circumscribed that freedom. To act responsibly in terms of that ever-increasing knowledge and to subject that action to the guidance of rational goals and values, is to exercise freedom. Responsible exercise of freedom must always be within a community of interests and values and aims to be achieved.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, pp. 189-90.

## 9. Value and Religion

In Mannheim's various discussions of religion, certain ambiguities continually present themselves. First, there is the question of whether he regarded religious phenomena as primary experience, or as a sociological derivative from other social phenomena. To what extent did he take a substantive view of religion and to what extent a functional approach? To what extent did he maintain the extreme rationalism of his earlier "German period," when his interest in religious manifestations was limited to the discovery of their relations with the social process? Did he continue to hold his earlier Comptean view that intellectual maturity moves from theology through philosophy to sociology?

For example, in his earlier period Mannheim was concerned to show that the biblical sentence, "The last shall be first," was the psychic expression of the revolt of oppressed strata, pointing up the "significance of resentment in the formation of moral judgments."<sup>1</sup>

In this case, for example, one could say in the case of Christianity, it was resentment which gave the lower strata courage to emancipate themselves, at least psychically, from the domination of an unjust system of values and to set up their own in opposition

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

to it. We do not intend to raise the question here whether with the aid of this psychological-genetic analysis we can decide whether the Christians or the Roman ruling classes were in the right.<sup>1</sup>

From this decidedly functionalist approach of his early years, he shifted gradually toward a more substantive approach to religion and value and the understanding of the self. Particularly in his later discussions of religion, he appears to be more aware of the limits of sociological analysis. His study of religion seems to have led him to new insight into the archaic regions of the human personality, and a new understanding of basic religious experiences that lie beyond the realm of logic and science.

In answer to the question of what can be done to foster a "rebirth in the depths of the soul," Mannheim suggests that the need is to nurture the "archaic potentialities in the mind and society," the basic visions of life which are "intuitive, integrating and directly related to the deepest sources of human experience."<sup>2</sup> These basic experiences, he claims, must be distinguished from the forms of intellectual life which are merely instrumental, analytical, or utilitarian. He does not want his apologia for the non-rational powers of the mind

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 131.

to be misappropriated for the "support of a new medievalism" or to be seen as a discrediting of the rational and critical spirit of modern thought. "The only thing to do," he declares, "is to strengthen the sense of what is genuine in human utterances and to teach the new generation to discriminate between artificial surrogates and the real sources of spiritual regeneration."<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim notes certain basic religious needs of man, some "inalienable features in human nature" which constitute the ontological basis of man's expression of religion, and without the satisfaction of which human life remains in a state of intolerable anxiety. Moreover, he maintains that men will not be satisfied with "scientific" interpretations that fail to answer these basic needs.

In the same way, calm assurance that the highest thing in life is communion with One to whom we can speak and who will respond with unfailing understanding and forgiveness is so deeply ingrained that despondency would reign if this religious belief were lost. Only through satisfaction of these deep-rooted aspirations (that there is a Purpose in what we are doing, and that there is a Personal Power to whom man can appeal) can man develop the sense of belonging in a world where he can find his place and where there is an order that supports him and dispels his anxieties.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 289.

At this deepest level of the human psyche, the very core of mental activity exists in the form of "paradigmatic experiences."

"Paradigmatic experiences" in our context will mean those decisive, basic experiences which are felt to reveal the meaning of life as a whole. Their pattern is so deeply impressed upon our mind that they provide a mould into which further experiences flow. Thus once formed they lend shape to later experiences.<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim illustrates what he means by pointing directly to Jakob Burkhardt's idea of "primordial images" and Carl Jung's meaning of "archetypes."<sup>2</sup> He rather casually equates his views with both of those men. However, Mannheim does not argue the question of whether biological inheritance or the collective unconscious best accounts for the presence of these prototypes of experience, but insists that the sheer fact of their presence in the history of our cultural development and the social function they fulfill are the important considerations. What is most important, he points out, is the "unfilled gap" and the psychic disturbance which is caused when these images or prototypes disappear.<sup>3</sup>

Mannheim acknowledges that mere observation of the functional or adjustment character of action does not

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



describe it fully. More basic than the adjustment patterns is the Weltanschauung, which is selective with reference to alternative types of adjustment, accepting some and rejecting others. But beyond the Weltanschauung lies something even more basic, which provides the criterion of its selection and which to the given Weltanschauung "reveals the meaning of life in general."<sup>1</sup> Here is the answer, Mannheim claims, to the problem of the relation between morality and religion. "The religious focus is not a moral or ethical experience, nor a way of regulating behaviour and conduct, but a way of interpreting life from the centre of some paradigmatic experience."<sup>2</sup> These foci of experience may be The Hero, Prometheus, Virgo of Greek religion, or, in Christian experience, the suffering Job, sovereign love upon the Cross, the act of Redemption. One's behavior and conduct are always reinterpreted from these foci of experience, when these basic images are kept alive in human experience. But, Mannheim notes that in "secularized European history" these basic visions of life have evaporated, and with their passing have gone the basic criteria of value, for all that is left are the empty criteria of adjustment and efficiency. "Right and wrong only means efficiency, and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

there is no answer to the question: Efficiency for What?"<sup>1</sup>

In Mannheim's view of the paradigmatic experience, he seems to be suggesting this as the ultimate referent of the individual's system of values, the ultimate justification and point of reference for an order of value-claims upon his behavior and conduct. But what gives authenticity or legitimacy to these basic archetypal visions of life? Mannheim states that there are "some basic experiences which carry more weight than others, and which are unforgettable in comparison with others that are merely passing sensations."<sup>2</sup> He offers no further elaboration or explanation as to why some basic visions lay heavy claim upon the individual and others do not. The claim itself appears to be the basic fact with which Mannheim is concerned, and it is its own justification, empirically evident but beyond logical explanation, a given of the ontological structure of mind, though not functionally isolated from the processes of the mind.

These paradigmata, these basic visions of life's meaning, become the foundations for developing levels of value consciousness, as well as the concrete integrating principle of a world-view. The basic vision which claims the person becomes the criterion of acceptance or

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

rejection of certain social, political, and economic patterns of organization. The paradigmata are inherently value orientations. As fundamental interpretations of the meaning of life, they communicate some ultimate value or values, from which may be derived an entire hierarchy of values which are relevant to the various levels and the various spheres of human experience. They must, in fact, be translated into these various levels of existence, or they will be irrelevant.

For Mannheim, the content of religious experience is no static thing, but rather he insists that "a transmutation of the religious substance is continually at work."<sup>1</sup> By this he means that religion in some phases exists on the level of "purely personal experience," as in the mystics; sometimes it "flows into the mould of fellowship," and at other times it "permeates the whole pattern of social organization." In still other phases it may crystallize into habits of thought, or be expressed in "petrified ritual practices."<sup>2</sup>

The paradigmata of religious experience must be translated into the idioms of modern society. He points out how Dostoevsky translated archaic religious experiences and the ancient conflicts of the religious mind, into

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

contemporary situations. Dostoevsky's art, Mannheim contends, is a "marriage of genuine archaic, religious substance and modern forms of interpretation."<sup>1</sup>

It is not contradictory to be moved by an ancient vision as the basic experience of life and to understand the needs and potentialities of a new situation. The first gives direction to all action--the latter makes for presentness and prevents us from becoming absentees from the historical process.<sup>2</sup>

This kind of integration, between the controlling vision of life and the contemporaneity of values, is a necessity, Mannheim contends, if modern man is not to lapse into barbarism or to "'progress' into a despiritualized realm of mere analysis and sophistication."<sup>3</sup> Here is where Mannheim calls upon theory to provide something positive and fruitful in this integrative task of religion. Theory, he maintains, can achieve something besides merely "chilling the authentic experience with the cold blast of reflection."<sup>4</sup> Theory, in the ethical, aesthetic, and religious realm, can provide for a "re-patterning of the original [paradigmatic] experience, by which light is thrown upon it from an entirely new side."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>4</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 40.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

Theory, then, interprets and re-interprets the original paradigmata in terms of the contemporary situation. The "Truths" of the paradigmatic experiences are given only as direction and not as rigid prescript, Mannheim suggests. It is this directionality or implicit value orientation, which presumably indicates their normative character. Mannheim mentions specifically two characteristics of a normative value; first, it leaves great scope for adaptation, and second, it "prevents man from getting lost in the endless possibilities of changing his behaviour."<sup>1</sup> It is not exactly clear whether he regards the paradigmata themselves as norms, or whether the norms are derived from them. At times he seems to regard the paradigmatic experiences themselves as norms, and at other times these appear to be experiential symbols from which the directional or normative values are inferred, or systematically educed. There is evidence that the latter view is more likely what he had in mind, as he discusses the task of religion and its functions of interpretation and integration.

The integrative task of religion has several dimensions to it, according to Mannheim. First, it must set forth guidelines for values, as well as general moral

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 118.

principles which stem from the basic paradigmatic vision of life. Further, these must be elaborated into a set of concrete patterns of behavior, and an "image of satisfactory social institutions" which embody the above-mentioned moral principles. Finally, the development of a world-view which embodies and embraces the above values and patterns of behavior must be elaborated. These are to be offered not as "dictatorial rules set down by a minority" but as the "fruits of creative imagination put at the disposal of those who crave for a consistent way of life."<sup>1</sup>

What he seems to be suggesting, in effect, is the translation of a set of "ultimate values" into a system of middle axioms or directional norms. It is impossible to know precisely, for he neither gives an unequivocal definition of value nor an elaborate definition of what he means by norm. Regarding a norm, he only suggests that it offer scope for adaptation, and directionality for life. The following illustration will help to demonstrate Mannheim's view of the directional values or norms which are derived from the ultimate values of the paradigmata of Christian experience. Both directionality and scope for adaptation are evident.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

It is possible to love your neighbour whom you know personally, but it is an impossible demand to love people of a wider area whom you do not even know. . . . It is the paradox of Christianity that it tried to apply the virtues of a society based upon neighbourly relationships to the world at large. . . . The solution to the paradox is that the commandment "Love your neighbour" should not be taken literally but should be translated according to the conditions of a great society. This consists in setting up institutions embodying some abstract principle which corresponds to the primary virtue of sympathy and brotherliness. The equal political rights of citizens in a democracy are abstract equivalents of the concrete primary virtues of sympathy and brotherliness.<sup>1</sup>

In the above illustration the norms derived from the basic vision of Christian faith would be meaningless and functionless, if they were not translated into the idiom of the new situation. It is the method of translation which makes the value system function once more and which determines the relevance or irrelevance of the religious vision.

It is apparent that Mannheim moved considerably away from his earlier rationalistic and functionalistic view of religion and toward a more substantive view, or at least toward a mixture of these two ways of understanding religious phenomena. From his earlier view of religion as a secondary phenomenon, he eventually assigned to religion the task of an ultimate integration of all human activities.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

He concluded that in religion, freed from authoritarianism and superstition, was to be found the authentic vision of life and the exemplary patterns of human conduct. The paradigmatic experiences of religion, archetypal symbols of the meaning of life, are seen to be the ultimate reference points for a system of values, which are derived from that basic meaning. To the extent that these derived values provide scope for adjustment, and directionality for life orientation, they may be said to be normative. Hence, normative values must be both contextually related, as to their adjustment potential for relevant changes in the modern environment, as well as related to the whole meaning of life and to the ultimate values of the paradigmatic vision.



## CHAPTER V

### CRITIQUE OF MANNHEIM'S AXIOLOGICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS

#### 1. Fact and Value

In the statement of the problem of the dissertation, one of the crucial questions was that of the relationship between Mannheim's epistemological claims and his axiological presuppositions. The question of this relationship implies a number of other questions. How does Mannheim conceive of "knowing"? What is the relation between "fact" and "value"? How does Mannheim distinguish the two terms? Do "facts" and "values" have a common ontological source, or do they arise from different sources?

On the basis of the foregoing exposition of Mannheim's epistemological claims (Chapter III) and the analysis of the value components of his system (Chapter IV), it would appear that he conceives of "facts" and "values" as dual aspects of the experience of "knowing." They are distinguishable but inseparable dimensions of the knowing process. That is to say, they are distinguishable as

aspects of human experience, but are inseparably mixed together within the content of experience itself.

This distinction is not unequivocally stated by Mannheim himself, but is a logical consequence of his discussion of the valuational processes and the cognitive processes. Most of the time these appear to refer to one and the same thing, namely, a basic life process in which the individual evolves a knowledge of the world in which he lives; i.e., life in a community of persons within the context of which he derives a Weltanschauung, a system of values, and a basic inventory of "factual" and "valuational" knowledge. To "know" is to perceive both a "factual" content and a "valuational" content in the object of knowledge. It appears to make no difference to Mannheim what the object of knowledge is, whether theoretical, aesthetic, historical, scientific, or otherwise, so far as this underlying "evaluational" or "interest-oriented" base of knowledge is concerned. He does, occasionally, exempt mathematics and such similar disciplines from this hypothesis.

Speaking more specifically of knowledge in the social sciences, such knowledge, he maintains, is neither "mechanistically external nor formal," nor even basically quantitative, but rather constitutes "situational diagnoses" which are premised upon the same thought-models as

were "created for activistic purposes in real life."<sup>1</sup>

It is clear, furthermore, that every social science diagnosis is closely connected with the evaluations and unconscious orientations of the observer and that the critical self-clarification of the social sciences is intimately bound up with the critical self-clarification of our orientation in the every day world.<sup>2</sup>

The human quest for understanding arises always out of action, out of real life situations that are permeated with value and laden with the aspirations, desires, and goal-orientations of the individual seeker. Thus there is no such thing as a naked fact, stripped of valuational elements. Agreeing with Troeltsch, Mannheim makes both the selection of facts and the objectivity of historical knowledge dependent upon the concrete aspirations of contemporary man. He takes Troeltsch's connection between "standard of value" and "cultural synthesis within the present" to be the foundation of a theory of history as well as a theory of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Thus the problem of objectivity in historical science is brought closer to the level of concrete research by making it a "matter of actual, substantive evaluation."<sup>4</sup> The rigid alternatives

<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 102.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 103.

of true and false, Mannheim contends, are totally inadequate for dealing with the qualitative and evaluative aspects of historical truth. Man is a valuing creature and truth is a supreme value. A theory of knowledge which strips man of everything vital, corporeal, evaluative and historical is sub-human.<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim's use of the word "perspective" clearly demonstrates his understanding of the two facets of human knowledge, the cognitive and the valuational. The word "perspective," he suggests, signifies not only the manner of perception and the content of that perception, but also the qualitative way in which the individual construes the object of knowledge within his thinking.<sup>2</sup> These qualitative and valuational elements are supra-logical, and are always ingredients of the knowledge situation.

This practical inseparability of fact and value, even though they are theoretically distinguishable aspects of experience, may be a partial reason for Mannheim's failure to give a more articulate accounting of the value problem. The valuational side of experience is rarely singled out by Mannheim for special consideration. By phrases such as "qualitative understanding"<sup>3</sup> and "meaningful

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 297.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

character of knowledge"<sup>1</sup> Mannheim subsumes all the valuational aspects as well as the factual content of knowledge. His repeated emphasis upon the contingency of "selectivity of facts" and "valuational substrata" seems to blind him to the need for further differentiation of the value problem and the necessity of distinguishing clearly the normative aspects of value from the functional aspects.

Mannheim's concepts of "knowledge" and "valuation" are both so broad as to offer little directive for distinguishing various types of knowledge and of value. It is not that he sees no qualitative difference in "facts" or "values." He insists that it is a falsely understood empiricism which collects all facts indiscriminately as if one were as good as the next. "Facts are only of equal value," he maintains, "for someone who is more or less indifferent to the real course of events and who does not have to take action, so that the major trends in events seem unimportant."<sup>2</sup> Such a senseless collection of facts only produces a "cultivated blindness" to the true nature of the world in which we live. And yet, for all this

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 231.

insistence upon the unequal value of facts, Mannheim never seems to offer an articulate distinction between the levels of science and common sense, between rational judgment and fundamental folkways, or between other types of "knowing." His own faith, however, is always on the side of rationality, aiming toward a coherent view of the world, where the community of persons is constantly reaching toward a more harmonious synthesis in every dimension of the life processes. "Knowledge" is, for Mannheim, the instrument for achieving that complex goal. He frankly admits that he is offering a less-than-systematic view of the problem of knowledge, but sees, nonetheless, real significance in presenting a preliminary and fragmentary view as an intermediary step in the historical transition of self-understanding.

If we advocate a comprehensive view of that which is not yet synthesizable into a system, we do this because we regard it as the relative optimum possibility in our present situation, and because in so doing we believe (as is always the case in history) we are taking the necessary steps preparatory to the next synthesis.<sup>1</sup>

He acknowledges also the value-premise of the above statement, namely, that the suggestion of a synthesis from the most comprehensive and most progressive point of view presupposes the value-judgment of "dynamic intellectual

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 188.

mediation." "Certainly we would be the last," Mannheim declares, "to deny that we have made this value-judgment."<sup>1</sup> Thus he attempts to be consistent in his view of "total ideology," in making it applicable to his own world-view and his own theoretical assumptions.

Mannheim claims a limited kinship with the phenomenological school, in interpreting the "existential relativity" of "certain items of knowledge," by which he means "objects encountered in the living process of history."<sup>2</sup> But what other kinds of objects are there, that human beings can know anything about, unless he means to exclude mathematical "objects" or other similar types of mental products. Proper analysis of experience, he contends, does not lead to a relativism in which everybody and nobody is right. What it implies rather is a "relationism which says that certain (qualitative) truths cannot even be grasped, or formulated, except in the framework of an existential correlation between subject and object."<sup>3</sup> Truth about human existence has both factual and valuational content, and both facts and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

values are relationally defined as aspects of the relation between subject and object. Mannheim uses the words "knowledge," "truth," and "cognitive act" somewhat indiscriminately, and it is difficult to know just what he means by each. Most frequently, however, he appears to regard "knowledge" as the product of cognitive activity, the "basic cultural inventory" which he mentions frequently, and "truth" as a sort of flexible ideal. Discussing the existential determinants of thought, Mannheim comments that they not only influence the practical results of thought, but "they also condition the ideal of truth which this living being is able to construct from the products of thought."<sup>1</sup>

This "ideal of truth" which Mannheim refers to is not at all as casual a notion as it might appear to be in the above context. His ideal of truth embodies the norms of coherence, rationality, and progressive synthesis, whose value equivalents would be the norms of harmony, integrity, and dynamic reconciliation. The problem of value norms will be discussed more fully in a subsequent section of this chapter. Mannheim's rather decided reaction against the idea of a "realm of Truth as such" does

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 298.



not prevent him from postulating Truth as a "concrete ideal," based upon the unity of personal experience and the coherently structured elements of consciousness. Mannheim's sociology of knowledge does not invalidate the use of human reason, but instead attempts to validate reason by purging it of its existential capricious ingredients. Self-conscious rationality, Mannheim contends, is a more effective weapon for truth than an unsophisticated and dogmatic reason, blind to its own perspectival biases. Furthermore, he insists upon the unity of the analytic and synthetic method, utilizing a synoptic approach as the means to a more comprehensive view of the whole. The valuational order itself provides the clue to the interpretation of the whole, since values inhere in the personal experience of the interpreter and exert a normative claim upon existence. All experience, and hence all knowledge of values, is grounded in a cosmic dynamic creative process. It is value which offers a basis of interpretation of the physical world, not the reverse.

These principles are in close accord with personalistic premises, at least in their rudimentary outline. In the process of sociologizing, Mannheim's system has transcended itself as sociology and has become philosophy, not consciously but subtly and inarticulately. Mannheim's sociological quest for "inner understanding" first of all

erased the lines of distinction between philosophy and sociology, then eliminated philosophy and supplanted it with sociology. Finally, his sociological quest took upon itself the concerns and the functions of philosophy. Then, as was noted in the discussion of his concern for religion and his study of archetypes and paradigmatic experiences, he began to move a little closer to a renewed understanding of the legitimate differentiation between sociology and the fields of theology, philosophy, ethics. This last conclusion should not be pushed too far, however, for it is evident that even to the end of his life, while he recognized the legitimacy of these other disciplines, he really expected from sociology the most sophisticated and most genuine understanding of human nature.

## 2. The Contextual Character of Value

Mannheim's emphasis upon the contextual character of value is a theme which permeated virtually every category of value in the preceding chapter. The contextual emphasis was present not only in the section dealing with "instrumental value" but was also evident in the discussions of personality, communitarianism, freedom, conscience, etc. It was pointed out that Mannheim gave very serious attention to the pragmatic and contextual emphases of

Dewey, Mead, and others. Much of his argument leans heavily on pragmatic theses: cognitive processes as part of the evolutionary struggle; adjustment character of value; thought as an instrument of cognition; probabilism or perspectival validity. In spite of these emphases, there is much evidence that Mannheim attempted to go beyond pragmatism, beyond contextualism, beyond what he considered to be the moral myopia of a contextualist view of value.

Objecting to the superficialities of much pragmatic understanding of human nature, he emphasizes that "society is rooted in deeper layers of the human soul" than is generally recognized.<sup>1</sup> He consciously seeks to avoid the dangers of moral rigidity derived from abstract value systems on the one hand, and the dangers of "wayward flexibility" and relativistic historicism on the other.<sup>2</sup> Under relativism, Mannheim contends, moral obligation cannot exist, whereas in his relational theory of value there is moral obligation and this moral obligation "is derived from the concrete situation to which it is related."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

Mannheim tries to attend both to the question of "Why" moral commands should be obeyed, as well as to the question of "How" moral imperatives can be obeyed if conditions of life are continually changing. It is the problem of equilibrium between these two facets of the moral issue that constitutes the problem for Mannheim. While he acknowledges that the pragmatists pointed up this important distinction, he cautions that "those who think, as the pragmatists do, that they have already found an answer to the questions they raised, will equally remain blind to the real magnitude of the problem of valuations."<sup>1</sup>

The difficulty in the pragmatist's answer is that it either identifies successful adjustment with right and wrong behaviour, or does not realize that by supporting individual spontaneity as the absolute claim he himself introduces unconsciously preconceived ideals of right conduct. In other words, the justification of a type of behaviour as being an efficient piece of adjustment to a given situation does not yet determine its being right or wrong from a Christian or a non-Christian point of view.<sup>2</sup>

Mannheim proceeds to point out that the person who denies the significance of "spiritual norms" may appear to adjust to the social situation as well as the Christian does, but that there is a profound difference between them. The difference is that the Christian does not simply want

<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

to adjust to the world in general nor to the "particle of environment" in which he momentarily sees himself. The Christian, Mannheim observes, seeks not just any adjustment but an adjustment which is "in harmony with his basic experience of life."<sup>1</sup> Mannheim protests the usual narrow definition of adjustment which tends to see a single "adequate" response to a given stimulus. He speaks of "real" adjustment as a creative response of the total organism to the total environment, involving a "continual liberation of new energies, a permanent give-and-take between the original conditions and the human being."<sup>2</sup> In discussing "Christian valuation" he analyzes two facets, one of which is "beyond the reach of the pragmatist." One facet is the general adjustment character of values and behavior; the second facet is expressed in the fact that the Christian wants to adjust himself with reference to certain normative patterns of action. He notes that the basic vision of life possessed by Christian faith provides a normative pattern, a fundamental value orientation with reference to which all action, and all options open for choice, is judged. This normative facet is, in fact, characteristic of any "valuation guided by a deeper purpose

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

than mere survival and some equilibrium with the surrounding world."<sup>1</sup>

This discussion of Christian valuation is one of the few places in which Mannheim makes a conscious and articulate distinction between the functional-adjustment character of value and the normative aspects. The distinction is generally present in Mannheim's approach, but is an implied rather than a declared assumption. For example, in the discussion of the category inclusive-exclusive in the foregoing chapter, the category itself implies a normative distinction, but in the illustrations from Mannheim's writings the normative distinction was not at all explicit. In this discussion of Christian action, Mannheim does make the normative aspects of value explicit, in declaring that the norms of Christian vision have continually to be reinterpreted. "This substance [Christian faith] again and again focusses thought and activity on certain issues and differentiates the otherwise homogeneous challenges of the environment and the responses to them into desirable and undesirable ones."<sup>2</sup> This view of Mannheim's is far different from the usual pragmatic criterion of efficiency, which usually leaves unanswered the question "efficiency for what?" Persistent pursuit of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

efficiency, Mannheim notes, emasculates human activity by making it progressively devoid of purpose; disintegration of character and conduct ensue, with eventual paralysis of cooperative activities as the deeper purposes vanish from its institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim's contextualism calls for rationally determined valuational norms which can provide for continuity through change, which enable one to deal with the challenge of res novae without becoming the victim of change. This normative source of direction must provide the individual with a "demarcation line" which informs him clearly which possible types of adjustment are "right" for him and which are "wrong." Means and ends must both be normatively defined. In this regard also, Mannheim's thought may be differentiated from most contemporary pragmatism. Here it differs from the naturalistic assumptions of Dewey, for example.

Pragmatism, according to Mannheim, tends to define context in narrow, individualistic terms. The "situation" or "context" is the characteristic unit of valuation, but these are to be understood as highly complex configurations. It is important to relate in one's mind the different series of events, and to see one's own life history in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

terms of a larger life history. By contextualism Mannheim seeks to emphasize "presentness" as a "genuine value," for by presentness one exists in continual tension between what is and what is to come.

Presentness in the sphere of moral, religious and cultural experience means continual return to central experiences which transfuse their spirit into new situations. Thus it means continual rebirth, a continual re-valuation and reinterpretation of the same substance.<sup>1</sup>

In this view, Mannheim apparently abandons some of his earlier intellectual convictions. In his earlier years, he assumed that for each historical context there was a corresponding situationally adequate type of behavior. Ideas or values which did not "fit" into the current order were "situationally transcendent or unreal." Ideas and values which corresponded to a concretely existing historical order he designated as "adequate and situationally congruous." This view was the theme of his epistemological conclusions outlined in Chapter III. Moreover, he wrote that only a mind which had been "sociologically fully clarified" could operate with situationally congruous ideas and valuations.<sup>2</sup> He apparently came to realize that the question of a valuational "fit" required

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 194.



some notion of historical purpose; that "congruity" presupposed some desired goals; and that a criterion of "adequacy" requires a set of given ends toward which behavior is oriented. His awareness of this problem is later somewhat humorously expressed in his paraphrase of a remark by another writer: "Even the pigeons in Trafalgar Square adjust themselves to the presence of the National Gallery in their environment, but the question is if theirs is a relevant and adequate adjustment to the real purpose of the object."<sup>1</sup>

Even with Mannheim's broadly defined contextualism and his pointing up of the normative facet of valuations, certain key questions remain to be dealt with in the following sections of this chapter. What is his ultimate basis of valuational norms, and what are the criteria of judgment for those norms? How does he propose to arrive at a transhistorical "standard of value" and a contemporary "cultural synthesis"?

### 3. The Problem of Norms

Mannheim sees the problem of axiological norms as being very much analogous to the problem Socrates faced in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

the context of a rapidly broadening intellectual horizon and the consequent questions and doubts of the Sophists. Psychoanalysis, sociological analysis, ideological debunking, and scientism in general have stirred up intellectual doubt and moral confusion. History has left modern man with: (a) no universally accepted set of moral axioms, (b) no universally recognized hierarchy of values, and (c) a confusing set of radically differing epistemologies and ontologies.<sup>1</sup> Contemporary man, Mannheim contends, is under moral obligation to search for a solution to the problem of historicism. That problem is: "How are moral norms possible in the midst of constant historical flux and cultural change?"

Mannheim protests against that philosophic view which admits that the content of moral behavior is existentially determined but retains the idea of eternal forms. But here he sets up a false polarization by insisting that the choice is between his "dynamic relationalism" and some kind of moral absolutism.<sup>2</sup> He repeatedly sets the problem in terms of the static versus the dynamic personality. The static personality thinks in terms of

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 81.

rigid moral absolutes. The dynamic personality is progressive, possessed of moral equilibrium, appreciative of the changing conditions under which moral choice occurs.<sup>1</sup> The "stationary type accepts each condition as a timeless order of existence" while the "dynamic seeker dispels false absolutes" and concentrates on the conditional and finite realm of things.<sup>2</sup> This tendency toward a false polarization of alternatives does not, in fact, help him to clarify the problem.

There is a considerable problem involved in trying to determine just what Mannheim means by a norm. He repeatedly uses the word "norm," and speaks of situations being inseparably related to "concrete norms." Further confusion is added when on certain occasions he equates "values" and "norms."<sup>3</sup> He speaks of "codes and norms,"<sup>4</sup> "public norms,"<sup>5</sup> and mentions the search for "new norms."

<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 74.

<sup>5</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 248.

He also states that "changing norms are mostly the expression of the changing habits and attitudes of man."<sup>1</sup> But in spite of this constant usage, he never explicitly states what he conceives a norm to be. He states that norms are "the expression of an interplay between individual and group adjustment," and that they "change with the changing social order," and that they are not absolute and unalterable decrees.<sup>2</sup> But all of this does not say what they are. He has only pointed to their changing character and to their functional relationships.

The most significant clue to Mannheim's meaning of the word "norm" is to be found in his analysis of the "paradigmatic experience," and the unconscious "archetypal image," discussed in Chapter IV. These, he claims, are "norms which satisfy the needs of the unconscious mind."<sup>3</sup> That is to say, the paradigmatic experience as a basic qualitative vision of life, has within it an inherent value claim. This value-claim gives directionality and meaning to all of life. It offers a focus for reinterpretation of all experience, and has no ulterior

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, "German Sociology 1918-1933," Politica, February (1934), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

justification. The paradigmatic experience is basically a symbolic psychic statement of the meaningful goal of human existence, and the frame of reference for judging moral experience and for making valuational decisions.<sup>1</sup>

Formerly Mannheim had sought for valuational sanctions within the historical process, within the intelligible and comprehensive totality. This inclination is evident in his earlier writings. However, with the emergence of totalitarianism in Germany it was evident that history was capable of producing a period of destructiveness beyond imagination and could not be the guarantor of values. After his exodus from Germany in 1933, Mannheim sought a new understanding of the value problem. It was at this point that he developed the idea of the "paradigmatic experience" as the clue to arriving at a normative understanding of value. With this theme came a more intensive voluntaristic emphasis, for the aberration of fascism could only be defeated by active will organized around an exemplary vision of life. One needed some kind of extra-historical standards of value to resist and counteract the aberrant trends. This did not mean that one could disregard the processes of history or ignore its comprehensive and interrelated nature, but it meant

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

that ultimate value-claims could not simply be judged by reference to historical actualities alone.

In discussing these "paradigmatic" or "archetypal" experiences of life, which emerged into conscious life from the creative depths of the unconscious mind, Mannheim frankly acknowledged that knowledge about such levels of psychic life was so primitive that it was virtually "impossible to state either positive or negative rules and correlations" about such phenomena.<sup>1</sup> It would appear that Mannheim's claim for their normative character lay in the fact that they give directionality to the rest of life, and provide a "mold" into which other experiences flow, giving "shape" to these other experiences.<sup>2</sup>

However, this discussion of archetypes and paradigmatic experiences does not exhaust Mannheim's use of the word "norm." It is evident that he thought of norms as functioning throughout all levels of the social process, judging from his use of the term in such a variety of contexts: public norms, institutional norms, norms of sub-groups in society, etc.

As was pointed out in the concluding section of Chapter IV, Mannheim noted two characteristics of a norm. Even these, however, are mentioned only incidentally and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

with very little further elaboration of their meaning. The two characteristics Mannheim mentioned were scope for adaptation and directionality for life, i.e., preventing man from "getting lost in the endless possibilities of changing his behavior." Normative values, in other words, provide a directional orientation and yet are adaptable to changing life situations. They provide direction even while accommodating to change.

Other characteristics of norms may be deduced from Mannheim's writings, even though he does not give an explicit accounting of what he means by the word "norm." In discussing the problem of judgment in ethical disputes he mentions two criteria by which men may judge "changes in morality and their effects on practical affairs." The two criteria which he mentions are "the range of people's foresight" and "the range of their sense of responsibility."<sup>1</sup> What he seems to be referring to here is the anticipation of consequences, as well as the accountability of persons for a broad range of moral behavior. Implicitly, then, valuational norms have reference to the future, and to the question of what ought to be. Moral accountability, on the personal level, involves responsibility for the anticipatory

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 67.

values of this ought claim. This ought claim is another characteristic of a norm, as implied in Mannheim's approach.

Both the ought claim and the directional values are seen by Mannheim to require participation in a process of continual synthesis.<sup>1</sup> For example, anarchist and totalitarian points of view can be dealt with so long as the "synthesizing power of the public mind can see them as extremes of a series, the center of which is firm enough to balance both ends." There is a certain "reality level" maintained as long as this synthesizing power is sustained, and norms must somehow be rooted in that reality level. By reality level, Mannheim only refers to the fact that every society has a "mental climate in which certain facts and their interrelations are considered basic and called 'real.'"<sup>2</sup> Hence, the term directionality (which points to the ultimate value orientation of the paradigmata) needs to have the adjective "synthetic" preceding it, to emphasize the synthesizing frame of reference which Mannheim has in view. Synthetic directionality is another characteristic of a norm implied in

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 140.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 139.



Mannheim's discussion.

The aforementioned notion of a "reality level" was defined by a sort of provisional consensus. It is important to note that Mannheim means much more than mere theoretical agreement on certain issues. To him, consensus is equated with common life and "to prepare the ground for consensus eventually means to prepare the ground for common life."<sup>1</sup> Thus, in this sense, a normative value is one which fulfills this criterion.

Comprehensiveness is another frequently implied characteristic of a norm. In discussing the problem of judgment in valuational issues, he continually refers to "constructive integration" and "constructive compromise," emphasizing all the while a need for "broadened experience" and "expanded vision" and "breadth of judgment."<sup>2</sup> This comprehensiveness of a norm is such that it could, presumably, take into account varying levels of inclusiveness and exclusiveness, as well as the changing and permanent aspects of experience, the reciprocal needs of self and community, and so forth.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 169f.

Coherence is likewise, both implicitly and explicitly, a constantly emphasized theme in Mannheim's discussion of value. In referring to the need for a dynamic system of standards for interpreting the value hierarchies of history, it is coherence which provides the crucial criterion of judgment.<sup>1</sup> Again, he discusses the fact that the "democratic pattern of struggle and discussion" enables different values and value systems to be amalgamated into a "dynamically balanced pattern" of agreements.<sup>2</sup> Mannheim's view continually calls forth a "dynamic logic" in which coherence is a primary test of the validity of historical "truths" and a primary criterion by which the normative character of their valuational aspect is judged.<sup>3</sup>

The characteristics of a normative value, as deduced from Mannheim's writings, might be summarized as follows: synthetic directionality; scope for adaptation; inherent ought claim; provisional consensus; comprehensiveness; coherence. These characteristics of a norm appear to be in many respects parallel to the epistemological criteria

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, p. 150.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 40.

of validity outlined in Chapter III. Mannheim's epistemological criteria of unanimity, perspectival synthesis, comprehensiveness and fruitfulness are basically epistemological equivalents of the above-mentioned axiological criteria. A basic difference to be noted is that when Mannheim elucidated his epistemological claims, he anticipated that "truth" was somehow self-validating within the historical process itself. In his earlier writing, especially in Ideology and Utopia, he rejected any extra-historical principle of interpretation or judgment. He insisted, at that time, that history's "wholeness" and "comprehensiveness" was itself enough to provide the significant clues to ultimate meaning and the true direction to the cosmic processes. Later, as he attempted to penetrate the problem of value, he was forced to admit that socio-historical analysis alone could not uncover the ultimate values and purposes of the cosmos, and that perhaps some extra-historical principle of judgment would have to provide the clue to the value problem as well as to the problem of truth.

Even though he acknowledged this extra-historical principle as a necessity for further resolving the problem of "human valuations," he still seemed to cling to the hope that sociology (rather than philosophy or theology) could somehow legitimatize the norms which were to

be derived from the non-rational, extra-logical paradigmatic experiences.

#### 4. Mannheim's Axiological Profile

Mannheim's search for an understanding of the "human dialogue" was based upon the firm conviction that it is only the historically and existentially committed analyst who can truly understand the qualitative meanings and values of history. As Mannheim put it: "It is only substance which comprehends substance."<sup>1</sup> In this sociological quest he moved from one level of analysis to another, continually trying to break through to the inmost layers of man's psyche, seeking always the person, the motivating center that lay beyond the superficial rationalizations. He saw the sickness of a "thing-oriented" and "operational-oriented" culture, and saw as the task of a democratized age the responsibility for breaking through the "screen of purely social self-assessment and achiev[ing] communion with the existential self, stripped of all social masks."<sup>2</sup> True knowledge, for Mannheim, involved a grasp of the

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p. 246.

historical processes themselves, including the valuational elements of those processes. Knowledge, in his view, involved an active and willful invasion of reality by the conscious and purposive mind. In this Mannheim sought, as did Hegel, to achieve communion with reality itself.

There is considerable difficulty in trying to "classify" Mannheim's approach in one or another category of value theory or ethical theory. Due to his radical eclecticism and continual synthesizing of various elements from diverse schools of thought, it is indeed virtually impossible to identify him with any particular strand. Perhaps the terms "concrete idealism" or "democratic personalism" would be appropriate terms to designate his general orientation, as these are both terms which he occasionally used to designate his essential approach.<sup>1</sup> It should be emphasized that he does not use these terms in any self-conscious manner to designate a systematically worked out system. He does use them, as he uses other similar terms, to point to a certain tendency, a certain way of interpreting experience, a certain way of patterning the elements of sociological understanding. The term "concrete idealism" is helpful in summarizing Mannheim's attempt to

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, pp. 198, 242.

combine what he considered to be genuine in traditional idealism with a specific contextualist or pragmatic emphasis, thus avoiding what he called "historical absenteeism." Likewise, the term "democratic personalism" gathers together certain of his emphases: e.g., the basic reality of the person; the organic relation between person and community; a fundamental equalitarianism as the ontological basis of freedom, etc. However, neither of these terms necessarily implies the full range of axiological assumptions that are found to be operative within Mannheim's system.

The analysis of the value components of Mannheim's system has resulted in what amounts to a rather extensive metaphysics of value. On the basis of this analysis of categories, a general metaphysics of value has been educed, with a somewhat loosely knit but basically coherent structure. These primary presuppositions are not set forth in any articulate fashion by Mannheim himself, but can only be educed through a careful analysis of his writings. Analysis does reveal a basic framework of axiological presuppositions, not always carefully worked out, but nonetheless evident and operative within his total system.

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning, pp. 198, 242.

This framework of primary presuppositions involves an organic relationship between the two poles of the polar categories, all of which are related to a central focus on the reality of the person within the context of freedom. Value and value-theory are both ultimately rooted not only in the experience of being a person but also in the fundamental act of self-valuation.

While there is a constant emphasis upon rationality and upon rational values, Mannheim scarcely offers a concrete distinction between judgment and emotional response. The problem as such is never specifically discussed, and any distinction would merely be implicit. This is a confusion that he shares with many pragmatists, in spite of his constant emphasis upon rationality and upon the criteria for rationally authenticated values.

While Mannheim is reluctant to speak of ideals or of ideal-values, these words nevertheless do occasionally find their way into his vocabulary, and almost always by way of criticism of, and as a corrective to, pragmatic errors. As was pointed out in the preceding chapters, he evidenced strong influences of both Hegel and Marx. Basically, Mannheim's view is a metaphysical theory of value. Conscious experience is the seat of all value, and the normative order of value that is so much a part of human

experience is rooted in the cosmic processes in which man shares intimately. Mannheim penetrated much more deeply into the anthropological problem than did Marx. His analysis of the ideological problem and his conclusion of a neutralized ("non-evaluative") conception of total ideology, was a more sophisticated sociological view of the knowledge problem than the Marxian approach. He endeavored to be consistent in his view of total ideology and attempted to apply it to his own perspective as well as to others, noting at times that such terms as "dynamic synthesis" and "purposive adjustment" were value judgments of his own. At other times, however, and in fact most of the time, his own value presuppositions were simply assumed without comment and without acknowledgment. Nowhere did he articulately set forth the value judgments which guided his thought and which alone give real meaning to his whole theoretical position. The inherent framework of primary presuppositions noted above, and deduced from a thorough analysis of Mannheim's writings, shows the extent of his omission.

Alongside of the above-mentioned general metaphysics of value with its configuration of primary presuppositions, there is also a series of what might be termed secondary presuppositions which forms the nucleus of a theoretical



ethics. What are here referred to as secondary presuppositions are simply those characteristics of a norm (synthetic directionality, scope for adaptation, inherent ought claim, provisional consensus, comprehensiveness, coherence) which provide the theoretical basis for a normative view of human behavior and ethical conduct. Such a theoretical ethics is very rudimentary to be sure, in Mannheim's system, for the presuppositions were not systematically worked out. Certainly Mannheim had an elaborately worked out social theory, but it was based unconsciously upon what Mannheim considered to be "the enlightened values of the age" and was without a systematic formulation of theoretical principles, and without a forthright declaration of his axiomatic values.

The task of such a theoretical ethics is to work out a normative concept of man, a normative judgment of what human conduct and social institutions ought to be. Mannheim does continually bring a normative perspective into his discussion, but he never differentiates this from his sociologically descriptive view of man. He continually gives evidence of stepping beyond the bounds of sociological "inner understanding," and of introducing normative ethical principles into the discussion, without acknowledging that he is doing so. Herein is the basic weakness of his whole system, in that he never fully and formally came

to terms at the theoretical level with the normative aspects of the science of human behavior. Certainly his writings are full of discussion concerning normative human behavior, and full of normative judgments upon contemporary society and social institutions. The whole of Mannheim's writings on social policy and social strategy are based upon a normative conception of human behavior, and pervaded by a practical ethic which is Mannheim's own. What is missing is the theoretical ethics, the systematic explication of principles which coherently integrate his science of human behavior.

In this regard, Mannheim failed to recognize that only such a theoretical ethics, combined with the insights of sociological penetration, could provide a full grasp of the anthropological question. When he appropriated unto the sociologist the tasks of philosophy and ethics and theology, he consequently eliminated the basic distinction between a descriptive and a normative understanding of man. However, when in his practical pursuit of policy and strategy he constantly confronted the problem of directionality, of "where man ought to go," he could not avoid the problem of the normative science of man. As a consequence, he assumed that the normative was but one aspect of sociological insight, and the real theoretical issues were hidden behind his sociological analysis. This is not to say that

it is not possible nor desirable for a student of the science of man to undertake both aspects of the problem. Indeed, what is needed more urgently than ever before is the interdisciplinary study which combines both the sociological and the normative, or ethical, dimensions of the problem. To risk oversimplification of the problem, the questions of "what man is" and "what man ought to become" are inseparable dimensions of the proper study of man. Nevertheless, the theoretical aspects of each must be clearly distinguished, without one being blurred by the other and without one task being absorbed by the other. Only a simultaneous refinement of sociological observation, and the concomitant task of developing an articulate theoretical ethics can provide a progressively fuller understanding of man. The fulfillment of neither discipline is possible without the complementary work of the other.

Generally, Mannheim's thought concerning ethical problems moves at the level of what might be termed tertiary presuppositions, to differentiate yet another level of presuppositional analysis. Most of his discussion of social policy and social strategy operates at this third level. For example, in discussing the "ethic of organized relationships" for a factory Mannheim states that such relationships would have to answer to the following conditions:

sanctions; discipline; code of conduct; assignment of responsibility; working incentives and rewards; intellectual appreciation of the purpose of the work; social prestige of the job; social hierarchy within the factory; etc.<sup>1</sup> These ethical norms represent the level at which Mannheim generally approaches any problem of value, i.e., at the level of what might be called a concrete ethics. He begins immediately at the level of the problem itself, and discusses it in terms derivative from, but without conscious reference to, a theoretical ethics. In other words, he tends continually to by-pass the theoretical levels mentioned above, both at the general level of axiological presuppositions, as well as at the level of a theoretical ethics.

There is, in short, an embryonic "philosophy of social science" evident in Mannheim's thought, but it is worked out only incidentally as an essential part of sociological theory, thereby confusing the areas of sociological theory and ethical theory. The confusion was due to the fact that Mannheim constantly tended to make action both the basis of thought as well as the criterion of truth. He found himself in constant tension between

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Diagnosis of Our Time, p. 162.

this pragmatic emphasis and traditional idealistic and rationalistic epistemological principles. His attempts to descend from language to life and to subordinate thought to action were constantly counteracted by attempts to regain status for rationally coherent principles and above all to assert the reliability of the human mind as a competent guide for all action.

In his ceaseless attempts at synthesis, many issues and problems were created by the conjoining of only partly compatible strands of thought and Mannheim never systematically worked out all of these incompatibilities. This fact can be partly understood by Mannheim's persistent claim to be an "experimental thinker" and not a "systematizer." He specifically acknowledged in several of his books that he had deliberately refrained from eliminating repetitions and resolving contradictions. He believed that certain themes expressed in different contexts might lead to new insights and to clearer understanding, even though there be inherent logical contradictions involved.<sup>1</sup> Again, he expressed the conviction that the time was not ripe to aim at absolute consistency when the main task of the age was primarily "to break the old habits of thought

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 52.

and to find the new keys to the understanding of the changing world."<sup>1</sup>

Whereas contradictions are a source of discomfiture to the systematizer, the experimental thinker often perceives in them points of departure from which the fundamentally discordant character of our present situation becomes for the first time really capable of diagnosis and investigation.<sup>2</sup>

Even though such statements may temper critical judgment concerning the logical structure of Mannheim's thought, they certainly do not preclude the necessity of bringing critical judgment to bear upon basic theoretical problems and basic incompatibilities within the diverse elements of his attempted synthesis. Nor does it preclude critical judgment upon his proposed division of intellectual labors, where he frequently assigned to sociology nearly all of the really significant questions and problems that confront mankind. It is interesting to note that while Mannheim generally rejects philosophy on behalf of sociology, he gives also a most eloquent defense of the virtues of philosophy in an article on American sociology.<sup>3</sup> After first noting some of the harmful effects

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<sup>1</sup>Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup>Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, p. 190.

of speculative philosophy on German sociology, Mannheim then notes that it is the philosophical legacy which is

responsible for a greater capacity of recognizing connections between things, for the development of a comprehensive view of the social process as a whole, instead of mere isolated treatment of sporadic facts which can be mastered in a division of jobs. Comprehensive vision will put every fact in its place within the framework of a broad hypothesis embracing the whole of society.<sup>1</sup>

Mannheim proceeds to point out that Comte was right in eliminating the metaphysical stage of thought and moving to the empirical. However, this cannot be done, he insists, merely by eliminating everything reminiscent of philosophy, but only by "applying to the facts and fructifying in empirical research that gift of consistent questioning and comprehensive vision which humanity for the first time developed in its philosophy."<sup>2</sup> But Mannheim did not stay with this highly praised conception of philosophy. He traded it, as did Comte, for sociology, in the hopes that he had rid himself of metaphysics and metaphysical issues. The results of this analysis of Mannheim's system show that he was not successful in eliminating the metaphysical issues. He only pushed them into the background and eventually introduced them under another guise.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS OF THE DISSERTATION

The conclusions of the dissertation will be discussed under three general divisions: (1) an outline of the three presuppositional levels which were deduced from an analysis of Mannheim's writings; (2) answers to the general questions posed in the statement of the problem of the dissertation in Chapter I; and (3) general conclusions concerning the relationship between sociological theory and value theory.

#### 1. Three Presuppositional Levels

An analysis of Mannheim's writings disclosed a basic framework of axiological presuppositions, which were seen to fall within three general levels and which were designated for convenience; primary presuppositions, secondary presuppositions, and tertiary presuppositions. These three general presuppositional levels were, in turn, interpreted in terms of a general metaphysics of value, a theoretical ethics, and what might be called a concrete ethics. These presuppositional levels are not explicitly



formulated by Mannheim, but they are evident and operative in his system.

1. General Metaphysics of Value.--The analysis and explication of a series of categories disclosed the primary axiological presuppositions of Mannheim's thought, and provided a detailed accounting of the implications of his writings in terms of these categories. This axiological presuppositional framework, including some polar categories of a general nature radiating from a central focus upon the priority and freedom of the self and its ought claim, is condensed into the following series of categories: intrinsic and instrumental; inclusive and exclusive; permanence and change; causality and spontaneity; egoism and communitarianism; personality; ought claim; freedom; primacy of religious experience. These categories, although only implicit, form a basically coherent structure of metaphysical premises upon which Mannheim's entire thought is formulated. They constitute, in fact, an implicit metaphysics of value.

2. Theoretical Ethics.--Within the context of the search for Mannheim's general axiological assumptions, the problem of normative values emerged. Since Mannheim's extensive discussions of social policy and social strategy

are based upon the concept of norms or normative values, it was necessary to discover what he meant by a norm, inasmuch as no explicit definition was evident in his writings. Further analysis disclosed a series of six characteristics of a normative value: synthetic directionality; scope for adaptation; inherent ought claim; provisional consensus; comprehensiveness; coherence. This secondary presuppositional analysis, eliciting the criteria of a norm, produced the nucleus of a theoretical ethics as the basis for Mannheim's own normative view of human behavior. Again, as was the case with the general axiological assumptions, this theoretical ethics is only implied, and not explicitly stated by Mannheim.

3. Concrete Ethics.--It was noted that Mannheim's thought concerning value problems or ethical problems moves generally at the level of tertiary presuppositions, i.e., at the level of immediate and practical considerations of the problems of personal relationships and socially organized relationships, rather than at the level of a theoretical ethics or the level of a general theory of value. No extensive analysis was felt to be necessary at this point, since the theoretical problem of the dissertation does not hinge upon this level of analysis and also since the bulk of illustrative material quoted

throughout the dissertation lends its indirect support to this observation about Mannheim's major emphasis. Mannheim's intellectual mood was essentially and urgently practical, and his basic work in social theory generally reflected this approach. Hence, his preoccupation with what is here termed a concrete ethics.

## 2. General Questions Posed

Certain questions were formulated in the introductory chapter, the answers to which have been elicited from the various expository, analytical, and critical sections of the dissertation. Answers to these questions will now be formulated, based upon the foregoing study.

### 1. What are the basic epistemological claims which Mannheim makes on behalf of the sociology of knowledge?

Basically, his claim is simply that the sociology of knowledge has made some relevant empirical discoveries about the nature and origins of human thought which require some revision of traditional idealistic and positivistic epistemologies. The sociological fact of "particularization" and Mannheim's own conception of total ideology (i.e., the claim that every view is perspectively biased) requires that a new epistemological foundation be sought, a new

theoretical basis under which can be subsumed all the modes of thought which, in the course of history, men have succeeded in establishing. In short, what he calls for is a hypothesis that is comprehensive enough to embrace the "personal equation" at every conceivable level of knowledge. As was concluded in the section "Fact and Value" (Chapter V), Mannheim's own epistemological assumptions are generally in accord with personalistic principles in many respects: insistence upon the unity of the analytic and synoptic methods; unity of conscious experience; dynamic logic to interpret experience; coherence and comprehensiveness and dynamic synthesis as epistemological norms.

2. What is the relation between these epistemological claims and the problems of value theory? Epistemological issues and axiological issues were seen by Mannheim to be dual aspects of the process of knowing, distinguishable in experience but inseparably mixed in the content of experience itself. To "know" is to perceive both a "factual" content and a "valuational" content in the object of knowledge.

3. Do "facts" and "values" have a common ontological source, or do they arise from completely different sources? Both "facts" and "values" arise out of the basic

life process in which the individual evolves a knowledge of the world in which he lives; i.e., life in a community of persons within the context of which he derives a Weltanschauung, a system of values, and a basic inventory of "factual" and "valuational" knowledge. There is no such thing for Mannheim as a naked fact, stripped of valuational elements, nor is there any such thing as a value freed from a concrete factual context. The human quest for understanding is itself permeated with value and laden with the aspirations, desires, and goal-orientations of the individual seeker. This complex of cognitive and valuational processes is itself grounded in a cosmic dynamic creative process, and it is value which ultimately offers a basis of interpretation of the physical world, not the reverse.

4. Are there axiological implications in the sociology of knowledge? If facts and values are both integral aspects of a singular knowing process, then the problem of validity in one area is reciprocally affected by Mannheim's conclusions in the other area. Thus, his conclusions regarding the existential determination of knowledge, specifically his doctrines of "relationism" and of "particularization," refer equally to the value problem as well as to the problem of knowledge. His call for

reconstruction of epistemological and axiological hypotheses is legitimately based upon his sociological conclusion that "the position of the observer influences the results of thought."

5. Does Mannheim draw the axiological conclusions which are implied by his sociology of knowledge? His doctrines of "relationism" and "particularization" and "total ideology" apply equally well to Mannheim's own thought processes and valuational judgment, as he noted on occasion. Hence, he rejected any claims to being a "systematizer" and defined himself as an "experimental thinker" whose task was seen to be, in a Socratic fashion, a midwife to the emerging synthesis in contemporary thought. This claim, although initially a modest one, eventually led to his usurpation of virtually all of the major disciplines dealing with the science of human behavior.

6. What are the axiological presuppositions of his social philosophy? These axiological presuppositions are summarized above in section 1 of the conclusions. It should be noted also that Mannheim's attempt to apply a "dynamic logic" to the problems of valuational processes steered him in a middle road between the problems of axiological absolutism and axiological relativism. There is a dynamic relationship between the elements of his polar categories, keeping in tension both the universalistic and the particularistic elements of experience.

7. In short, is value theory possible, and if so, under what conditions? Value theory is possible, given the assumptions of Mannheim's Wissenssoziologie, and under the conditions that any absolute claims to validity and any claims to absolute certainty be exchanged for conditional or provisional claims of certitude. Only if one were to insist upon the alternatives of absolute knowledge versus axiological relativism could Mannheim be classed with the moral skeptics. There is no moral skepticism to be found in Mannheim, as T. E. Hill contends, no matter how inarticulate the theoretical foundations of his system may be. There is no more skepticism in Mannheim than in the analogous situation of Socrates, who in his own age of extreme skepticism was endeavoring to provide new foundations for the intellectual and moral understanding of man. Mannheim was right in his basic contention that the sociology of knowledge could be a constructive effort in the appreciative understanding of the nature of human perception, and the necessary limitations of that perception. On the other hand, Mannheim was wrong in his tendency to assume that the basic epistemological and axiological issues could all be subsumed under the aegis of sociology and sociological theory.

### 3. General Conclusions

1. Mannheim's general approach cannot be classed as either moral skepticism or epistemological skepticism. Those critics of Mannheim who so classify him have simply not taken into account the constructive elements that are explicit and implicit in his writings.

2. Similarly, Mannheim's thought cannot be reduced to a thoroughgoing relativism, for to do so would be to ignore the universalistic, the inclusive, the normative, elements that pervaded his thinking.

3. Mannheim's elucidation of the social and existential determinants of thought are not to be understood as a denial of the rational validity of moral and intellectual judgments, but are to be seen rather as a refinement in our understanding of human perception and an illumination of the qualifying conditions of the meaning of the search for truth.

4. In spite of Mannheim's constant emphasis upon the social conditioning of cognitive and valuational processes, there is simultaneously a pervasive emphasis upon uniqueness, individuality, spontaneity, self-determining conscience, and a genuine affirmation of the ultimacy of the "person."



5. Mannheim fuses and then confuses the roles of the descriptive and the normative study of man. The basic weakness of his whole system is that he never fully and formally came to terms at the theoretical level with the normative aspects of the science of human behavior. The analysis of the three presuppositional levels revealed the extent of his theoretical omissions. Mannheim assumed that the normative was but one aspect of sociological truth, and consequently the basic theoretical issues were hidden behind his sociological analysis.

6. Mannheim's work, on the positive side, points up the necessity of integrating, through interdisciplinary study, both the sociological and the normative, or ethical, dimensions of the study of man, as complementary disciplines.

7. Mannheim's work points up also, because of what he failed to do, the necessity of distinguishing clearly the theoretical aspects of each (the normative and the sociologically descriptive) and of bringing together both the refinements of sociological observation and the insights of an articulate theoretical ethics for a progressively fuller understanding of man.

8. Mannheim, in seeking with Comte to eliminate the metaphysical issues, did not successfully avoid them but only pushed them into the background, confirming the notion that sociologists also must at some point become self-conscious in regard to the metaphysical and axiological assumptions which they hold and which pervade and guide their thought. Mannheim, in spite of all his emphasis upon "total ideology" and "perspectivism," was never able to articulate fully his own axiological assumptions.

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## A B S T R A C T

## ABSTRACT

The problem of the dissertation was to discover the axiological basis upon which Karl Mannheim has developed his sociology of knowledge and accordingly his social philosophy. Integral aspects of the problem included the question of the link between Mannheim's sociology of knowledge and his axiological assumptions, and the question of whether or not he was successful in steering a course between axiological absolutism, on the one hand, and axiological relativism on the other.

The method of the dissertation included:

(a) Exposition.--Chapters II and III were primarily expository, setting forth the main outlines of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge and the epistemological conclusions he has drawn.

(b) Analysis.--Chapter IV was primarily analytic, and attempted to elicit the value components of Mannheim's system through a series of categorial analyses. These categories were educed from Mannheim's writings and are basically reflections of perennially recurring problems in the field of value theory. The categories of analysis were as follows:

1. Value--Intrinsic and Instrumental
2. Value--Inclusive and Exclusive

3. Value--Permanence and Change
4. Value--Causality and Spontaneity
5. Value--Egoism and Communitarianism
6. Value and Personality
7. Value and the Ought
8. Value and the Meaning of Freedom
9. Value and Religion

(c) Comparison and Synthesis.--Chapter V was primarily critical and comparative. The results of the categorical analysis were subjected to critical and comparative study, for the purpose of inquiring into the consistency and coherence of Mannheim's value presuppositions and his sociological and epistemological conclusions. An "axiological profile" was attempted, offering a critical synthesis of the axiological presuppositions which were deduced from the analysis of Chapter IV.

Conclusions of the dissertation include the following:

A. Three Presuppositional Levels.

An analysis of Mannheim's writings disclosed a basic framework of axiological presuppositions, which were seen to fall within three general levels and which were designated for convenience: primary presuppositions, secondary presuppositions, and tertiary presuppositions. These three general presuppositional levels, implicit in Mannheim's writings,

were, in turn, interpreted in terms of:

1. General Metaphysics of value.--Analysis disclosed an axiological presuppositional framework, including some polar categories of a general nature radiating from a central focus upon the priority and freedom of the self and its ought claim, which was condensed into the following series of categories: intrinsic and instrumental; inclusive and exclusive; permanence and change; causality and spontaneity; egoism and communitarianism; personality; ought claim; freedom; primacy of religious experience.

2. Theoretical Ethics.--In the search for an understanding of what Mannheim meant by norms or normative values, further analysis disclosed a series of six characteristics of a normative value: synthetic directionality; scope for adaptation; inherent ought claim; provisional consensus; comprehensiveness; coherence. This secondary presuppositional analysis, eliciting the criteria of a norm, produced the nucleus of a theoretical ethics as the basis for Mannheim's own normative view of human behavior.

3. Concrete Ethics.--It was noted that Mannheim's thought concerning value problems or ethical issues moved generally at the level of tertiary presuppositions, i.e., at the level of immediate and practical considerations, rather than at the level of a theoretical ethics or the level of a general theory of value. Hence, his preoccupation with what

was termed a concrete ethics.

## B. General Conclusions

1. Taking into account the constructive elements that are implicit and explicit in his writings, Mannheim's general approach cannot be classed as either moral skepticism or epistemological skepticism.

2. Similarly, Mannheim's thought cannot be reduced to a thoroughgoing relativism, for to do so would be to ignore the universalistic, the inclusive, the normative, elements that pervaded his thinking.

3. Mannheim's Wissenssoziologie is not to be understood as a denial of the rational validity of moral and intellectual judgments, but is to be seen rather as a refinement in our understanding of human perception and of the qualifying conditions of that perception.

4. With Mannheim's constant emphasis upon the social conditioning of cognitive and valuational processes, there is simultaneously a pervasive emphasis upon uniqueness, individuality, spontaneity, self-determining conscience, and ultimacy of the person.

5. Assuming that the normative was but one aspect of sociological truth, Mannheim never fully and formally came to terms at the theoretical level with the normative aspects of the science of human behavior.

6. Mannheim's work points up the necessity of integrating, through interdisciplinary study, both the sociological and the normative, or ethical, dimensions of the study of man.

7. Mannheim's work points up also the necessity of distinguishing clearly the theoretical aspects of each (the normative and the sociologically descriptive), and not merely absorbing one discipline into the other.

8. Mannheim, in seeking with Comte to eliminate the metaphysical issues, did not successfully avoid them but only pushed them into the background, confirming the notion that sociologists also must at some point become self-conscious in regard to the metaphysical and axiological assumptions which they hold and which pervade and guide their thought. Mannheim, in spite of all his emphasis upon "total ideology" and "perspectivism," was never able to articulate fully his own axiological assumptions.



A U T O B I O G R A P H Y



#### AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Francis Warren Rempel, the son of Peter Rempel and Ellen Cossman Rempel, was born on December 14, 1925, in El Paso, Texas. The major part of his pre-college education was received in the Albuquerque Public Schools. His undergraduate studies were pursued at the University of California and at the University of New Mexico, where he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1950. He subsequently studied at Boston University, where he received the Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree in 1953. An additional year of graduate study was undertaken at Iliff School of Theology in 1956-1957. He entered the Graduate School of Boston University in 1958 for advanced studies in the department of Social Ethics. For the past six years he has served as University Methodist Chaplain and Director of the Wesley Foundation at Kansas State University. He is married to Patricia Wylder Rempel and they have three children, Scott, Sue, and Peter.