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A CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITICAL THEORY OF ORGANISATIONS:  
(NEO) HUMAN RELATIONS MANAGEMENT THEORY, IDEOLOGY AND  
SUBJECTIVITY.

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## SUMMARY

This thesis contributes to the developing field of the critical theory of organisation. It presents a critical inquiry into the ideological nature of (neo)Human Relations management theory and its strategies for the management of subjectivity and organisational culture. The introductory chapters discuss the meta-theoretical grounds and contexts for the development of the thesis. Chapter 1 responds to the epistemological challenges put forward by post-Modernism highlighting the basic trajectory and underlying values of the thesis. Chapter 2 discusses the development of critical organisation theory so far, with respect to the discussions of subjectivity and culture. This includes a discussion of aspects of the work of Foucault, (neo)Marxist Theory, Labour Process Theory and critical social psychology as they have been taken up by organisational studies of subjectivity and culture. Chapter 3 clarifies the use of the concept of ideology and outlines the research strategy for the concrete study of (neo)Human Relations management as ideological. This involves a 'depth hermeneutic' research strategy, made up of the 3 components of (1) A Social Analysis, (2) A Discourse Analysis, and (3) An Interpretation of Meaning.

As the 'Social Analysis' component of this 'depth hermeneutic', chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 highlights the work of Herbert Marcuse, exploring his critical social psychology; his notion of 'new forms of control'; his discussions of the relationship between culture, language and power; and his discussions of the rationalisation process leading to the rationalisation of culture and power relations.

This is followed by both the 'Discourse Analysis' and 'Interpretation of Meaning' components of the 'depth hermeneutic' method. Chapter 8 offers an account of the historical emergence of the management discourses around subjectivity and culture and identifies its leading authors. Chapter 9 offers a critical interpretation of meaning of this discourse in the light of Marcuse's social analysis which highlights the ideological nature of (neo)Human Relations management.

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## PREFACE.

A manager at a Glasgow whisky bottling plant observed: "Old-style management methods don't work. You have to involve people".....It is a welcome change from the relics of so-called scientific - meaning dictatorial - management.... Mr. Lederer thinks of his people as a "strategic asset" ....Because the "lowliest" workers are those who have the closest dealings with the customers' attitudes and in the best position to understand operational problems....It is not easy for companies used to working under the old ideas to change to the new. But it can be done, with "change programmes" which introduce the new culture, as most large British and American companies have proved.

I've started a local exchange trading scheme in Leicester to give people an alternative to the money economy.... You don't get anything from appealing to government or bureaucratic organisations, but people at the grassroots can run things themselves in a co-operative way. The

struggle is on the create the structures to let co-operation come out.

People are tied into real hardship now and are becoming scape-goats for an economic system that is falling apart. Self-help networks are forming, both locally and globally. We've learned that you can't separate the environment from social issues....

These two examples from The Guardian during 1994 graphically illustrate divergent tendencies within contemporary society and different visions of future social and economic organisation. It is clear from the comments above that such tendencies are largely incommensurable. These two visions of change in the nature of social, economic and institutional relations seem to echo the analysis provided by Herbert Marcuse, of a dialectic of trends of social development.

Marcuse develops a thesis which

.....vacillate(s) throughout between two contradictory hypotheses: (1) that advanced industrial society is capable of containing qualitative change for the foreseeable future; (2) that forces exist which may break this containment and explode the society (Marcuse 1964. p.xv).

It is evident from the two examples that such tensions,

counter-tendencies, attempts to contain social change and attempts to 'break this containment' still exist within contemporary social and organisational life. Primarily I shall attempt here to analyze the containment of the potential for social change. Specifically I shall focus upon (neo)Human Relations management theory which attempts to manage more efficiently subjectivity and culture as 'strategic assets'. This has the consequence of initiating a more consolidated form of organisational power and thus 'containing' the potential for change.

This thesis is at once **theoretical** and **applied**. It deals with the theories of Marcuse, but it applies these theories for a detailed analysis of a **concrete social phenomenon**, the discourses of (neo)Human Relations management. Two aspects are central to this contribution. Firstly it highlights that the insights offered by Marcuse have not been sufficiently taken up by critical organisation theory; and secondly, through this take up, critical organisation theory can develop its understanding of the ideological nature of (neo)Human Relations management discourse by developing an understanding of how culture, language and subjectivity are specifically effected by this ideological nature. Thus the application of the work of Marcuse contributes to an explanation of the **operation** of ideology as well as helps to identify its existence in certain discourses.

Central to this thesis is the application of the work of Marcuse for the critical inquiry into power and authority

relations. It is concerned to analyze the integration of the individual into a culture and the manipulation of subjective processes which initiate the active involvement of the subject into their own control, over and above coercion. The critical inquiry into (neo)Human Relations management theory is as an inquiry into one **example** of this general trend.

To develop this, some initial epistemological points are first made. In chapter 1, I make an Introductory Confession. This is for two main reasons. Firstly, it seems necessary to demonstrate some self-reflexivity as to the concepts and arguments one is using. The concepts central to my work are often contested, and so it is necessary both to clarify the way I shall use them and demonstrate some awareness of this contestation. The post-Modern challenge to (Critical) Social Theory has revolved around the deconstruction of the essentialist assumptions of 'modernism'. I discuss this in chapter 1 by way of accepting the 'narrative' status of my thesis, its 'open' nature and the 'epistemological nervousness' which underpins it in these post-Modern times. I also confess in chapter 1 to the humanist value position which underpins my interests in both developing an ideology-critique of (managerial) containment, and contributing to the development of an 'applied' Marcusean perspective as it relates to the contribution to critical theories of organisations.

These epistemological points are continued in chapter 3, in



which I discuss the central concept of ideology. In this chapter I discuss some of the problems associated with its use and attempt to offer solutions. I also discuss a specific methodology and research design amenable to an ideology-critique. The methodology and research design I use is a 'depth hermeneutic'. This involves 3 elements; a 'social analysis', found in the Critical Theory of Marcuse in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7; a 'discourse analysis' involving a discussion of the historical and empirical features of the (neo)Human Relations management discourse, discussed in chapter 8; and a critical 'interpretations of meaning', involving a re-assessment of the leading authors/texts of the (neo)Human Relations discourse in the light of Marcusean critical concepts, discussed in chapter 9.

Before this is developed however, a more general situating of this thesis in critical organisation theory is necessary. In chapter 2, I discuss existent critical organisation theory. This starts with a discussion of the take up of the work of Foucault which has been increasingly significant in recent years. I articulate the nature of this significance for the theoretical inquiry into the impact of the organisation upon the human subject. However, I also level two main criticisms at Foucault's work. Firstly that Foucault's theoretical work exhibits an insufficient concern with the material dimension characterising the concrete economic conditions of an industrial capitalist society and the consequences this has for contemporary organisations. Secondly that Foucauldian

organisational studies fail to provide an analysis of how the organisation impacts upon the subject. That is, it lacks any sustained social psychological dimension. It is held that the application of the work of Marcuse offers insights which can begin to fill this gap. Also in chapter 2 I explore the take up of neo-Marxist theories in critical organisational studies, particularly post-Braverman Labour Process Theory and the work of Habermas. It is argued that such critical theories of organisations, concentrating as they do on the internal discursive development of branches of organisational studies, do not take up Critical Theory in a very critical way. This neglects both the nature of power and authority relations and the more emancipatory dimensions of Critical Theory. Therefore it is again argued that the lack of any sustained interest in the work of Marcuse for a critical theory of organisations is a missed opportunity. Finally, chapter 2 explores the existent social psychological theories of organisational behaviour. This has included a call for a fuller development of a theory of the subject. It also discusses the potential relevance of other social/group psychological theories. To contribute to this I suggest the development of a materialist psychology, in particular the synthesis of Marxism and psychoanalysis, a major representative of which is again Marcuse.

For these reasons I suggest a sustained application of the work of Marcuse would contribute to the critical understanding of organisations. This application offers

insights in terms of the critique of culture, 'new forms of control' and the general critique of the ideological nature of scientific rationality. To clearly expound this, I develop a detailed analysis of the work of Marcuse in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. I extrapolate key critical theoretical constructs from the work of Marcuse and apply them to an analysis of the specifics of (neo)Human Relations managerial attempts to deal with cultural and subjective aspects of organisations. This amounts to an ideology-critique grounded in the social theoretical locus of a Marcusean analysis. However, as detailed in chapter 3, and in order to as it were 'pin down' the ideological nature of certain managerial discourses, a 'depth hermeneutic' method is employed.

Therefore, after an account of the 'social analysis' provided by Marcuse, I return to this 'depth hermeneutic' method.

Chapters 8 and 9 reveal the specifics of both the 'discourse analysis' and 'interpretation of meaning' components of a 'depth hermeneutic' study, set against the 'social analysis' component outlined in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. This is in line with Thompson's (1984) methodology. In chapter 8, I provide a broad historical account of managerialist theoretical concerns with questions of human subjectivity, motivation and culture. This is necessary as an account of the historical emergence of the 'human relations movement' (Hollway 1991) as a whole and the (neo)Human Relations management discourse in particular.

The historical emergence of this discourse is related to the triangulated empirical analysis of its leading proponents. This demonstrates the 'leading authors/texts' which characterise the (neo)Human Relations discourse. This forms the 'data' which is subsequently subjected to Critical Theoretical analysis.

In chapter 9, I apply Critical Theoretical constructs to a detailed critical 'interpretation of meaning' of the 'leading authors/texts' of the (neo)Human Relation discourse, in line with the 'depth hermeneutic' method for a critique of the ideological nature of management theory, and its conceptualisation of the human subject.

This thesis concludes in chapter 10 which both reviews the contribution this makes, and highlights some of the implications it has for further research. The Critical Theory of Marcuse includes 'utopian' elements as to the potential for the expansion of human autonomy and convivial relations as the counter-tendency to managerialism, which relate to the more practical-political emancipatory interest found in Marcuse's work. In this way I hope to contribute to a critical theory of organisation which moves within the dialectic expressed by Marcuse in the quotation above. One which discusses the tendency towards the 'containment of qualitative social change' on the one hand, and points to the tendency towards practices which 'may break this containment and explode this society' on the other. However, to attempt to make such statements in the contemporary social theoretical scene, which is often

characterised by a post-Modern and deconstructionist eschewing of such 'modernist' sensibilities is difficult. So before the development of a 'depth hermeneutical' account of (neo)Human relation management as an example of an 'applied turn' (Forester 1985) in Critical Theory, it seems necessary to make some initial meta-theoretical comments on the nature of this thesis in the light of potential deconstructionist criticisms and to make an introductory confession as to the values and concepts which inform it. For this reason I now turn to questions of values, epistemology and research design.

## 2 VALUES, EPISTEMOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

## CHAPTER 1.

### INTRODUCTORY CONFESSION.

"To sing you must first open your mouth."

Henry Miller. Tropic of Cancer

Before one begins to construct one's thesis, develop one's concepts and devise a research strategy, it is necessary to demonstrate some reflexivity to meta-theoretical and epistemological challenges to the status of academic monologues. This chapter therefore deals with some responses to 'post-Modern' and deconstructionist criticisms, declares the values underpinning the thesis, and confesses to an underlying 'epistemological nervousness'. It does so as a way of accepting the 'narrative' status of this thesis and recognising it as one possible interpretation.

It is probably not easy to write a Ph.D thesis at any time, but it is especially difficult in post-Modern times. Here I shall explore some of the difficulties involved in expressing a coherent thesis which nonetheless shows some sensitivity to post-Modern arguments. What I intend is not an exhaustive account of post-Modernism and its effects upon social theory, but a personal account of my reception of the post-Modernist argument, my attempt to digest its potential significance, and to ultimately confess my own theoretico-political position.

So I should begin by confessing that whilst I see some important and necessary philosophical, epistemological and political ideas being articulated within post-Modernism, I am on the whole unreceptive to it. This is because firstly I feel many of the philosophical and epistemological issues were being discussed adequately before post-Modernism became the fashionable label, and that one can be sophisticated in one's reading of such issues without post-Modernism. Secondly, politically I find much of post-Modern theorising idealistic and relativising of contemporary politics and reality. The 'linguistic turn' has done much to divorce social theory from issues I am still interested in. So, from the beginning my rejection of post-Modernism is born of a reading of it and not from a fear of its deconstructionist directions. I am still of the opinion that poverty, racism, sexism, the ecological crisis and the man-made starvation of the 'Third World' are still happening as a consequence of the global capitalist economy.

The attempts at classifications, schema and periodisation designed to summarise post-Modernism are by now too numerous to mention, so I shall not attempt to do so. I agree with Seguin who writes 'The term (postmodernism) is remarkable because of its paradoxical character of denying one thing only to affirm it in the same breath' (Seguin 1994), and I shall explore some of these internal inconsistencies below. To attempt any classification would inevitably be to leave oneself hostage to fortune, and to



sidetrack the debate into an area which I do not really want to write about. However, I have to start the discussion of one's post-Modern difficulties somewhere, which usually means some sort of preliminary definition. So as Gibson Burrell is my Ph.D supervisor, I shall begin with what as far as I know is Gibson Burrell's most recent published 'definition' of the tendencies and directions within post-Modernism. You/he write(s),

Postmodernists suspect 'reason' and validity claims arising from the Enlightenment; they talk of the end of philosophy and the decline of the individual; they see the modernists as producing metanarratives to explain away existing social disorganisation. They seek to deconstruct not reconstruct; they are suspicious even of suspicion. (Burrell. 1994 p.4)

One is tempted to ask that if this is the case, and they really do believe in these things, why do they keep on writing so many book/monologues/narratives about this end of philosophy. To answer that question would require idle speculation, but maybe idle speculation is now as legitimate as any other form of inquiry. One is also tempted to ask where did this universalised 'Modernism' which they are all so opposed to come from? Nietzsche or Dickens, Marx or Hitler, Durkheim or Breton? But all this does not help me to carve out some philosophical or epistemological grounds for the act of writing in

particular institutionalised circumstances, that is a Ph.d thesis. Is it legitimate of post-Modernism to expect a certain sort of writing from the writer, when it is these institutionalised circumstances which declare whether the act of writing has been successful or not? In short, should one be sophisticated, sensitive and nuanced to the post-Modern challenge, or should one get a Ph.D ?. One can already see what a Post-Modernist Ph.D thesis might look like, an interminably self-referential thesis about the act of writing a thesis, a Ph.D about a Ph.D. This is of no interest to me and it is not what I intend to write. I shall therefore return to a more sober appraisal of post-Modernism and a discussion of what it has to say.

#### **Post-Modernism.**

Post-Modernism can be seen as the deconstruction of the epistemological and methodological certainties of what post-Modernists have labelled Modernism. Commentators (Norris 1982, 1992, Jencks 1986, Hebdige 1988) have argued that such a post-Modern challenge has revolved around various common features. The 'anti-foundationalism' of post-Modernism refers to the challenge to any fixed theoretical foundation or tradition as a legitimate basis for theorising about social phenomena. Post-Modernists characterise Modernist social theory as stemming from fixed, and therefore limiting, theoretical positions. In this sense perhaps Nietzsche (1956), Heidegger (1978), Kuhn (1970) or certainly Feyerabend (1975), can be seen as

precursors to the full blown post-Modern epistemology. Post-Modernism deconstructs epistemes in the sense that it wants to connect with an eclectic variety of theoretical starting points and agendas in a way which can grasp the multiplicity of contemporary social and cultural practices, architectural forms and aesthetics. (Derrida 1978, Lyotard 1984, Jencks 1986, Baudrillard 1988, 1989, 1990, Rose 1989, Keith and Pile 1993).

The 'anti-essentialism' of the post-Modern position is the rejection of the notion that any essential theoretical construct, such as labour, economy, technology, the subject, can be easily assumed to form the basis for social theoretical inquiry. (Baudrillard 1975, Foucault 1980, 1991). Post-Modernists have rejected this essentialism in favour of references to the multiplicity of world-views and the notion that 'reality' is socially and culturally constructed. Again contemporary post-Modernism seems to me at least to exhibit features very similar to those discussed by Kuhn (1970) and Feyerabend (1975).

Post-Moderns exhibit an 'anti-utopianism' which connects with their critique of the purportedly misguided and false presumptions underpinning Modernism concerning the notion of social progress (Foucault 1980, Lyotard 1984, Fukuyama 1992). For the post-Moderns, Modernism smacks too much of a utopian faith in science, technology and socio-political projects stemming from an Enlightenment sensibility, stemming from a unilinear conception of history and progress. A loss of faith in this, and a rejection of the

presumed inevitability of progress is what characterises the post-Modern sense. In its place there is a celebration of the multiple lived experience of the here and now.

Post-Moderns (Lyotard 1984) have rejected the notion of theoretical 'metanarratives' in favour of an epistemology which locates all social theory as narrative, stemming from a socially constructed and linguistically shaped world-view. Some (Derrida 1978) have argued for this linguistic basis of social understanding as the vehicle for the deconstruction of fixed notions of reality. This connects with the much talked of 'linguistic turn' in social and philosophical debate since the post-Modern challenge. Some have argued for a move away from total theorising in favour of a micro-orientation and a 'history of difference' (Derrida 1976, 1978, Foucault 1991. See also Hoy 1985, Norris 1987, Cooper 1989). There has been a linguistic (textual and symbolic) turn in post-Modern theorising (Barthes 1972, Bourdieu 1992) which emphasises language and symbolic aspects of social and cultural interaction.

Derrida's work has also inspired a feminist deconstructionism, and its critique of logo/phallogocentrism, as well as a more general feminist philosophy (Lloyd 1984, Irigaray 1985, 1991, Moi 1986, Cixous and Clement 1987, Griffiths and Whitford 1988) and the critical debate this has created (Plaza 1978, Moi 1986, Bologh 1990).

Instead of this post-Modern deconstructionism, I argue for a 'depth hermeneutic' method (Thompson 1981, 1984) for the

critique of ideology understood within the material reality of capitalism. In the light of Derridean deconstructionism, I argue that a 'depth hermeneutic' which sets an interpretation within a wider socio-economic theory is a legitimate interpretation of one set of meanings at least. This 'depth hermeneutic' account may be an interpretation, but as Derrida suggests, all is interpretation. Given the post-Modern challenge, it seem legitimate to argue that supervisors and examiners can now no longer expect a Ph.D thesis to claim universal truth. It seems, given deconstructionism, one can only justify one's own narrative as it stands amongst others. It should be emphasised therefore, and it will be discussed in detail in chapter 3, that I do not claim some version of truth for this ideology-critique. All interpretations stem from a value-laden position, and as such no interpretation can claim to be outside value. In this sense all theory is ideological. There is no arena where value does not operate, and in this sense there is no 'absolute zero' of ideologicalness. However, as I shall explicate below, to ensure that such philosophical discussion does not end in absolute idealism or relativism, and to continue to provide a Critical Theory of existent organisational conditions, I shall demarcate 'degrees of ideologicalness' as part of my theoretical interpretation. This is also explored in more detail in chapter 3.

### **Epistemological Nervousness.**

Given this back drop, the difficulties in constructing a testable hypothesis, designing a research strategy, operationalising ones concepts, and collecting data with any sense of epistemological confidence become evident. This pervading loss of confidence is fuelled by some important philosophical insights which cannot and should not be ignored if one is to operate with any level of philosophical sophistication. In any case some of the underpinnings of the post-Modern deconstruction connect with the necessary deconstruction of the positivistic orthodoxy of the social sciences. However it is illegitimate for post-Modern philosophy to present itself as a historically new contribution to epistemological debate.

The phenomenological, interpretative and hermeneutical tradition includes some of the biggest names in the philosophy of the social sciences, such people as Heidegger (1978) and Husserl (1974), Dilthey (1989), Weber (1949), Mannheim (1936), Gadamer (1975) and Berger and Luckmann (1967). Such philosophical debates have been discussing the socially constructed and discursively derived nature of versions of reality for 100 years! For these traditions, social understanding comes from an acceptance of the contingent nature of social reality and perception which positivist approaches could never grasp. Thus a discourse based inquiry and an interpretative understanding is necessary. Is this really so different to what the post-

Moderns are saying? Methodological innovations within the qualitative social sciences, such as participant observation, ethnography, textual analysis and feminist methods have all been driven by these fundamental philosophical insights into the nature of knowledge and knowledge generation in the social world (Garfinkel 1967, 1986, Douglas 1971, 1976, Roberts et. al. 1981, Denzin 1989). The history and sociology of the (social) sciences has involved the celebrated work of Feyerabend (1975) and Kuhn (1970), who have done much to deconstruct the received view of the objectivity, neutrality and unity of scientific inquiry. Feyerabend has called for the opening up of (social) science to the multiplicity of traditions of knowledge and inquiry. Berger and Luckmann (1967) showed us that reality is a social construction.

Therefore, in connection with what the post-Moderns are now saying, and despite a sense of irritation with their failure to recognise the full historical scope of the deconstruction of positivism, we cannot simply ignore these epistemological issues and their methodological implications. Any social theorist engaged in rigorous inquiry should take such issues on board if they are to do justice to their topic. It is no longer legitimate to pursue social inquiry in a quasi-positivistic way and claim veracity for one's findings on the basis of some spurious notion that one has 'proven the truth' through adherence to some particular scientific methodology. The most rigorously quantified and tested social inquiry is only at best a

partial 'truth' and is at worst a particular value-laden view of the world dressed up to be 'objective'. One should, I feel, therefore accept the narrative status and contingent nature of one's account.

But all this still does not help one to write a Ph.D thesis which attempts to make an original contribution to knowledge. For a Ph.D thesis one must it seems still attempt to articulate a theoretical understanding of social phenomena which somehow connects with, and here even the language lets one down, the 'real world'. A dilemma.

Berger, Berger and Kellner (1974) have used the concept of 'cognitive nervousness' to discuss the partially fragmented nature of contemporary social identity. At the level of epistemology, and in the attempt to deal with this dilemma, one could perhaps borrow this notion and talk of 'epistemological nervousness'; as the loss of confidence in, and the deconstruction of, the basis of the thing one is about to engage in. It is not easy writing a Ph.D thesis in post-Modern times! We can perhaps still attempt to have a meaningful and communicative inquiry into social phenomena despite operating from this position of nervousness.

One's nervousness is made more acute if one still feels the need to construct a narrative which will have (hopefully) some connection with the lived experiences of others, and if one still wants to construct a narrative which is critical. That is, if one wants to operate in a 'Modernist' tradition to construct one's narrative. Logically, this



should not present too many difficulties for the arch post-Modernist. If one narrative is as good as the next, then why not a Modernist one with lots of essentialisms, a foundation, a commitment to a version of social progress which still argues that Critical Theory can make the world understandable (Burrell 1990)?.

One response to this epistemological nervousness is to refer to Eco's (1989) notion of the 'open work'. By the 'open work', Eco means a 'work in movement', a 'field of possibilities' and 'the discarding of a static, syllogistic view of order, and a corresponding devolution of intellectual authority to personal decision, choice, and social context' (Eco 1989. p.15). The dialectic of (counter) tendencies which Marcuse refers to above seems to be a particularly clear example of this approach. Eco discusses the philosophical development of the 'disjunctive dilemma between true and false, a fact and its contradictory, (as) no longer the only instrument of philosophical experiment' (Eco 1989. p.15). He refers to the work of Sartre, Husserl and Merleau-Ponty as the development of modern psychology and phenomenology which '.... indicates the availability of new cognitive positions that fall short of conventional epistemological stances and that allow the observer to conceive of the world in a fresh dynamic of potentiality before the fixative process of habit and familiarity comes into play' (Eco 1989. p.16). In this way Eco recommends an 'open' approach to, in this case philosophical issues and social critique. I hope to

demonstrate such an 'openness'. However the main import of one's 'openness' here is the recognition of it's 'incompleteness', and 'perceptive ambiguity'. For this reason a definitive 'conclusion' to one's work is left open-ended. To do otherwise would be to contradict oneself and compromise assertions stemming from the attempt to be epistemologically sensitive.

This does not imply however that a 'work in movement' has to culminate in 'complete chaos'.

...to sum up, we can say that the 'work in movement' is the possibility of numerous personal interventions, but not an amorphous invitation to indiscriminate participation. The invitation offers the performer the opportunity for an oriented insertion into something which always remains the world intended by the author (Eco 1989. p. 19)

This is especially the case when the 'performer' (Ph.D student) is also the writer (interpreter). Therefore, notwithstanding the commitment to an oriented openness, to the acceptance of the narrative status and contingent nature of one's thesis, and the rejection of the unhelpful basis of 'truth' stemming from an epistemological nervousness, I shall refer to the tradition of radical humanist Marxism (Marcuse 1955, Marx 1961, Fromm 1965). This demonstrates a commitment to what I consider to be the practically possible improvement of social conditions

(Marcuse 1979, Gorz 1983, Russell 1993). I consider this to articulate my 'oriented insertion into the world intended by the author'.

### **Critical Social Theory.**

This 'insertion' will necessarily involve the critique of given social conditions which artificially contain the possibilities for social change and the expansion of human autonomy as a facet of the dialectic referred to in the Preface. Thus what I am here confessing to is firstly that I have a set of values underpinning my thesis which revolve around a humanistic belief in the 'falsity' of the domination and exploitation of one by another. For me this is self-evident. No-one's self narrative and socially constructed reality would voluntarily involve being dominated. This statement can become problematic due to masochistic strategies of avoiding self-responsibility and gaining psycho-sexual gratification by some individuals. However, this is rare enough I feel to allow a specifically societal level of debate to continue on the above premise. Individual psycho-sexuality geared towards a masochistic desire for domination is one thing, a critique of the systemic reproduction of the domination of those who do not want it is something else. Masochism usually implies both certain forms and times of domination and the self is voluntarily given over to it, whilst the reproduction of social and economic domination is systematised, regularised and compulsory. Therefore, interesting though such

discussions may be, I see the qualification around the individual choice of lifestyle and sexual practice to have not very much bearing upon a socio-historical theory.

The second confession I am making here is that I am operating from within a tradition of Critical Theory which, in connection with a set of radical humanist values, has generated its own set of concepts, its own essentialisms and foundations. This orientation is Marxist in general, and refers to the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School in particular. (Marcuse 1955, Horkheimer 1972, Adorno 1973, Adorno and Horkheimer 1979). At a very early stage in my intellectual development I was struck by an intuitive appreciation of the work of the Frankfurt School. It seemed then, and still does, to provide an analysis which I was struggling to formulate for myself, and expressed ideas I myself was only dimly aware of. Since then I have become convinced that such ideas, although in need of development, provide the potential basis for a critical inquiry which both connects with empirically identifiable phenomena and provides explanations of such events. This century has seen two popular literary visions of social control, Orwell's 1984 and Huxley's Brave New World. Whilst Orwell's vision of control emphasises control through coercion, Huxley's version of events is more apposite for an understanding of the post-World War 2 world. Huxley emphasises social control through pleasure rather than pain, through integration rather than exclusion. The social theory of Marcuse is one of the most sustained attempts to

theoretically explain and analyze the phenomena which Huxley's fiction dealt with. I concentrate on Marcuse's work therefore, and apply its insights to the development of a Critical Theory of the empirically demonstrable phenomenon of the attempt to manage culture and subjectivity inside organisations.

Alvesson and Willmott (1992) argue that Critical Theory is characterised by an 'intellectualism', 'essentialism' and 'negativism'. In the spirit of an 'open work', it seems apposite to say a few words about this and why I have chosen to concentrate on the work of Marcuse. The primary reason I shall concentrate on the work of Marcuse is that it has not been fully taken up within the development of critical organisation theory. It offers the potential for a significant contribution to the critical understanding of organisational behaviour, culture and subjectivity. Critical organisation studies has recently focused to a large extent on the work of Foucault. To briefly comment on the relationship between the work of Foucault and Marcuse will throw into sharper relief the reason for the concentration on Marcuse.

There has been numerous commentaries on the relationship the work of Foucault has with Marxism (Gordon 1979, Smart 1983, Poster 1984, Dews 1989); with the work of the Frankfurt School (Miller 1987, Dews 1989) and as a theorist of modernity (Giddens 1991). The work of Foucault is often presented as superseding western Marxist theory (Miller 1987, Rose 1989, Knights and Willmott 1990).

Foucault highlights a multiplicity of forces behind historical events as the 'doing of history' which is not self-satisfied with a synthetic history of extra-historical mechanisms, as is vulgar Marxism. However, Marcuse deals with the cultural and existential consequences of power and knowledge (Marcuse 1966, 1970, 1979) and as such is not dissimilar to Foucault. He also offers a dialectical theory which deals with more systemic questions of the rationalisation of domination within the social and cultural institutions of global capitalism. For this reason the analysis of domination offered by Marcuse is more fruitful than that of Foucault, in that it involves a more complete and contemporary picture of the technological operations, existential and political consequences and systemic reproductions of capitalism. One of the problems with Foucault is that it ultimately embodies little consistent political commitment, and does not immanently offer itself to the development of practical alternatives for the radical reconstruction of contemporary organisational forms, practices or the redistribution of power and resources.

The work of the Frankfurt School demonstrates that the relationship between power, domination, reason and the subject had been theorised prior to the work of Foucault. Indeed Foucault himself admits that had he been more conversant with the work of the Frankfurt School he would have taken such a position on board (Foucault 1983, 1991).

Given this admission, is it too strong to argue that Poster (1984) and Miller (1987), as well as many other disciples of the Foucauldian tradition are simply incorrect in some of their assertions? Miller even goes as far as to say the Frankfurt School has no theory of the subject. When writing about Critical Theory and its discussion of power and subjectivity he fails to say anything about the work of Fromm and does not deal with Marcuse's Eros and Civilisation and Five Lectures (Marcuse 1966, 1970). This is simply amateurish.

The Frankfurt School members did not satisfy themselves with a discussion of the relationship between power, Reason and subjectivity simply at the discursive level though a detailed analysis of archival material, as does Foucault. Marcuse in particular contributed to the development a theory of **how** the subject was influenced by power and reason at the social psychological level. In his synthesis of the work of Marx and Freud, Marcuse's declared aim is to bring to our attention the 'hidden political trend' in Freud's late meta-sociological work, and to historicise Freudian theory of the relationship between subjective existence and civilisation. In Eros and Civilisation, Marcuse develops a theory of power which presents a picture of how social, cultural and interpersonal relationships of power **produces** a subjectivity, a set of attitudes and behaviours, what Marcuse calls a Performance Principle. It is a misrepresentation of the work of Marcuse to claim there is no theory of the production of the individual

subjectivity through power.

Despite this, Foucauldianism seems to claim at one and the same time, that there exists within the work of the Frankfurt School both an essentialist theory of subjectivity and no theory of subjectivity! It has been argued (Poster 1984) that Foucault's concept of power-knowledge and his 'reason-in-history' thesis confronts the notion of reason as the arbiter of historical truth and reality. On the other hand the Frankfurt position is presented as confused and essentially flawed in that they held on to some notion of essentialist, Enlightenment reason. This, it is argued implies an immanent connection between reason and freedom; a notion of universal truth through reason; and therefore a theory of an essential subjectivity. However this fails to take account of the practical political commitment of the Frankfurt agenda to the practical possibility of human improvement through the amelioration of the material struggle for survival given historical possibilities. This demonstrates a continued commitment to a notion of reason as the articulation of the potential for social change. It also signals the refusal to descend into either relativism or 'terminal disengagement' (Norris 1992). This refusal of the nihilistic despair which characterises the more Nietzschean pronouncements of Foucauldian post-modernism saves the Frankfurt position from overly academicist irrelevance. For someone like Marcuse, as a representative of the more practical-political side of the Frankfurt School (Kellner 1991),



reason is not so much about truth as the practical realisation of social improvement of the material and existential conditions of life. Again anyone really familiar with this work would know that the negative philosophy of the Frankfurt School should not be easily characterised as having an unproblematic and simplistic conception of truth, reason or reality. Indeed it was the Frankfurt School that did much to put such agendas on the intellectual map in the 1930's and 1940's (Marcuse 1955, Horkheimer 1972, Adorno 1976, Adorno and Horkheimer 1979). Foucault's position is revealing in that he is able to raise questions of how power operates on the body, of how '...the body is marked, positioned, temporalised, collected, and so forth'. This is useful, but again it ante-dates significant work by the Frankfurt School (Marcuse 1955, 1964, Habermas 1971a, 1971b), whose analysis of the 'science' of power involves an analysis of the motives and distributions of power which gave rise to these technologies. The question of **why** particular technologies were developed at particular times and not other technologies of power are discussed by the Frankfurt School. The application of the work of Marcuse contributes to the critical organisation theory of the specifically capitalist technologies of power as they act on the subjective, to produce behaviour in organisations. Marcuse shows how power operates to produce a culture designed to reproduce existing authority relations and a culturally compliant attitude within the self. For Marcuse

the demarcation between the mode of information, symbolic and cultural communication, the politics of language and the mode of production is spurious. Given a Marcusean analysis, the link between culture and the operation of power is related to the nature of information, discourse and communication as a route to the increase of industrial production and organisational control.

On the concept of ideology, Foucauldians (Poster 1984, Miller 1987, Rose 1989) argue that Marxism uses the concept of ideology in connection with the notion of 'false consciousness'. Whilst there is obviously some truth in this, it is a crude formulation and does not capture the full significance of the development of the concept of ideology within western Marxism in explaining social and cultural reproduction. Foucauldianism posits the superiority of the concept of power-knowledge over ideology. Firstly it suggested there is no absolute truth as an epistemological grounds for the critical demarcation of ideology and non-ideology. Secondly, Foucault's anti-humanism argues that the locus of ideology in ideas and subjective consciousness prevents an analysis of the relationship between reason and power, which the analysis of 'discursive practices' through the concept of power-knowledge can facilitate. Thirdly the Marxist conception of ideology suggests that the production of ideas is determined by the mode of production, whereas Foucault argues that power-knowledge stem from relationships between knowledge, discourse and power situated in institutional

relations at the micro level. As Poster puts it 'Discourses, for Foucault, are already powers and do not need to find their material force somewhere else, as in the mode of production' (Poster 1984. p. 87, see also Poster 1991)

In response to this critique of the Marxist concept of ideology one can make the following points. Firstly, as chapter 3 will show, the Frankfurt School conception is not based upon some demarcation between truth and falsity, but on ideology as the arresting of the potential for historical social, economic, political and cultural change. The epistemological demarcation between truth and falsity is an orientation born of positivism which is anathema to the Frankfurt School. Secondly, the situating of the Marxist concept of ideology simply as a consciousness orientation which neglects social and cultural practices is to deny the full complexities of Marxism. To present the Marxist concept of ideology in this idealistic, non-dialectical way is incorrect. Thirdly, the Foucauldian separation of 'discursive practices' from social and economic relations, and the positing of discourse over social and economic factors is problematic. This separation and its implicit language-centredness is not born out by empirical and historical investigations. The control strategies making up (neo)Human Relations management show that the development of communicative strategies of power is directly related to the reproduction of the capitalist mode and relations of production. For these reasons the

Marxist concept of ideology, as outlined in chapter 3 is a useful analytical and critical tool.

For these reasons I contend that the application of the work of Marcuse, given his critical social psychological analysis of how power operates upon subjectivity; his insights into the nature of power and ideology; his analysis of culture, language and discourses; and the relationship between power, reason and rationality leading to certain technologies; all have relevance for the development of a critical theory of organisation over and above the fairly well developed Foucauldian perspective in organisation studies.

Thus I am confessing not only to the adoption of a value position, but to the reliance of several key, essential concepts which emanate from this position. It seems advantageous to declare these concepts now.

All narratives need characters. I have already contended that all social theoretical positions are informed by a set of values. It is not only more honest but more theoretically complete to be self-reflexive as to these underpinning values. The concepts of central importance for critical social theory, at least as far as this inquiry goes are totality, ideology, the subject and, perhaps more implicitly used here, alienation. The use of these concepts connects with another central feature, that of dialectics, as used from within the humanist Marxist approach of historical materialism (Marcuse 1955, Marckovic 1974, Sayers, S 1985).

Totality as it is understood here proposes that whilst discrete social and historical phenomena can be analyzed, this analysis should be located within a wider conception which connects discrete analyses to the social and historical context within which they are found (Novack 1978, Jay 1991). A study of organisations is related here therefore to a study of capitalism and the social, economic, political and cultural relations which make it up. It is assumed here that we live in a capitalist society, and that the nature of this totality has a bearing on the nature and strategies of management and organisations.

Ideology as it is understood here refers to the process of social and cultural reproduction whereby distinctly capitalist power relations are maintained. A much fuller discussion of the status, use and development of the concept of ideology is discussed in chapter 3. Suffice to say here that it is understood as the process whereby, in the realm of ideas, the contradictions inherent within capitalist relations are given an illusory mediation, or 'solved' (Larrain 1979, 1983, Parekh 1982, Thompson 1984, 1990, Eagleton 1991).

Alienation is understood as one outcome of this process of social and cultural reproduction, and its political connotations, as it exists as the experiential level. That is, given the material reproduction of the totality of capitalism and its coincidence with the ideological reproduction in the realm of ideas, the individual often

experiences themselves, their potential for freedom and creativity, others and institutions, as something alien to the self. Individuals come to reduce themselves and are reduced to the status of objects, come to be objectified within an alien power. (Fromm 1961, 1978, Ollman 1976, Markovic 1982). This may or may not be experienced as such, which means we may be able to talk of an objective aspect to alienation whereby one's human ability for creativity is redirected as a consequence of the material organisation of society. We may however talk of the subjective aspect of alienation whereby individuals may or may not 'feel' alienated. These are obviously thorny philosophical issues which would require another thesis to fully explore. For this reason the notion of alienation is not fully explored below but remains implicit and informs the basic humanistic perspective which inspires this thesis as a whole. However, the notion that individuals could regularly become more than they at present are, and that the current organisations of society, economy and culture regularly arrests this potential is the most basic 'truth' which informs this analysis (Marcuse 1955, Fromm 1965). It is this notion which is the defining characteristics of the 'humanism' to which I have referred.

Of course subjectivity (and recently 'identity') is a contested concept. The Critical Theory which underpins this thesis generates a particular theoretical position on subjectivity which should be signalled. Many contemporary theoretical orientations which focus on the socio-cultural

shaping of subjectivity relate it to the consumption of culture industry products (Featherstone 1991b, Nava 1992, Shields 1992); the construction of 'privatised' lifestyles (Logan 1985); language (Hanson 1986, Homachek 1992) and the body (Ponce 1978, Brunt 1989, Featherstone 1991a, Giddens 1993). Rose (1989) and Cohen and Taylor (1991) suggests that through 'therapy', as an expression of the self in terms of one's symbolic and cultural presentations divorced from any other aspect of everyday life, one can enable and create a 'self'. Several theorists (Leadbeater 1989, Mort 1989, Featherstone 1991a, Giddens 1991, Shields 1992, Bocock 1993) have argued for the celebration of individual difference as demonstrated through consumption, posited as forming the basis for a new 'politics'. This is an example of the post-Modernist cult of consumption and of 'symbolic exchange values' stemming from a Baudrillardian perspective. These are the worst excesses of the idealistic position which touts 'lifestyle' as the locus of subjectivity. The philosophical basis for this post-Modernism and Baudrillardianism comes down essentially to the discursive and textual emphases, the much hyped 'linguistic turn' in cultural clothing. Norris (1992) has shown with great clarity the ridiculous, self-congratulatory smugness of this aloof position, what he calls 'terminal disengagement'.

Mass media communication is also held to be an aspect in this shaping of identity (Lash and Urry 1987, Castells 1991, Featherstone 1991b, Giddens 1991, Poster 1991,

Baudrillard 1992). It is argued that interaction with and communications from the electronic medias are increasingly coming to form a major aspect of an individuals experience and meaning (Baudrillard 1992).

Within the deconstructionism discussed above, is a deconstruction of an essential subjectivity. Marxist theory is held to have an essential subjectivity within it, and as such produces a flawed theory of power which only sees power as the repression of this essential subjectivity (Foucault 1980, Miller 1987, Rose 1989). In response to this I shall use the concept of subjectivity in a self-reflexive way (Henriques 1984). Subjectivity is not taken as something fixed nor as a simple emanation of the free-willed individual. Rather, the notion of subjectivity is understood in relation to the social, cultural and interpersonal processes which constitutes and maintain a sense of self, identity and subjective existence. Subjectivity is used here to denote something which emanates from a process, understood in a way which rejects an individual-society dualism.

Contemporary critics of post-Modern and idealist notions of subjectivity (Bauman 1989, Lodziak 1990) express a critique of the various but heteronomously controlled social forms and practices as a locus for identity. The general conflation of identity with these factors of consumption, as with the notion that an identity can be formed within heteronomously organised work, fails to recognise the externally controlled nature of the culture industry



production. To equate this with an individual sense of meaning, self-expression and agency is to reduce what being human is, or could be, to a set of externally derived and controlled functions, whether it be in production or consumption, what Marcuse (1966) has called the 'Performance Principle'. This is the reduction of the concept of self and identity to a trivial concern with symbolic manifestations and paraphernalia. More significantly, to equate the performance of such pre-established functions as production and consumption with identity is evidence of the loss of meaning in these 'troubled times' (Lasch 1985), of 'ontological insecurity' (Giddens 1991) and 'identity crises' in general. To reduce identity to consumption shows how little the concept of identity means in the hands of Rose (1989), Leadbeater (1989), Nava (1992) and the like. Furthermore, these so called analyses of the question of identity simply reproduce the symptoms of the problem of 'identity crises' by positing what is as what should be, and ignoring potential futures. They ultimately become representatives of a cultural version of the 'end of history' thesis (Fukuyama 1992).

If it can be accepted that identity relates to the development by the individual of a sense of self and meaning, then we can see how identity often develops through reference to particular social encounters where significant others are a source of self-evaluation. (Goffman 1969, Laing 1971). That is, identity often

develops through significant practices, social arenas and interaction with others. It can be argued that these sources of identity formation are being increasingly brought under external instrumental control. The Freudian tradition and its politicisation by Critical Theory has offered one way of theorising the external nature of identity formation. The notion of the super-ego and the internalisation of the other through identification motivated by the avoidance of guilt forms the basis of this theory. (Freud 1930, Fromm 1941). The Freudian analysis of the group has shown that through the socio-cultural and psychological dynamics of the group, the individual can come to subsume themselves and their subjectivity into the group and group culture (Freud 1921, 1930, Lasch 1985, Hinshelwood 1987), as well as the 'group-mind' (Janis 1972, 1982). Fromm (1941) has shown how the individual has an existential incentive for avoiding autonomy and responsibility and to 'escape from freedom' given the discomfort of the knowledge of the lack of 'transcendental guarantees'. Marcuse (1966) adopting Freudian concepts has shown this, and developed this 'hidden political trend' within Freudian social psychology. Marcuse radicalises the Freudian notion of the super-ego and shows how it comes to be an externally imposed mechanism of control of subjectivity. Marcuse has shown how an externally derived 'super-ego' becomes a social and political moment of control rather than a purely psychic phenomena. Having said the above, I understand identity from within

the context of a wider humanistic concern with individual potential to become other than what one already is, that is, de-alienation (Marcuse 1966, Maslow 1970, Fromm 1978, Rogers 1980). A more useful focus would be on self-determination and the ability to both determine and maintain an autonomous identity over and above heteronomous 'identities'. It is for these reasons that I argue for a theory of 'identity needs' in relation to a materialist psychology in chapter 4, and the practical possibilities of expanded autonomy. This notion of 'identity needs' develops from the view that we should take the issue of (existential) resources seriously for both the development and maintenance of both subjectivity and action as the precursor for a self-determined identity. Only through a discussion of subjectivity and action geared towards the expansion of autonomy does Critical Theory of identity become meaningful. It is for this reason that a discussion of identity, subjective meanings and senses of self cannot be separated from a discussion of the politics of resource distribution. This is not to attempt to delineate a priori what the needs of each individual are, but is to argue for the necessity of the theoretical discussion of resources in the same context as subjectivity. Thus one can demonstrate a sophisticated awareness of the contingent nature of subjectivity without following the conservative post-Modern argument stemming from an idealist, language or image-centred theory of subjectivity. Indeed to fully accept the social, cultural and discursive shaping of subjectivity, as

with the social construction of knowledge and 'truth', one should also recognise the political shaping of subjectivity, along with knowledge and discourse.

Thus whilst being sensitive to individual difference, I confess to also argue for this social dimension as part of my humanist Marxist underpinnings. This involves the rejection of a theoretical emphasis on solely individual or privatistic action within a market orientation. I am critical of this as the basis for the discussion of subjectivity and self-creation as it neglects a discussion of how a more pleasurable identity can be formed and maintained. To form an identity is not synonymous with the maintenance of an identity. To form an identity through one aspect of life can mean that other aspects of life are temporarily foreclosed. The reliance on market activity for the formation of an identity makes that identity unstable, contingent and inherently problematic. Identities formed through the consumption of paraphernalia from the culture industry are often consistently future oriented, where one more artifact is always 'needed' for a complete 'identity'. Convivial relationships to others and to the social and natural environment relates to the relevance of Critical Theory of organisations and the expansion of autonomy. Central to this is the maintenance of a distinction between subjectivity as a function of organisationally manipulated and managed culture on the one hand, and subjectivity in an expanded realm of autonomy and authenticity on the other. The radical redistribution of material and existential

resources as a practical possibility is held to be politically desirable in terms of a social policy aimed at solutions to urgent problems of social and urban life. Long term unemployment and homelessness can be seen as the redistribution of time and space. These processes of redistribution could be humanised. This brings us to the question of social justice.

The contemporary theorists who focus on the desirability and practical possibility of the humanisation of life (Lefebvre 1971, 1976, Harvey 1973, 1993, Illich 1973, Fromm 1978, Habermas 1981, 1989, Gorz 1983, 1989) all have, implicitly or explicitly a radical theory of social justice. Whilst these theories of social, economic and spatial justice have to deal with the notion of the 'difference' of subjectivity, they also are able to argue for social improvement. Whilst the concept of justice should be recognised as socially and politically shaped, this should not collapse into relativism.

We can demarcate between self-determined identity and externally derived and imposed identity. An ideology-critique of the (neo)Human Relations managerial strategies designed to manage subjectivity and culture is a specific example of subjectivity coming increasingly under instrumental control connected to commercial interest.

### **Summary.**

This chapter has been both epistemological and political. I have been at pains to demonstrate some familiarity with

post-Modern epistemological debates by way of a critique of their consequences. I have shown how such post-Modernism leads to meta-theoretical problems in constructing a coherent and defensible thesis, and to 'epistemological nervousness'. My response to this has been to argue for an 'open work' which is self-reflexive to its own value-orientation. I have been concerned to highlight the value-orientation which underpins this thesis because, despite epistemological nervousness, I intend to construct the 'modernist' narrative nonetheless. As a result it has been necessary to declare the specific theoretical base and values which inform this endeavour, namely humanism generally, humanist Marxism and Critical Theory. As part of this I have articulated the concepts central to Critical Social Theory, both in relation to social theory as a whole and to the question of subjectivity in particular. Part of this confession has been to declare my concentration on the work of Marcuse, as holding both the potential for developing the specifics of a critical theory of organisations, and also contributing to a critical theory of subjectivity.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the concept of ideology and the development of a methodology for its sophisticated use which deals with notions of the discursive construction of contingent social conditions, will form the main vehicle for this critical theory of organisations. It is argued that this position, narrative though it may be, underpinned by values as it certainly is, is more beneficial to

critical social inquiry than the pedestrian case-study orientation which pretends at neutrality, or the post-Modern 'terminal disengagement' (Norris 1992). As I have shown, this is to provide a critique more than to prove the 'truth'; concerned to show precisely what the deconstructionists suggest, that social reality is contingent and socially constructed.

In addition to an ideology-critique, this thesis will be implicitly concerned with the potential for the development of structures and relations which embody an expanded scope for autonomy (Lefebvre 1968, Illich 1973, Gorz 1989). The preliminary discussion of subjectivity, against the backdrop of humanism places this concern with expanded (organisational) autonomy, de-alienation and social justice at the centre of a Critical Theory trajectory. This concern resonates with the dialectical inquiry into potential futures highlighted above (Marcuse 1955, Marckovic 1974, Novak 1978, Sayers, S. 1985, Ollman 1993).

The exploration of these social and the political concerns will proceed through the application of the specific details of Marcuse's Critical Theory to the concrete pronouncements found in the history of management and organisational theory's concern with the subject. Such theory will be approached as something of a data-base. The organisation will not be approached from a position which is implicitly informed by a concern to somehow or other 'improve' the organisation. It is proposed that the organisation embodies many of the features of the social,

cultural and ideological process of reproduction I am concerned with here at a more general level.

In pursuit of this applied Critical Theory, and to continue to establish the epistemological possibilities for it, I shall discuss in further detail the central concept of ideology and a methodology for its study in chapter 3. I shall explore in detail the relevance of the work of Marcuse in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. However, it is necessary to discuss the development of existent critical organisation theory. This will enable a better appreciation of the contribution that the application of Marcuse's Critical Theory to the analysis of organisations and the ideological nature of (neo)Human Relations management may offer. As the next chapter will show, existent critical theories of organisation tend to revolve around the work of Foucault, the Marxist underpinnings of Labour Process Theory, growing references to the work of Habermas and the use of social psychological concepts for a critical appraisal of organisational behaviours and interactions. A consideration of these orientations will enable the explication of how and why the application of the work of Marcuse contributes to the development of the critical theory of organisations.



## CHAPTER 2.

### EXISTENT CRITICAL ORGANISATION THEORY.

In chapter 1, some initial 'confessions' were made concerning the trajectory and underlying values which inform this thesis. This refers to the attempt to contribute to the critical theory of organisations. However, before one can proceed with this, it is necessary to survey some of the contributions to this field made so far. This survey will not be exhaustive, but will concentrate upon those contributions which are most clearly focused upon the questions of culture and subjectivity in organisations, as they relate to questions of power and ideology. A consideration of these themes will help to show why the application of the work of Marcuse contributes to the critical theory of organisations.

#### **Critical Organisation Theory.**

Critical themes are being taken up within contemporary organisational theory, especially at the theoretical level (Knights and Willmott 1982, 1985, 1990, Fay 1987, Mumby 1988, Alvesson 1989, Hassard and Pym 1990, Alvesson and Willmott 1992, 1993, Willmott 1993). In particular Alvesson (1989) and Alvesson and Willmott (1993) have attempted to develop and apply a Critical Theory perspective to organisational studies. Such theorists see themselves as

developing a nascent trend within management theory. Having said this, it has also been argued (Alvesson and Willmott 1992) that the 'intellectualism', 'essentialism' and 'negativism' expressed by Critical Theory has led to 'the marginalisation of Critical Theory within management and organisation studies' (Alvesson and Willmott 1992. p.438). They see their work as demonstrating a commitment to a 'deep appreciation' of the philosophical foundations of Critical Theory, whilst also being concerned with 'reformulating' management. They argue that the application of Critical Theory to management and (implicitly) Labour Process Theory is necessary in that the development of a Critical Management Studies is '...not fully comprehensive'. Alvesson and Willmott want to improve management through this 'critical turn'. However, it is my contention that whilst such a critical organisational theory has developed in recent years, it has done so largely through taking up the works of either Habermas or Foucault. As such it has been neither 'fully comprehensive' nor can it claim to have fully developed a 'deep appreciation' of all the strands within Critical Theory. It is to overcoming some of these shortfalls that I hope to contribute.

Some of the contributions which have been made to the analysis of organisational culture and subjectivity are surveyed below. It is necessary to provide a brief account of these developments in the critical theory of organisations so as to articulate the contribution which

the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School can make to organisation theory which is developed in subsequent chapters. This will refer explicitly to the work of Marcuse, and contribute to a Critical Theory of the management of culture and subjectivity as ideological.

#### **Foucauldian Organisation Theory.**

Any inquiry into the question of subjectivity in organisations would be incomplete without a consideration of the influence of Michel Foucault's work. This has been a major contribution to critical theories of organisations in recent years. In this section I shall deal only with the significance of Foucault's institutional history (Foucault 1971, 1977) and not with his more epistemological and metaphysical writings. It may be argued that this is to do an injustice to the full complexity of Foucault's work, but to inquire into the epistemological work of Foucault would be to detract from the focus of the thesis as a whole. The essential significance of the work of Foucault is here taken to be that he provides a history of institutional power as it impacts upon subjectivity. His work revolves around the analysis of firstly, the subjectification of the individual as the focus of organisational discipline; secondly, the normalisation of individual behaviour through the definitional power of organisations for the Judgement of the subject; thirdly, and most famously of all, the consequences of the impact upon subjectivity given Panoptic surveillance; and fourthly the category of power-knowledge

and the simultaneity of the production of knowledge/discourses with the (re)production of power-relations. These themes illuminate the general concern of this study with the relationship between power and subjectivity.

A Foucauldian perspective on this question holds that power and subjectivity have been for too long separated in social theory and that the operation of power coincides with the production of subjectivity and discourse. Foucault sees power as not just acting negatively to repress an essential subjectivity, but also as creating the subject (Miller 1987, Burrell 1988, Clegg 1989, Rose 1989). Power initiates 'regulatory practices of the self' according to this view. Clegg (1989) points out that disciplinary practices manifest in organisations stem from forms of knowledge and meaning creation, that such disciplinary practices are 'knowledge constituted' in both texts and 'definite institutional and organisational practices'. Given the diffuse, pluralistic nature of 'discursive practices' and the rejection of notions that discourse is immanently linked to any one monolithic constellation of interests, the Foucauldian perspective is keen to emphasise the shifting nature of 'discursive practices' as sites of power and the need for a situation-specific analysis of power practices and power-knowledge. Burrell (1988) makes the point that the full significance of Foucault's work is to show not so much how specific institutions ('carceral' or otherwise)

operate, but to show that whilst 'carceral institutions' may not be the norm, we as individuals tend to be incarcerated in an organisational world. '...whilst we may not live in total institutions, the institutional organisation of our lives is total' (Burrell 1988 p.232). In particular Foucault developed the notion of Panopticism and demonstrated its fertility for an understanding of the surveillance capabilities of information technology. Mellosi and Pavarini (1980) take on board this Foucauldian theme in terms of a comparison between the prison and other organisational forms. They identify the common origins of the prison and the factory from an implicit Foucauldian genealogy. Mellosi and Pavarini demonstrate this commonality by showing how organisational forms were productive, of both things and men (sic) and the transformation of the criminal into a mechanical subject due to disciplinary domination. That is, they trace a history of the organisation and its impact on the subject from a perspective similar to Foucault's own micro-histories of institutional discipline (Foucault 1971, 1977, 1979). Mellosi and Pavarini do however demonstrate a more open link between discipline and material interest than does Foucault. They argue that the 'anthropological mutation' of the subject given disciplinary mechanisms is linked to the 'logic of the free market'. They therefore link the 'transformation of man' to the imperatives of capital accumulation as the proletarian is integrated into the disciplining of his or her own self. In this way

Melossi and Pavarini echo the work of Gramsci and the Frankfurt School as much as Foucault.

Zuboff (1988) has taken the concept central to Foucault's theory of discipline, that of Panopticism, and the surveillance which it ensures, and applied it to an analysis of contemporary organisational power relationships stemming from information technology. Zuboff coins the term 'The Information Panopticon'. She details through various case studies how the utilisation of information technology operates to ensure compliance on the part of workers, in that it facilitates a 'universal transparency' through information in a way analogous to the classic Panopticon discussed by Foucault (1977, 1979, 1980).

Sakolsky (1992) delineates a perspective for a critique of social institutions and the labour process which draws upon the work of Foucault. Sakolsky emphasises the centrality of the notion of 'disciplinary power' and its micro-conceptualisation of power relations and situations. This emphasises the general Foucauldian proposition that disciplinary practices should not be separated from discourses of power-knowledge. Sakolsky makes the distinction between the orthodox Marxist notion of 'power as property', and the Foucauldian conception of 'disciplinary power relations' which emphasise the constitutive nature of power relations within the labour process. In an attempt to demonstrate this, Sakolsky turns to the notion of Panopticism, and in particular the 'Information Panopticon' discussed by Zuboff (1988). See

also Finlay 1987). Sakolsky is also concerned however to draw out some of the relationships and 'conviviality' between this Foucauldian approach and a more Marxist discussion of the capitalist labour process. The career of Panopticism and surveillance is taken a stage further by Davis (1990). In his 'excavations' of the future of Los Angeles, Davis has shown how the use of surveillance technology and the management of the urban space is increasingly leading to a Panoptic arrangement, where disciplinary technologies serve to either exclude or discipline the inhabitants of Los Angeles.

Dandeker (1990) has taken on board a Foucauldian analysis of surveillance in his historical analysis of bureaucracy and the modern corporation. Dandeker relates the rationalisation of administration evident in the historical development of bureaucratization to the rise of surveillance techniques. Dandeker talks of 'bureaucratic surveillance'. Given this emphasis, Dandeker demonstrates a limited and non-totalised notion of surveillance, and relates his analysis more to a meta-Taylorism which links 'surveillance' to the centralisation of knowledge and records more than to a Foucauldian notion of 'universal transparency'. Dandeker links the surveillance capacities of an organisation to the size of the files held in a surveillance system; the centralisation of those files; the speed of information flow; and the number of points of contact between the system and its subject population. Despite this however, he still attempts to articulate a

theory of the modification of the subject by the organisation.

Theorists working within the field of Labour Process Theory have been influenced by the work of Foucault. Knights and Collinson (1990) in their analysis of shopfloor discipline, managerial control and organisational power have used a Foucauldian framework. They have shown how the development of knowledge, along with strategies of power and surveillance within the management of the shopfloor can be analyzed as disciplinary mechanisms. They have argued that post-Braverman Labour Process Theory and the analysis of power, control and organisational relations needs to be supplemented with a Foucauldian theory of the relationship between power and the subject. This holds that power is best understood not simply as the repression of the subject, but as producing the subject.

Deetz (1993, see also Sakolsky 1992) adopts this Foucauldian stance in his analysis of 'Disciplinary Power in the Modern Corporation'. He conceptualises organisations as political systems made up of sites of conflict, divergent interests and negotiations. This involves divergent forms of knowledge and discourse within the organisations. Thus this analysis sees organisations as power situations, power and discipline is conceived through a Foucauldian perspective as micro and situational. Deetz demonstrates this Foucauldian perspective when he argues for a move away from economic determinist theories of organisational power relations, to an emphasis on how



'world', 'self', 'system' are power-laden conceptualisations born of discursive practices and thus are constitutive of subjectivity (see also Cooper 1990). Deetz posits the superiority of this position in that he argues such a conceptual shift within organisational studies would bring an '...analysis (which) focuses on systems that develop each subject's active role in producing and reproducing domination' (Deetz 1993. p.22). This involves locating a theory of the subject in organisational communication as the 'control of identity production'. Rose (1989) has adopted this perspective in his analysis of the history of social scientific constructions of the self, found in the development of techniques for the shaping of the self in work, the military and the therapeutic professions. Rose links this history of the institutional, social scientific shaping of the self to the Foucauldian notion of power as enabling the self, and to the notion of power-knowledge as developing through discourses. He has attempted to show the nature of discourses of subjectivity which arose in institutional sites, how the management of subjectivity became a 'central task of management', and how this gave birth to a new 'expertise of subjectivity'. Rose adopts notions of disciplinary power, power-knowledge and 'discursive practices' to make sense of this as a history of industrial and institutional psychology.

Thus from this brief survey of some of the critical theorists of organisations we can see the influence of the

work of Foucault. Useful though this influence has been, it has its problems, and as was alluded to in chapter 1, the critical theory of organisations can usefully be developed by the inclusion of a Frankfurt School perspective. This perspective will make 'more complete' a theory of the subject, and will relate this to the specificity of the contemporary capitalist organisational context. It does this by offering a critical social psychology developed against the backdrop of a social theory, that is it offers a dialectical analysis of the subject-object relation. The contribution to this, through the application of the insights of Marcuse to Critical Organisation Theory are explored in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Before that however, this brief survey of some contributions to the critical theory of organisations and subjectivity should involve those which have taken a more neo-Marxist perspective. This will enable the further clarification of what a Marcusean analysis can contribute.

#### **Critical Organisation Theory and Neo-Marxism.**

In recent years the critical study of organisations has also taken some inspiration from the neo-Marxist tradition. This section will not explore in full the whole of the Marxist tradition and its impact upon recent organisation studies, a full account of which is beyond the remit of this study, (Braverman 1975, Clegg and Dunkerley 1980, Clawson 1980).

Central to the neo-Marxist approach are concerns with

ideology and alienation. Also central to the neo-Marxist approach which I will explore in this section is the concern to respond to what has been called the 'crisis of Marxism', a response which attempted to make Marxism responsive to contemporary social and cultural situations. This was sought by making connections and drawing upon theoretical insights which attempt to link a basically Marxist theory of the social totality, with psychoanalysis, social psychology and cultural enquiry. Part of the contemporary development of this, and one route in which it has been applied to the study of organisations as such, is the development of the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School. However, the timing of the developments within a critical theory of organisations has meant that to a large extent the work of Habermas has been taken up by critical organisation theorists (Mumby 1988, Hassard and Pym 1990, Alvesson and Willmott 1993, Burrell 1994). This has meant that, with a few notable exceptions, (Knights and Willmott 1982, Alvesson 1989, Alvesson and Willmott 1993) the work of the earlier generation of Frankfurt School writers has been neglected in terms of its relevance for the explicit study of organisation. Therefore, a detailed inquiry into the work of Marcuse contributes to the critical theory of organisation in that it addresses this lacuna. Those critical organisational studies which emphasise ideology, a linking of Marxism and psychoanalysis, and Habermas' analysis of knowledge-constitutive interests and communicative rationality (Habermas 1981) are not fully

developed. I hope to show below that a more sophisticated theoretical insight into the full significance of Critical Theory, a more energetic application of these insights, and a contribution of these insights into potential developments of alternative organisational theories and practices, can be developed.

The basis of a neo-Marxist theory of organisations is a Marxist theory of society, which argues that an understanding of contemporary social forms and relations needs to connect with a political and economic understanding of the underlying power structures which characterise capitalist society. Thus a critical theory of organisations connects with a political economy of organisations. Marx's only specific organisational analysis comes in reference to bureaucracy, found in the context of his response to Hegel (Albrow 1970, Beetham 1970, Perez-Diaz 1982). Hegel advanced the idea that the bourgeois State was the vehicle for the preservation of the general interest, over and above the particular interest of individuals. The State, and bureaucratic State institutions, given their impersonality and professionalism, later alluded to by Weber (1968), was the arbiter of decisions within the democratic process. Marx's specific discussion of the notion of bureaucracy was by way of a critique of this orthodox, liberal view of the State (McClellan 1986). The substance of Marx's critique was based upon a rejection of the universalisation of the State as a formal mechanism for the representation of civil

society. Marx argues that such a dualism which separates the State from civil society, and represents the State as the bearer of the general interest is a false one, which bureaucratic mechanisms use to legitimate their position and function. This approach has given rise to emphases on the capitalist organisation of work and the labour process, as well as a focus on the political and ideological nature of organisations generally within a capitalist industrial society. This approach suggests that the form which domination takes within the organisational setting needs to be understood in ideological terms as well as, or in relation to, political economic factors. This implies a dialectical analysis of subjective and objective factors, which demonstrates a greater sensitivity to ideological, cultural and subjective aspects than does orthodox structuralist Marxist criticisms of capitalism. That is, a recognition of this implies a 'radical humanist paradigm' rather than a 'radical structuralist paradigm' (Burrell and Morgan 1979) for the development of a critical organisational analysis.

A seminal example of this concern is provided by Gramsci, in his famous essay Americanism and Fordism (Gramsci 1971). Here Gramsci employs the notion of hegemony to discuss both the objective political economic structures of capitalist industry as well as, by implication, the motivational and relational aspects of life and experience embedded within those structures. In terms of the organisation of work, Gramsci argued that the capitalist labour process could be

seen as the transformation of the consciousness of one's class position given one's position in the labour market, from an active agent to the status of a commodity. Labour is reduced from quality to quantity given the nature of the organisation of work in the factory. The rationalising imperatives within the Fordist/capitalist organisation of work involved attempts to 'create a new type of worker', one which is 'suitable for Fordised industry' as the Fordist organisation of work brought with it its own unintended labour management consequences. He goes on to argue that the history of industrial rationalisation and its managerial imperatives is the history of an increasing subjugation of the 'natural' instincts to 'new, more complex and rigid norms, and habits of behaviour'. Gramsci is demonstrating the normative, that is ideological, nature of management within capitalism. This is a history of the new managerial imperatives around the 'labour problem' which is more fully developed in chapter 8. Given this, we begin to see that some of the Foucauldian 'discoveries' are neither as novel nor as profound as some commentators wish to claim (Miller 1987). Gramsci argues that Fordist industry adopted an increasingly 'puritanical' tone in its concern to align the human subject with the disciplinary requirements of industry.

#### **Post-Braverman Labour Process Theory.**

Part of a general Marxist trajectory in organisational studies have been theoretical debates which fall under the

rubric of Labour Process Theory. These have seen developments which point to the deconstruction of those criticisms of management and organisations deemed to be excessively mechanistic. As a result Labour Process Theory has included calls for the development of a more 'full theory of the subject' (Knights and Willmott 1990) from within this largely Marxist orientation to organisational studies. Most of these developments have occurred within the context of a critical appraisal of the work of Braverman (1975). The contribution of the work of Braverman to an analysis of the capitalist labour process and the analysis of managerial technologies has been seminal. However, criticisms of 'Bravermania' and the development of post-Braverman Labour Process Theory have revolved around several points.

Braverman is said to demonstrate an excessively positive and 'romantic' view of craft labour which he contrasts with the 'deskilled' nature of work in industrial capitalist organisations. He tends to present a universalised picture of his 'deskilling' thesis which, it has been argued fails to deal with contemporary claims for the reskilling and hyper-skilling of some workers. Braverman focuses solely upon Tayloristic management strategies in his account of capitalist labour control and fails to deal adequately with 'voluntaristic' and multiple strategies of industrial management. It is claimed that Braverman neglects the resistance of workers to mechanistic managerial technologies, and more generally neglects the potential for

the development of a radical class-consciousness in his 'over-deterministic' analysis (Freidman 1977, Edwards 1979, Clawson and Fantasia 1983, Gordon 1982, Storey 1983).

It has thus been argued that he has neglected the subjective aspects of the labour process and management control strategies, as well as gender issues (Cressey and MacInness 1980, Giddens 1982, Littler and Salaman 1982, Salaman 1982, Storey 1983, Thompson. P 1983, Burawoy 1985, Herman 1985, Edwards 1986, Wood 1986, Alvesson 1989, 1993, Knights and Willmott 1990, Reed 1990, Willmott 1990). The critical theory of organisations developed here analyses those management strategies which do concern themselves with the 'subjective', ideational component in the interests of control.

Theorists from within Labour Process Theory and organisational studies who have begun to concern themselves with a theory of subjectivity include those from both, what Burrell and Morgan have called, the 'interpretative paradigm', (Silverman 1979, Hassard and Pym 1990), and those from a more 'radical' tradition (Knights, Willmott and Collinson 1985, Knights and Willmott 1990, Collinson 1992). Knights (1990) has responded to the 'crisis' in Labour Process Theory by arguing that it has failed to develop an adequate theory of the subject and subjectivity. He argues that Labour Process Theory has traditionally been characterised by a 'dualism' which emphasises either the voluntaristic subject on the one hand or determining objective structures on the other. That is, according to



Knights, Labour Process Theory suffers from a structure-agency dualism. Given this dualism, Knights argues that a 'full theory' of the subject which situates subjective, interpersonal and group features of action in relation to objective conditions, has not sufficiently developed. As chapter 4 will show, the application of the work of Marcuse offers precisely such a potential development.

Knights (1990) and Willmott (1990) argue for an analysis which revolves around a subject-object dialectic (Littler and Salaman 1982, Benson 1983, Clawson and Fantasia 1983, Herman 1985, Storey 1983, Knights and Willmott 1990, Thompson and McHugh 1990). The '....dynamic of contestation constitutes the basis for a dialectical interplay between control and resistance' (Storey 1983).

Attempts to 'bring back in' the subject to Labour Process Theory have proceeded, according to Knights, in the context of the critique of Bravermanian technological determinism and the (Marxist) positing of an 'essential subjectivity'. Knights wants to 'eliminate determinism' from debates around the subject and to '...supersede the objectivist and empiricist contributions of managerial sociology' (see also Burrell 1990, Alvesson and Willmott 1993). In pursuit of this Knights makes the following points concerning the failure of Labour Process Theory to theorise the subject. Firstly that there is a prevalent tendency within Labour Process Theory to emphasises either voluntarism or determinism in an understanding of social action. Secondly Knights argues that there is a tendency for Labour Process

Theory to posit a theory of the individual in relation to isolated, usually deskilled tasks, and fails to deal with the shaping of subjectivity and identity as a function of the network of social and cultural relations within the social organisation of work. Knights is essentially arguing that Labour Process Theory and its treatment of the question of the subject is, due to its non-dialectical 'dualistic' nature, either idealist, deterministic, individualistic or some variation of the three. Knights calls this characteristic within Labour Process Theory the 'failure of dialectics'. From an emerging Foucauldianism, Knights goes on to argue that this dualism also brings with it a 'control-resistance dualism'. Instead Knights points to the over-determined nature of social and subjective reproduction. He criticises the tendency of Labour Process Theory to simply acknowledge the existence of subjective factors as a substitute for an analysis of how and why such aspects occur. However, in response to Knights, one could argue that in turning to Foucault one does not really overcome this failing, as Foucault himself fails to develop a thorough-going theory of the subject but merely posits the existence of subjects/bodies within determining disciplinary mechanisms, despite his insistence on a multiplicity of powers. In turning to social psychology, Critical Theory of organisation to some extent overcomes this problem. Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 attempt to contribute to the analysis of how such operations occur at the level of subjectivity, culture, language and knowledge

production, in relation to an analysis of the background structuring of social existence and interaction, namely capitalism. Such an approach is dialectical in its orientation, in that it demonstrates both a fundamental subject-object dialectic and recognises the flux of potential futures stemming from control-resistance interplays alluded to by Marcuse in the quotation in the Preface.

Storey (1983) has argued that Braverman adopts a view which is insensitive to the contradictions within management (Watson 1980, Storey 1983). These criticisms also relate to developments in Labour Process Theory towards a theory of the subject (Knights and Willmott 1990). The varying, multiple management strategies demonstrated by industry raises for Reed (1990) the notion that management make 'strategic choices', and adopt a 'voluntaristic' attitude with regard to the forms of organisational control they mobilise. Reed argues that it would be incorrect to develop an overly deterministic account of management as being directed by any one universalised approach to management which is insufficiently sensitive to the social, cultural and motivational complexities of work relations (Edwards 1986, Wood 1986, Hyman 1987). He argues for an analytical framework which can cope with the 'breaks and contradictions' within management strategies. Reed shows how, due to an internal dynamic, the guiding logic of managerial practices change over time. It is important to note that the analysis developed in subsequent chapters is

concerned with a critique of this more integrative, socio-cultural focus for authority relations, set against the historical emergence of a (neo)Human Relations management discourse. In this sense it echoes much of this work. However, whilst the specific technology of management might change from a mechanistic approach to a more 'integrative' or 'socio-cultural' approach, the basic technological rationality which drives such an endeavour, that of the 'assembly and regulation of those basic activities' remains the same. Thus whilst what Reed is saying is at one level useful, to emphasise the internal dynamic of the management paradigm, the critique of the instrumental rationality underpinning management remains valid. Indeed if Reed is correct, it is more important to analyze management technology from the standpoint of its underlying rationality precisely given its internal complexity. As he suggests, the concern with 'effective control' rather than with formally rational techniques is what should give a critical analysis of management its impetus (Littler 1982, Salaman 1982, Knights, Willmott and Collinson 1985, Willmott 1993). Similarly Storey (1983) argues that Braverman fails to develop a suitably 'dialectical' analysis of managerial control strategies which involve the coexistence of these various approaches (Willmott 1990). Braverman's 'functionalism' led to a 'panacea fallacy' stemming from his over-deterministic analysis. Scott (1985) shows the connection between the use of the variety of management strategies for control and corporate strategy as

a whole within which management is 'embedded'. Such a recognition of managerial strategies of control can highlight connections between internal managerial 'voluntarism' and the underlying capitalist/instrumental rationality. Recognising some of the internal contradictions within management which culminates in a substantive rationality, suggests an over-determination of the reproduction of power relations. By this it is meant that through a combination of causes, be they material power relations; social and cultural integration; the control and regulation of relational, motivational and other psychological factors as experienced by the worker; the institutionalisation of conflict and its resolution; that a multiplicity of potential strategies available to management produce similar results. This effect is the reproduction, legitimation and consolidation of the existent relations of production which characterise the capitalist organisation of work. The debate internal to management raises interesting issues, but raising these internal complications which challenge the universality of one particular regulative strategy of management does not invalidate the thesis that management as a function, and the development of various management techniques as a whole, is inherently guided by the capitalist logic of domination and regulation. The debate touched upon above serves to outline the projection of such an underlying technological rationality into the socio-cultural, subjective arena.

Pignon and Querzola (1970) point to the 'new language of capitalism' which emphasises job-enrichment, participation and consensus as giving capitalist organisations a 'more radical ideological form' which attempts to 'liberate mass initiative'. Thus they interpret managerial control strategies which attempt to initiate the subject into their own control which is nevertheless understood against the backdrop of the totality of capitalism. Pignon and Querzola argue that managerial strategies developed around these themes can be located within the rubric of (neo)Human Relations. They explicitly refer to the work of Herzberg, McGregor and Argyris and the emphasis on motivational aspects in work relations. The historical emergence and a detailed empirical inquiry into these 'leading authors' as a signifier of the (neo)Human Relations management discourse is fully explored below. This attempts to '...transform into a science the art of organisation and command' at the interpersonal and cultural level (Baritz 1974, Anthony 1977, Hollway 1984, 1991, Parker and Slaughter 1990).

### **Organisation Theory and the Frankfurt School**

The analysis of the 'authority' of capital relates to the more sustained development of a Critical Theory of new managerial control strategies. It stands against a general Marxist backdrop which shows how the production of commodities for exchange and the negation of production for use engenders a reliance on exchange relations in

production and consumption. Given this economic organisation, individual workers are subject to the fundamental authority (power) of capitalist relations despite the rhetoric of participation and democracy. Whether or not to 'be a commodity' due to the commodification of labour given these exchange relation underpinning work, is an important question for the experiential content of individuals. However the point which Pignon and Querzola wish to make is that fundamentally each individual worker '...is not in a position to choose the answer'. In this way Pignon and Querzola imply an objective aspect to alienation, given these particular social and economic conditions, over and above purely subjective aspects of alienation. The experiential questions concerning the production of identities or the presentations of the self in the workplace are more fully understood in this dialectical analysis. The commodity status of individuals as workers and the organisation of work and work relations around this basic feature corresponds to the experience of the 'economic necessity' of capitalist production and the 'political necessity' of control (Abercrombie 1980, Lodziak 1988).

Again the Frankfurt School demonstrates one of the first sustained attempts to develop this subject-object dialectic. Several organisation theorists have taken up the work of the Frankfurt School. Knights and Willmott (1982) have commented upon the significance of the work of Fromm.

They cite Marcuse, Habermas and Fromm as theorists who are concerned with this central demarcation between subjectivity in given conditions and potential futures; between the 'dead objectivity' which characterises instrumentalist approaches to the subjective experience in organisations with the 'live subjectivity' of expanded autonomy (See also Gorz 1989). According to Knights and Willmott (1982) central to Fromm's argument is the analysis of the effects of the capitalist economic structure upon the socio-psychological make-up of the individual. The potentialities of the human individual are adapted to the economically and historically contingent requirements of the capitalist system in general, and the industrial capitalist labour process in particular. The individual actively demonstrates their loss of autonomy by presenting the self as saleable commodity and through actively attempting to 'escape from freedom' (Fromm 1941).

Alvesson (1989) has specifically taken up the work of Marcuse and Habermas, and applied it to the analysis of organisations. Alvesson has drawn out the connection between ideology and the instrumentalisation of organisational culture, given the 'increased need for ideology' in the reproduction of capitalist organisational relations. Alvesson gives a reasonably full account of certain aspects of Marcuse's theoretical legacy, revolving in particular around the ideas Marcuse explicates in One Dimensional Man (1964). However neither Knights and Willmott nor Alvesson relate the developments of a Critical



Theory of organisations to the cultural, linguistic, and social psychological dimensions of Marcuse's work. Their accounts of the significance of the work of Fromm and Marcuse are not fully developed, and therefore neither is a theory of the subject. A contribution to its continued development is what I shall be concerned with below in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. In particular, Marcuse's social psychology offers insights into the operation of power upon subjectivity. As with Foucauldian 'critical theory', a failure to fully connect with this theoretical resource could leave critical organisational theory simply positing the impact upon the subject of certain organisational factors, such as ideology, discipline, surveillance and culture, rather than explaining them.

Critical organisation theorists have in recent years begun to draw on the work of Habermas (Forester 1985, Mumby 1988, Alvesson and Willmott 1992, Burrell 1994). Alvesson and Willmott (1992) argue for the development of what they call a 'critical management studies'. They argue that management should be seen as a 'social phenomena' meriting 'serious critical examination'. They are disillusioned with the 'tunnel-vision' of orthodox, technicist managerial approaches. They advocate 'sociological, historical, philosophical and critical study' of management. It is to Critical Theory in general, and Habermas in particular that the contributors to this volume turn for this critical examination, relating to a Habermasian expression of the concern to renew the emancipatory interest in science. This

highlights the challenge to the myth of neutrality and objectivity of management and the 'broadening of the agenda of management studies'. It includes critical features through a Critical Theoretical inquiry as one (but not the only) way in which the agenda of management studies could be so broadened. Such a Habermasian perspective enables a critical analysis of 'epistemological issues, notions of rationality and progress, technocracy and social engineering, autonomy and control, communicative action, power and ideology' (Alvesson and Willmott. 1992. p.9). In comparison to this Critical Theory perspective in general, and the Habermasian perspective in particular, Alvesson and Willmott see other 'critical' positions such as Foucauldianism and feminism as, whilst still offering useful insights, nevertheless, 'limited'. A Habermasian perspective is applied to various branches of management studies to discuss the underpinning knowledge-constituting interests within management science disciplines. Interesting though this research is, it fails to distinguish between the 'interest' discussed in such a management community with wider emancipatory interest in Critical Theory. These are obviously not the same thing. Such 'critical' managerial studies tend to be very discipline-oriented in that they provide a history of a discipline and an account of its underlying rationality. That is, they do not apply Critical Theory in a very critical way, as such inquiry tends to still be largely discourse-centred.

More critically, Forester (1985, 1992) proposes the adoption of a Habermasian stance for the development of what he calls a 'Critical Ethnography' for the fieldwork study of organisational life. He points out that Habermas sees the discursive field as a site of power and authority in a 'thickly layered texture of political struggle'. For Forester the significance of the work of Habermas is found in the fact that it highlights much more than instrumental action and rationality within communication and agency. Forester emphasises agency within the agency/structure debate. He goes on to argue that the work found in Habermas' sociology of communicative action is an 'unrealised potential for concrete social and political research'. Through detailed analysis of competing and simultaneous speech-acts and validity-claims obtained from case-study, Forester uses a Habermasian schema to critically analyze examples of organisational speech and action. He argues that this shows how organisational interaction produces social and political relations which effect, firstly 'patterns of belief'; secondly 'patterns of legitimacy', which can indicate a management of consent; and thirdly 'patterns of status and identity', whereby individual subjectivity and presentations of the self are effected.

Forester therefore sees such a discursive field as operating within, and helping to reproduce a 'practically and politically bounded rationality'. Within this rationality, organisational members operate to shape

belief, consent, trust and attention, or are subject to such processes. Forester uses a Habermasian perspective therefore to highlight the linguistic aspects to the organisation as a political process. The use of this Habermasian perspective for a critical account of communicative interaction in relation to organisational interests and power is advantageous for Forester, in that it moves beyond strictly discourse/phenomenologically based analyses and enables the study of the context of communicative action as well as its content.

The 'Depth Hermeneutic' using Marcusean Critical Theoretical constructs for a critical interpretation of the discourse of (neo)Human Relations discourse developed below, exhibits similar features to this, and adds to the full development of the critical analysis of organisational language. However, Marcuse has a more fully developed theory of 'affirmative culture' and the 'closing of the universe of discourse' against which this is set.

Similarly, Mumby (1988) has adopted a Habermasian perspective in his analysis of power and ideology within the organisational context, through a focus on organisational discourse. For Mumby the discursive basis for power and ideology within organisations proceeds through organisational culture, symbolism and narrative. He takes up the basic issue of the analysis of organisations as cultures, as systems of communication and meaning formation and relates this to the analysis of 'discourse as power' (Parker 1992, Parker and Burman 1993). Mumby argues

that organisational meaning and discourse does not arise spontaneously, but should be understood as a function of the uneven power distributions and pursuit of interests that are '...part of the deep structures of organisational behaviour'. Mumby argues that in everyday organisational practices and relations, as rooted in discursive schema, the individual is signified and constituted as a social actor through ideologically formed meanings. In this discursive universe, the interests of the materially and discursively powerful are presented through the organisational narrative in such a way as to appear universal. This Habermasian perspective on the linguistic analysis of ideology connects with the Marcuse's notion of the 'language of the totally administered society' discussed in chapter 5. This contributes to this analysis by showing in detail how institutions define 'reality' through their ability to invent or distort linguistic communication geared towards a sectionally interested form of the presentation of information (Marcuse 1964, Kellner 1990). Marcuse, Habermas and Mumby have in common a central proposition, that the structure and maintenance of the organisational narrative maintains and reproduces certain ideological meaning formations.

Evidence of this is seen in the increased organisational concerns with communication (Pondy 1983, Frost 1985, Alvesson 1993), whereby '...organisational culture has become a major theoretical rallying point' (Bittner 1965, Pondy 1983, Hollway 1984, 1991, Frost 1985, Turner 1986,

Lynn Meek 1988, Alvesson 1990, 1993).

The Critical Theory of this involves the distinction between on the one hand the managerialist/theoretical concern with organisational culture geared towards actively promoting and changing the symbolic communication purveyed by the organisation so as to promote and change meaning (Peters and Waterman 1982, Martin 1985, Kropowski 1983, Kilmann 1985). This approach is rooted in the technological/instrumental rationality which is the focus of much of the Frankfurt School critique (Willmott 1993). On the other hand Mumby identifies is what he calls the 'cultural purist' approach. This view emphasises the understanding of the formation of organisational culture and how it is consolidated through symbolism and communication. This view seems to have much in common with the basic features of the sociology of knowledge (Mannheim 1936), hermeneutics (Gadamer 1975) and 'social construction of reality' (Berger and Luckmann 1967) approaches.

Given the above survey we can argue that despite the application of this specifically Frankfurt School orientation of a Critical Theory of organisations, this application is neither as thorough nor as developed as it could be. To contribute to the interesting work done in this area so far I wish to develop in subsequent chapters a fuller account of the Critical Theory for the extended application to the specifics of (neo)Human Relations management theory and discourse to reveal its ideological nature. As already declared, for this

development I intend to concentrate primarily on the work of Herbert Marcuse. Firstly Marcuse's work represents what has been called the 'practical-political' strand within the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School. This is vital in that any worthwhile Critical Theory should have as an immanent feature an alternative vision to the given condition (Alvesson and Willmott 1992). The work of Marcuse can be used to articulate the significance of new forms of organisation and new forms of organisational relations, although such an account cannot be fully explored here given constraints upon the length of this thesis. Secondly the work of Marcuse involves a social psychological dimension which, in radicalizing the work of Freud, offers a theoretical resource for a contribution to the deeper understanding of the social, cultural, linguistic and psychological dynamics within the group/organisation which can be the vehicle for ideological reproduction.

However, one last aspect of this survey of the critical theory of organisations remains. The relationship between social psychology and a critical theory of organisation, particularly in terms of the question of culture and subjectivity is a fertile one. Also, a consideration of some of this work will enable again to throw into sharper relief the contribution made to the critical theory of organisation which the application of the work of Marcuse can make.

### **Social Psychology and Critical Organisation Theory.**

As discussed above, one of the major failings of the Foucauldian perspective on organisations is the lack of any consistent theoretical analysis of the psychological or social psychological component of organisational life and behaviour. The Foucauldian theoretical insights offers useful analyses of the potential impacting of institutional structures, practices and knowledges on the individual. But this perspective asserts this impact, posits that the relationship between the institution and the individual has an effect, rather than attempts to fully explain how and why such effects take place. Moreover, this impacting upon the individual is effected by not just the structure, practices and knowledge of the institution, but is also effected by the interactions between individuals within the context of the institutional structures. That is, there are networks of relationships within the group setting which impact upon the subjectivity of the individual as much as the formal structures and power-knowledge of the institution.

For these reasons a fully developed critical theory of the organisation and the subject should include an exploration of the significance of psychological and social psychological theory. In this section I will comment on the work of some organisational theorists who have usefully taken up these themes. Such work refers to social psychology as it contributes to this analysis through symbolic interactionist, existential social psychology and



a sociologically oriented psychoanalysis. This point of inquiry will also relate to a materialist psychology which attempts to locate interpersonal features of the social process in the context of the material conditions of contemporary capitalist society and its institutional forms. Such inquiry also draws upon group psychology which points to the social, cultural and psychological dynamics within the group setting. It can be argued that this 'groupness' is a significant and distinguishing feature of certain aspects of social and psychological life which gives such features their defining character.

Whilst such a social psychology contributes to a more complete critical theory of organisations, no causal relationships can be gained from such an inquiry. This relates to the notion of over-determination, that the reality of social, cultural and group relations is such that cause and effect logics are inappropriate, and that several factors can often contribute to a certain piece of behaviour or interaction.

In connection with the theme of the ideological nature of organisations, a social psychological analysis is of use in that it adds an experiential and existential element to the critical analysis of (neo)Human Relations management, and the historical emergence of managerial concerns with subjectivity. An analysis of power and ideology is more complete if it is partially informed by the analysis of the experiential changes brought about as a consequence of a group/organisational setting. In this way organisations can

be seen as networks of subjects and subjectivities, and potentially at least, controlled subjectivities. The notion of ideology as the politicisation of the realm of ideas relates at the psychological level a politics of subjectivity. The critical discussion of the intertwined psychic and cultural processes in organisational relations and power thus relates back to the notion of ideology, and 'organisations as ideology'.

Group Psychology has contributed to the understanding of the socio-psychological dynamics raised by the general move within management away from the purely technical aspects of work towards the more social and motivational. It contributes to the understanding of the informal practices within organisations and the generation of the meanings of social action over and above the purely material and pragmatic. The group and the group-mind can be seen as the vehicle for the culture or sub-culture of the organisation. We can see that the organisation and the relations therein form of 'groupness' or 'group-mindedness' (Janis 1972, 1982). Group psychology can be seen as a theoretical resource for the analysis of the 'mental changes' which individuals potentially experience due to the impact of the particular culture of the organisation, as the vehicle through which the 'group-mindedness' is carried. Within organisational settings, it is clear that there are normative tendencies for the initiation of the individual into a group way of thinking, an internalisation of the groups norms and values. The hallmarks of a group

psychological analysis as it refers to the individuals relation to the organisation are concerns with the initiation of the individual into the group and the normative/integrative aspects of this as well as the identification of the individual with symbolic representations of the group/organisation culture. An exhaustive history of group psychology is beyond the scope of this project, but it is clear that certain theoretical research findings have implications for the project.

Freud (1921) and Moscovici (1986) have both argued for the significance of group psychology. Moscovici (1986) and Grauman and Moscovici (1986) provide something of a history to the development of group orientations in psychology. Grauman (1986) points to 'the discovery of the masses' in the history of psychology and social philosophy, and the turn to an inquiry into the crowd. According to Moscovici, this started in the 1930's, with the work of Ortega y Gasset and Jaspers, and developed within the Freudian tradition through the work of the Frankfurt School. Freud (1921) is concerned with three sets of interrelated questions. Firstly with what a group is, how it is formed, and what determines the group. Secondly, with how group membership comes to have a decisive influence over individual members. Thirdly, and most importantly for Freud, what are the mental changes which individuals go through when they become group members. For Freud there is something about group membership which changes the behaviour of individuals, certain acts and behaviours occur

only in the group setting, as the group setting is characterised by a specific and unique group-mindedness within which individuality comes to be submerged (Fromm 1941, 1980, Adorno 1969, Hinshelwood 1987). This process is characterised by a '...sentiment of invincible power', a 'contagion' and a heightened 'suggestibility'. Similar points have been made about groups and the impact of groupness on behaviour by non-psychoanalytical traditions in social psychology (Garfinkel 1967, Janis 1972, 1982, Brown 1980, Henriques 1984). What these tendencies can potentially create within the group/organisation is an increase in irrationalism led by unconscious or preconscious motivations, and overall a loss of critical faculties on the part of the group to distinguish between reality and a self-generated falsehood.

A further important and fertile aspect of what group psychology provides to the general theme of the relationship between the individual and the organisation, as well as the management of the individual subjectivity, is found in the use of the concept of the super-ego as it is developed within the psychoanalytic tradition. It is instructive to use the super-ego as a metaphor for the development of group norms, for the initiation of the individual into group norms so as to avoid social sanctions, and for the development of a group culture around various normative aspects. For Freud this was facilitated in group terms through the emotional identification of the individual with the group or leaders

of the group. Elias (1982) has shown, at a very general macro-historical level that this relationship between the self and civilisation has a tendency towards the repression of the autonomous self. Elias' work relates to the earlier work of Freud (1921, 1930) in the sense that both attempt to articulate the internal features of the civilising process and its repressive impact upon the autonomous being. Elias, along with Freud thus helps us to articulate the macro-historical context for the more specific development of a 'voluntary compliance' and social constraints over and above the more Foucauldian notion of 'anticipatory compliance' (Foucault 1977). Elias shows that this process develops through the conversion of material and physical constraints into self-constraint due to the specifically social nature of communal life. The relationship between this notion and socio-political features of social/organisational interaction is explored during the detailed exposition of the work of Marcuse in chapter 4.

This orientation contributes to the analysis of the socio-cultural dynamic within the organisation. Firstly this adds insight to the notion that organisations are made up of interpersonal aspects over and above the purely structural features. Secondly, such insights enable a contribution to a critical analysis of management's attempt to control such informal, psychological and motivational processes. Management may not theorise what it is they do, but adopt a practical, instrumental orientation to organisational

'groupness' and culture. However such a social psychological account can provide insights as to how such cultures may operate upon the individual.

### **Group Psychology and Organisational Theory.**

Group psychology as specifically applied to the study of organisations has a fertile history. Brown (1980) has argued for the 're-discovery of the group in organisations'. She explores that the way individuals act specifically in their organisational life is at least partially due to their adoption of standards of behaviour, expectations, perceptions and internalised notions of 'correctness' developed within the group. This highlights the nature of the 'belonging needs' (Maslow 1970) of individuals and points to the potential for the control over normative aspects of behaviour, given the potential for the control over group norms and membership. What Brown is in part implying is the same social psychological process identified in (neo)Human Relations managerial theory for the design of strategies of control. The potential to control the facility of individuals to meet these 'belonging needs' brings with it an aspect of normative control, put in more radical terms, the ability to manipulate the potential of individuals to meet their (belonging) needs coincides with ideology.

Schaaf and Fassel (1990) talk of the 'Addictive Organisation' where they apply social psychological thinking for an analysis of the particularly novel effects

organisations can have upon the mental state of individuals. They deal with the notion that individuals can become 'addicted' to the organisation, and in this sense 'neurotic', as they subsume their self and individuality into organisational (that is group) behaviour. Schaaf and Fassel point to organisations in which the 'key person' is an addict. This stems from the assertion that organisations tend to take on the characteristics of leaders, and they extend this notion into the idea that the personality of the 'key' person sets the tone for the organisation. Schaaf and Fassel also point to the development of 'the organisation as the addictive substance'. This situation thus becomes such that the life of the individual feels incomplete without the organisation, and other aspects of life lose their significance in comparison. They argue that the 'promise' of the organisation (which implies normative and ideological appeals made to the individual), becomes something that the individual becomes 'hooked on', all of which brings normative pressures to bear.

Janis (1972, 1982) is one of the best known theorists who have taken up group psychological insights and applied them specifically to organisations. Janis focuses on the group, and on 'groupthink', as the explanation for organisational pathology. Echoing Le Bon and Freud, Janis argues that the group orientation which can effect organisational processes is characterised by 'temporary states of elation, fear, or anger that reduce a person's mental efficiency; chronic blind spots arising from a person's social prejudices;

shortcomings in information-processing that prevent a person from comprehending .....' (Janis 1972. p.2). Due to this Janis identifies the group and 'group contagion' as the potential origin of a 'group madness'; 'mindless conformity and collective misjudgment'; 'excessive risk-taking'; 'conformity to group norms'. Thus Janis refers to his notion of 'groupthink' which exhibits these characteristics as '...a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when members' striving for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action' (Janis 1972. p.9).

Janis, in his case-studies of organisational pathology highlights the effects of group mindedness. We can see how such a groupness has normative influences and impacts upon subjectivity. Because of this normative aspect, the development of a more critical social psychology and its application to a critical organisation theory needs to take on board such a group psychology orientation. This is especially the case when the critical focus is an ideology-critique of the technicist attempts to generate a managerially controlled sense of 'groupness', to facilitate normative effects commensurate with managerial interests. Janis refers to 'groupthink' as universally pathological, as 'a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing and moral judgement...', but it is also clear that it can culminate in a loss of critical faculties which negates critical thinking.



### **A Critical Social Psychology of Organisations.**

Some organisational theorists have taken up this critical theme in interpersonal social psychology and symbolic interactionism (Goffman 1969). This connects with the question of power, the self and others and 'collusion' (Laing 1967, 1971). This also has a resonance with the analysis of the fate of subjectivity in 'modernity' (Giddens 1991, Beck 1992). A critical social psychology of organisations moves away from what Salaman (1980) has called the 'psychologism' of orthodox accounts of subjectivity in organisation theory. 'Psychologism' is premised upon the notion that the organisational structures and processes are neutral and that subjectivity is formed within this neutral arena. Critical theories of organisation in general, and critical social psychological accounts of organisations and subjectivity share a common rejection of this purported neutrality. Sennett and Cobb (1972) and Thompson and McHugh (1990) are concerned to understand how individuals manage their presentation of the self and the consequences of this presentation within the context of a class society. Such views show how poverty and the experiences of poverty have an impact on the perceptions of the self and can undermine the capacity for the control of self and self presentation. Sennett and Cobb found in their research that those with experience of poverty and low status often compensate with an exaggerated concern with presentations of the self through signs of

status and social mobility. Outward presentations of the self can combine with a deference to those perceived of as having a higher status. Whilst the self is active in constructing the self, there is a tendency to do so in the context of the acceptance of background features such as inequality and meritocracy, and a tendency towards self-blame as to the experiences and positions of inequality and hierarchy. Given the material position of the individual, the maintenance of the presentation of the self is problematic and there is an increased tendency to demonstrate and maintain a notion of self-worth in the perceptions of others. This tends to become translated into conformity, fatalism, 'depoliticisation', as well as self-blame. The concern with the presentation of the self thus tends to become translated into conformity within a mass or group orientation. The self is constructed through interpersonal relations and through attention to the perceptions that others have of the self. Due to the capitalist organisation of society and its class/status division, identity formation and maintenance is made more problematic. Due to this tendency the creation of self comes to revolve around a defensiveness in relation to others. It is these features which Sennett and Cobb refer to as the 'hidden injuries of class'.

Several organisation theorists (Knights and Willmott 1985, Willmott 1986, Knights and Willmott 1990, Collinson 1992) discuss subjectivity and its production in relation to organisational power, seeing organisational power as

influencing subjectivity which in turn can consolidate relations of power. They adopt a critical stance towards the mainstream instrumentalist version of the organisation-subjectivity relationship which focuses upon efficiency criteria. They also criticise organisational psychology for its failure to examine the question of subjectivity in relation to material conditions in organisations. Collinson (1992) in particular argues that despite the centrality of subjectivity for organisational practices, it continues to be ignored by much of organisational theory, whose focus tends to be more on structure and procedure.

Knights and Willmott (1985, 1990), and Collinson (1992) focus on an inquiry into subjectivity and organisational analysis which is concerned with how subjects search for 'material and symbolic' security and positive presentations of the self in a precarious organisational existence. Knights and Willmott (1985, 1990) and Willmott (1986) are critical of both 'structural' theories of power as well as those theories of power which relate the dynamics of social relations to a universalised theory of power and the creation of a social order. Instead they argue that an adequate theory of power, and the power-laden nature of organisations, should relate to 'contemporary developments in the theory of identity'. As part of this development, Knights and Willmott start with reference to Berger and Luckmann (1967) and the notion that social existence and identity is constructed along an axis of powerfulness and powerlessness. Here Knights and Willmott turn to Giddens'

notion of a 'dialectic of control', whereby compliance to such a situation coincides with the creation of 'identity-damaging disciplinary controls'. For Willmott (1986) a critical social psychology of identity involves a rejection of the agency-structure dualism. As Giddens argues, this structuration theory recognises that '....structure...as implicated in power relations, and power relations as implicated in structure' (Giddens 1979. p.91). In this way the mutually effective relationship between power and identity can be seen.

This has two immediate consequences which are either implicit or explicit in the development of the general theme of this thesis. Firstly the power-laden context of identity formation, the 'existential' needs of the individual and management's ability to partially control this process amounts to the manipulation of these needs and their satisfaction. This has normative as well as practical consequences and stands in parallel with the more ideology-centred arguments. Secondly, given what Knights and Willmott argue, we can see that 'existential resources' are vital for the maintenance and construction of an identity, in the symbolic or material sense. This question of resources for the meeting of 'existential' needs is also something I shall return to below. In this way Knights and Willmott argue for greater attention to be paid to the 'material conditions of identity formation', and they criticise both Berger and Luckmann (1967), and Goffman (1969) for a relative lack of such attention. 'Existential'

resources such as time, space, effective control over one's practical life-decisions and 'convivial technology' can be seen as aspects of the 'material conditions' for a more autonomous identity.

Collinson (1992) points to the contradictory nature of subjectivity, characterised as a 'dual experience'. Identity oscillates between the poles of self and group membership, concerns with material survival and self-expression, autonomy and alienation. In this way Collinson attempts to express the complex nature of identity and its over-determined nature, stemming from a critical approach which locates subjectivity within power-laden context of the organisation. Through his emphasis upon anxiety avoidance and the seeking of security, Collinson discusses the 'subjective motivation' which propel individuals to engage in 'discursive practices'. He goes on to argue that the focus on subjectivity within the organisational setting leads to an explanation of how 'security seeking' behaviour can lead to the reinforcement of control, in that the fulfilment of the individuals needs for 'security' can be manipulated by management. There are echoes of the work of Fromm (1941) and Marcuse (1966, 1970) here. If for instance the individual attempts to gain security from group membership, this can be 'self-defeating' as the group, or the management of group processes, becomes the arbiter of 'security'. The individual correspondingly loses autonomy. Collinson, and Thompson and McHugh (1990) analyze subjectivity in a way which moves away from what he

considers to be orthodox organisational theory's idealist treatment of subjectivity, to one which emphasises the 'political and material basis' of power inequalities and their impact upon subjectivity.

Thompson (Salaman and Thompson 1980), Salaman (1979, 1980) and Thompson and McHugh (1990) have discussed such 'subjective factor(s)' of the organisation, posited 'organisations as constructions of social reality', and as such the 'reality' of an organisation is not fixed. This interpretative/phenomenological stance approaches organisational 'reality' through an inquiry into the perceptions of members. Such a view points to the construction of organisational 'reality' by participants employing shared rationalities and logics. In this way Thompson goes on to discuss the ideological nature of the instrumental or technological rationality (logic-in-use) which directs the management of the social construction process.

Thus Thompson uses this 'social construction of reality' argument to politicise the routinisation of the everyday referred to by Berger and Luckmann and to relate this process to the ideological self-legitimation of sectional interest within the organisation. In this way Thompson also echoes both Burawoy (1979) and Edwards' (1979) work within Labour Process Theory, as discussed above. Thompson refers to organisational power and control, given its impact upon individual subjectivity and the construction of a 'reality', as an '...over-arching ideas system', and an

'unobtrusive control', which echoes Marcuse's (1964) notion of 'new forms of control', discussed in detail in chapter 5. This focuses upon the culture of organised reality which develops into a taken-for-grantedness. This emphasises the social psychological effects of culture, as organisations come to define 'reasonableness, create news and information, give authority to definitions of 'necessity', and thus in this way also come to define and shape a 'reality' which impacts upon the perceptions of the individual subject.

What these views point to is the 'negotiated self' as the result of 'rationalised performances', and due to the interactive, socially constructed versions of self, subjectivity can be seen to be partially created by the 'social and cultural groupings' within which this negotiation occurs. Thompson and McHugh (1990) refer to the organisation as a specific social site which can have an impact upon identity in that the resources available to the individual given their position and 'structural power within the organisation' will differ. They point out that the structured position of individuals within the organisation restrains identity formation as the organisation forms the contextual backdrop for identity. Within capitalist organisations this context is one of fragmented, commodified relations and decentred work. Therefore this context of work organisations will have these effects upon identity, leading to the fragmentation, distortion and dehumanisation of interpersonal relations

within orthodox work organisations, implying an alienation. Thompson and McHugh discuss the question of subjectivity in relation to the instrumentalist approach within management. They refer to this aspect of management as 'technologies of regulation', developed historically through occupational psychology and sociology. 'At its most visible level, this process can be seen in the internalisation of the norms and accepted standards of behaviour in workgroups which occurs in organisational socialisation' (Thompson and McHugh 1990. p.294).

Thompson and McHugh discuss the role of the 'organisational psychologist' in relation to the ideological reproduction of 'suitable' organisational relations and behaviour at the normative level, and as a 'specialist helper' offering a 'therapeutic' solution to the problems of labour management. In this way Thompson and McHugh echo Marcuse's discussion of the 'therapeutic' nature of one dimensional rationality and its control-orientation, discussed in chapter 7. They also corroborate critical histories of (neo)Human Relations management (Baritz 1974, Hollway's 1991) as stemming from instrumental control-orientations. To summarise the position adopted by critical social psychology as applied to organisations, Willmott (1986) argues,

...critical social theory must penetrate the existential as well as structural sources of alienation. Only then can it understand why, when dominated by the fear of freedom, the oppressed



may prefer the security of conformity with their state of unfreedom to the creative communion produced by freedom. Oppression is sustained by anxiety associated with human freedom as well as by exploitative relations of production and consumption. Dissolving the illusion of security based upon a dualistic, egoistic mode of awareness is as much a condition for realising fully human relations as is the removal of structured inequality. (Willmott 1986. p.118).

Here it is apparent that Willmott is turning to the work of Fromm (Fromm 1941, 1961, 1965, see also Knights and Willmott 1982). It is the development of this Critical Theoretical stance for a social psychology of (organisational) subjectivity found in the work of Marcuse that I shall discuss in chapter 4. Such a critical social psychology contributes to a critical theory of organisation in that it relates subjective features to material aspects of capitalist organisations and relations (Marcuse 1966. Also Habermas 1971b, Seve 1978, Fromm 1980, Litchman 1982, Leonard 1984, Lodziak 1988, 1990, 1994, Zizek 1989). The work of the Frankfurt School highlights a humanist Marxist philosophical stance which is concerned with an inquiry into subjectivity, individual needs, relations with others, creative intentionality and the development of personality within the specific historical and material context of industrial capitalism. The synthesis of the works of

Marxism and Freudianism provide a fruitful route for the development a critical analysis of human subjects who are active in the creation of the self which occurs in and through the active creation/reproduction of structures of domination (Fromm 1941, 1980, Marcuse 1966, Adorno 1969, Habermas 1971b, Larrain 1979, Lichtman 1982, Zizek 1989). Without providing a fully developed account of the history of this synthesis, nor of the many varied interpretations of the thorny theoretical and philosophical issues it presents, I shall turn to a detailed account of one representative of this tradition, namely Herbert Marcuse in the next chapter.

This is because firstly I feel Marcuse provides the most fully developed account of the theoretical fertility of the Freudian legacy which not only relates to the existential aspects touched upon above, but also to the ideological and political aspects alluded to. Secondly Marcuse's work on Freud stands in relation to his legacy as a whole, which is also considered in detail below, which provides a convincing account of other technological, cultural and ideological aspects for a developed critical theory of organisations. Thirdly the work of Marcuse, because it stems from a strand within the Frankfurt School more committed to social change and the 'practical political' (Kellner 1991), can be used to inform the development of theories of potential new organisational forms. Any 'negative critique' should I feel have within it the potential for the development of alternative social,

economic and political organisations. The work of Marcuse has this. It is for these reasons that the work of Marcuse, taken as a whole offers more potential for the development of a Critical Theory of organisations than other Frankfurt School representatives, and it is with these aspects in mind that I turn to a detailed inquiry into the potential for this theoretical development, and for a contribution to the Critical Theory of organisations in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7.

### **Summary.**

The sentiments which inform this chapter can be summarised by what Burrell and Morgan (1979) identify as the 'radical humanist paradigm' in organisational analysis. This involves the critique of orthodox organisational theory and practice; the explication of the potential for new organisational forms; and its relation to the expansion of individual autonomy within organisations. At the heart of this is the critique of the political and ideological nature of orthodox organisations as well as a contribution to the understanding of alternative organisation forms and cultures. This 'radical humanism' differs from a purely interpretative view of socially and culturally constructed organisational reality in that it posits a dialectical relationship between subjective phenomena and an objective material reality. The 'radical humanist paradigm' subjects the objective features of the historically contingent material reality of any epoch to a critique. For instance,

humanist Marxism attempts to develop an understanding of the human, subjective and cultural features of contemporary society as they relate to the specific objective, material conditions which characterise capitalism. It is this component of the 'radical humanist paradigm' which underpins the critique developed in subsequent chapters. Specifically, the critique of (neo)Human Relations management as it attempts to control cultural and subjective aspects of existence as they exist within capitalist organisations. For Burrell and Morgan (1979) the 'underlying unity' of the 'radical humanist paradigm' of organisation theory stems from a common concern with human freedom and autonomy, involving a critique of ideological distortions of human consciousness within the historical and social conditions of capitalist formations. Much of the impetus for the development of the 'radical humanist paradigm' lies in the critique of the instrumental interest in administering social and cultural relations. Thus a central theme within this is a critique of the technological and instrumental rationality which informs such an underlying functionalism. The specific data-base for this critique of instrumentalism and technological rationality is the managerial attempt to operationalise the subjective, human factors of organisational relations, and the development of technologies within management to administer the human and subjective 'component' of work.

As a preliminary to this, and to throw into sharper relief

its basic trajectory, this chapters has been concerned with a survey of some of the salient aspects of developments in the critical theory of organisations. It has surveyed developments within Foucauldian, (neo)Marxist and (critical) social psychological perspectives. It becomes clear that the question of the relation between organisational power and subjectivity is of central importance to all three perspectives. A critical analysis of managerial and 'disciplinary' strategies highlights the power-oriented nature of these formulations. Another aspect of this is the technocratic and positivistic nature of managerialist control strategies, the self-consciously instrumental approaches that management as a specifically capitalistically oriented profession takes in dealing with power related imperatives, and the underlying material contexts of many of these institutional and commercial technologies. This raises questions as to the relationship between the Foucauldian tradition and Marxism in general, and to Critical Theory in particular (Gordon 1979, Smart 1983, Poster 1984, Miller 1987, Dews 1989). My intention has been to highlight the significance for a 'fully comprehensive' critical theory of organisations that the work of Marcuse has, from both social and social psychological theory.

Whilst existent critical theory of organisations (Alvesson and Willmott 1993) criticise the technocratic orientation of orthodox management, they do themselves demonstrate a failure to be 'fully comprehensive', in that their version

of Critical Theory does not develop into a thoroughgoing critique of capitalism and tends towards a discipline-oriented account of the history of various management theory specialisms. As I have tried to show, a more thorough-going Critical Theory of organisations would involve a radical account of the reorganisation of the material and political aspects of the socio-economic relations which are labelled 'the organisation'; it would offer alternatives, challenge the existence of 'the organisation' as a reified entity and tend towards the negation of management as a separate specialist function (Gorz 1983, 1989).

The survey of critical organisation theory from Foucauldian, (neo)Marxist and (critical) social psychological perspectives shows the contribution that a Marcusean analysis can make. Marcuse's work adds insight to the lacunae found in the above mentioned perspectives. His work adds to Foucauldian insights in that it includes a social psychology to more fully explain the operation of power upon the subject rather than simply asserting an influence. However, Marcuse's work adds to social psychology in that it adds a materialist element which moves psychology away from an over-psychologistic emphasis on the individual in isolation from material/group/political contexts. As we shall see below, Marcuse's works adds insight into the theory of power which takes account of cultural, symbolic, technological and linguistic elements. The Habermasian focus on discourse is

extended through a Marcusean analysis of the power of language set against a broader and deeper theory of 'affirmative culture'. All this contributes to the fuller development of a theory of the subject in organisational studies.

All this implies that the concept of ideology is one of central importance. It is one which is at the heart of the Critical Theory of Marcuse and humanist Marxism in general. However the concept of ideology is a notoriously slippery one, and some clarification of the way I intend to use the concept seems in order. It is therefore necessary to respond to both the epistemological challenges to the Critical Theory/Marxist position in general (often labelled as the 'modernist' position), and to various theoretical discussions of ideology to both arrive at a clarification, and to attempt to overcome some of the epistemological problems inherent in the development of a thesis which has the notion of ideology central to it. Given the epistemological 'confession' in chapter 1, I shall now turn to a discussion more specifically applied to the concept of ideology. This will include theoretical clarification, an operationalised concept of ideology and a methodology for its application in concrete social inquiry. I will attempt to show in subsequent chapters how such an inquiry holds relevance for the development of a Critical Theory of organisation. However, before this more substantive element of inquiry, it is the aforementioned theoretical clarification and epistemological discussion that I turn.

## CHAPTER 3.

### IDEOLOGY: CONCEPTUALISATION, OPERATIONALISATION AND RESEARCH STRATEGY.

#### The Concept of Ideology.

Whilst the notion of ideology, and in particular a 'dominant ideology thesis' which enshrines mechanistic, deterministic and 'ideology-centred' views of social reproduction is problematic, it nevertheless holds potential for illuminating critical inquiry (Abercrombie 1980, Lodziak 1988, Mann 1986).

This chapter will not attempt to come up with a single definition of the concept of ideology across all theoretical traditions. It will not consider the work of all the writers who have written on the subject. It will however express the way I intend to use the central concept of ideology. It will also attempt to offer a research strategy and an operationalisation of the concept of ideology to enable a critical conception of it to be applied to the empirical analysis of (neo)Human Relations management discourse. The discussion of the concept, inevitably abstract though it is, will be thus related to preparing the conceptual ground for a more concrete account of management discourse advanced below.

We can begin a process of clarification of the use of the concept of ideology with a basic demarcation between 'liberal/neutral' and 'critical/Marxist' versions (Thompson 1984). The liberal (neutral) conceptualisation sees



ideology as relating to the shared ideas and values of a particular group, class, political movement etc. This conception also refers to the ability to articulate a particular ideology. However this conception is not the one which is referred to here. I intend to concentrate upon the more critical (largely Marxist) discussions of ideology. The conceptualisation of ideology to be developed here will be the one developed from within humanist or 'Western Marxism'. An exhaustive discussion of the more general Marxist conception of ideology is beyond the scope of this essentially methodological chapter. (For a general theoretical/historical account of the development of a Marxist conception of ideology see Larrain 1979, 1983, McCarney 1980, 1989, Thompson 1984). It seems more apposite to express a version of the conceptualisation of ideology as it relates to a potential contribution to the development of a critical theory of organisations. Individuals engage in productive activity are thus engaged in definite social and political relations. These relations and the structures which reproduce them are linked to the material reality of production. The nature of ideas and consciousness are effected by these material conditions. Mental activity is dialectically related to material activity as the two opposites interpenetrate and inform each other within the reproduction of the social totality (Fromm 1972, The Frankfurt School 1973). Such an approach is based on the premise that actual social and economic practice is the beginning of historical investigation of

definite human practices which occur within definite historical conditions. Thus, given this dialectical materialism, Marxism resists the positivist/empiricist fascination with 'dead facts' as well as the German Idealist concern with 'imagined subjects'. The Marxist conceptualisation of ideology is fundamentally based upon the rejection of views which falsely separate the reality of material conditions from the purported 'realism' of purely scholastic endeavour. This is the politico-epistemology for the subsequent development of the discussion of ideology which I shall explore, and in subsequent chapters use for a critical analysis of the concrete nature of (neo)Human Relations management discourse and organisational power relations.

The sense of the critical concept of ideology is found through the critical analysis of the functioning of ideas in the reproduction of the material and power-laden relations which make up this socio-historical context. Critical Theory developed this concept in relation to their critique of scientism, the metaphysical faith in the scientific approach to knowledge and technological applications, which eventually assumes power over social and cultural relations rather than being guided by social needs (Marcuse 1955, 1964, Adorno 1976, Adorno and Horkheimer 1979). For the Frankfurt School, the notion that some version of 'objectivity' can be the antidote to ideology becomes problematic. Scientific 'objectivism' itself comes to be ideological as the 'reason' of The

Enlightenment becomes its own opposite (Adorno and Horkheimer 1979). It is this dialectic and the 'abdication of reason' to which Marcuse refers when he discusses the 'one dimensional' nature of 'technological rationality' and positivism (Marcuse 1964).

A specific case of this general point concerning the ideological nature of 'objective' knowledge production through scientism is discussed by Parekh (1982) in relation to the ideological nature of classical economics. Parekh argues that classical economics can be seen as scientific, in that it is the study of social and material relations and not just the study of abstract ideas; it attempts to study the essence of economics and political relations, rather than just describes the surfaces of appearances; it is not 'base', but attempts to be 'honest', 'impartial' and 'disinterested'. However, whilst such classical economic inquiry can in these terms be seen as 'scientific', it is also 'bourgeois' according to Parekh. Classical economics operates totally from within a pre-established world-view which has politico-economic consequences. This point parallels the analysis below and forms part of the basis for arguing that the managerialist science and technologies geared towards the modification of the organisational subject is similarly ideological. Parekh argues that classical economics is 'bourgeois' in the sense that it studies economic life from within the bounds of the bourgeois horizon and is '... prisoner of the capitalist standpoint' (Parekh 1982). This means that classical

economics looked upon the capitalist economy and society in a way which absolutises, universalises and dehistoricises it.

According to Parekh, bourgeois classical economics sees capitalism and its socio-economic relations as being the culmination of the best elements of its predecessors, as it 'frees' labour, capital, exchange and so on.

Whilst classical economics may in this way demonstrate an 'impartiality', in the sense that it adopts rigorous standards of inquiry and applies such impartial standards to all avenues of research, the content of these standards of inquiry are formally biased. They are formally biased in the sense that such an outlook becomes a closed world-view where the assumptions about the universality of the particular nature of the economy as capitalist are already and always present before specific inquiry. Put more prosaically, only certain types of questions are asked by classical economy, and therefore only certain answers are demonstrated. In this way classical economics is ideological in its very scientificity, in that it '...dehistoricises the present and arrests history. They (bourgeois economists) dismissed the past, foreclosed the future and eternalised the present'. (Parekh 1982. p. 82). As I hope to demonstrate below, this same notion of bourgeois, capitalist-oriented social research as evidence of ideology can be applied to the innate managerialism of (neo)Human Relations theory. Both exhibit this self-limiting and partial view of what it is they are studying.

As will be demonstrated below, (neo)Human Relations management theory assumes a particular, limited view of the nature of the capitalist production process and the power relations involved as the universalised site for specifically organisational relations of power within the reified organisational context. Similar to classical economics, such managerialist theory routinely ignores the total pattern of relations of production in a wider sense, and fails to set their theories within a specific historical context.

This relates to a key feature of the Marxist conceptualisation of ideology, the notion of ideology as the illusory mediation of contradictions inherent in the material organisation of society and the existential aspects of life within such material conditions. Larrain (1979, 1983) provides an extended exposition of the historical development of the Marxist conceptualisation of ideology which is related to this point. Larrain argues that Marx developed his theory of ideology in relation to the more general philosophical discussion of the relationship between consciousness and objective material reality. As we have seen, this philosophical discussion proceeded largely in response to the idealism of German philosophy. Of the Marxist conceptualisation of the relationship between consciousness and material reality, Larrain writes,

...what seems to be the objective reality is by no means a pure datum, on the contrary it is to

be understood as the historical product of man's (sic) practice.... the subject-object relation becomes neither a relation of mere contemplation of an external objective reality nor a relation of ideal creation of reality, but a relation mediated by practice (Larrain 1979. p. 40).

Thus Larrain expresses the materialist dialectic which underpins the Marxist conception of ideology. The nature of capitalist relations imbues such 'practice' with a particular and contradictory character. The development of the capitalist material practice and the corresponding organisation of the social and the economic is based at one and the same time on the active involvement of creative humanity and the simultaneous exploitation and repression of that potential for creative self-expression. Given this basic contradictory nature of the capitalist material organisation of society, an illusory 'mediation' of these contradictions in the realm of ideas is necessary for the reproduction of these 'practical' relations. As Larrain puts it,

As contradictions emerge and reach consciousness before men (sic) can solve them in practice, they are given distorted solutions in the mind.... as men in their reproductive practice are unable to solve these contradictions, they project them in ideological forms of consciousness. Ideology is, therefore, a solution in the mind to

contradiction which cannot be solved in practice;  
it is the necessary projection in consciousness  
of man's practical inabilities (Larrain 1979. p.  
46).

A very clear and concise example of this practical contradiction and the attempt to 'solve' these contradictions in the realm of ideas is found in the specifics of (neo)Human Relations management. On the one hand we see historically the deskilling of work, the hierarchisation of power relations and exploitative nature of wage-labour relations due to the logical development of capitalist organisational forms. This stands in contradiction with, on the other hand the managerial imperative of ensuring in practice the active involvement of the subject in their work and a demonstration of commitment and initiative. This is evidenced by the ideological nature of the management function as a whole, and by the more intense ideological function of normative aspects of the (neo)Human Relations management of organisational relations and culture. This can be seen in the attempt to create a 'solution' in the mind by initiating a sense of identification with ones work, or more probably with the social, social psychological and cultural relations found in the workplace. It is this definition of ideology which will be used in the critical empirical inquiry made specific to (neo)Human Relations management theory developed below.

Thompson (1990) offers something of a summary of the Marxist conceptualisation of ideology which relates to this basic notion. Thompson also provides a useful schema which we might use to extrapolate an operationalised version of the concept for application in empirical study of (neo)Human Relations management. He argues that the basic features of the concept of ideology relate to the understanding of the conditions under which societies in general, and capitalist society in particular sustain and reproduce themselves, in spite of their recognisably negative features such as exploitation and poverty. This basic formulation relates an ideology-critique to mechanisms which secure this socio-economic reproduction. Thus Thompson's (1990) schema suggests an analysis of;

1. The reproduction of shared values and beliefs through the provision of 'symbolic forms' which help to create 'normative rules and conventions'. This tends towards,
2. Securing the adherence of individuals to the social order. The analysis below is a concrete example of the way in which this process may happen, through the study of organisations as ideological systems which have normative effects upon the individual. This connects with;
3. The activities of institutions (the State) in producing and diffusing 'the dominant ideology'.

However, this 'dominant ideology thesis' is open to criticism (Abercrombie 1980, Lodziak 1988).

The view of ideology proposed here falls somewhere between the 'strong' and 'weak' conceptions discussed by



Abercrombie et al. (1980), seeing the tendency towards greater cultural uniformity and ideological consolidation by the ruling class, whilst also recognising the potential for resistance and ideological breakdown. The notion of a dialectic of potential futures, a dialectic of subject and object, lived contradictions and counter-veiling tendencies is taken seriously here (Marcuse 1955, Marckovic 1974, Sayers 1985, Ollman 1993).

Abercrombie et al. (1980) have argued against what they have called this 'Dominant Ideology Thesis' as a set of theories which proceeds through an exaggerated emphasis on ideology, which thereby privileges it as a concept over other theories of power and social reproduction. Abercrombie et al, argue that there is the need for more empirical analysis of the content, effects, generation and reception of ideology. The analysis developed below offers one example of this. They also argue that the existence and impact of ideology cannot be read off simply from the production of ideology itself (Mann 1986). Nor, they argue, can ideology be read off from the mere existence of a particular class. This, for Abercrombie et al. raises questions of 'evidence and methodology' to which we shall return in more detail below.

Abercrombie et al. argue that 'dominant ideology thesis' approaches fail to 'specify the institutional mechanisms', and detail the 'origins of a dominant ideology'. This is also something which I hope to do through the development of the thesis, by focusing on the specific institutional

site as a site of ideological generation, and by attempting to detail its content and attempted impact upon the individual/group within the organisation. I hope to show that there is at least the tendency, given the specific developments of (neo)Human Relations management towards the developments which Abercrombie et al. identify as central indicators of ideology. The fact that I argue that there are tendencies for these developments does not mean that I fully accept the existence of a 'dominant ideology', partly as I do not fully accept Abercrombie et al's interpretation of the theoretical discussions of ideology. This is for the following reason.

As part of their critique of the 'dominant ideology thesis', and its ideology-centredness, Abercrombie et al. focus on 'economic compulsion' (see also Lodziak 1988), as a form of social reproduction and a source of cohesion of a class society. In part this 'economic compulsion' involves 'possession' of economic resources which implies 'control over a specific labour process'. It is central to the thesis developed below that such 'control', whilst being economically grounded and commercially motivated at the level of the organisation, also includes a normative, that is to say an ideological element. As I hope to show in detail, (neo)Human Relations management increasingly involves an ideological component geared towards integration of the individual into the labour process, as well as the technical/managerial reproduction of the labour process as such through overt forms of control. This is the

'voluntarism' referred to in chapter 2. The lack of detail and nuance in Abercrombie et al's attempt to construct a theory of 'economic compulsion' through reference to the labour process only goes to show how important the concept of ideology still is for a critical appraisal of the capitalist labour process, organisational relations and the managerial techniques of control. Indeed Abercrombie et al. write that it is '...possible to see control by management over the worker as a fundamental process, if not the fundamental economic process of capitalism' (Abercrombie et al. 1980 p.162). They seem to see this as a source of critique for a focus on ideology, but it is precisely the opposite given a recognition of the developments in managerial technologies of control over the cultural and normative spheres and the tendency towards 'new forms of control' (Marcuse 1964) which are exhibited by modern management.

The 'possession' and control of resources by management gives them authority, according to Abercrombie et al, but they argue it needs to be explained why 'authority is accepted'. Again the analysis of the normative, cultural, that is ideological aspects of management strategy offers at least a contribution to this explanation. Again, this analysis should be seen in the context of tendencies, and not an argument for the 'dominant ideology thesis' as such. It will not be argued that such ideological managerial projects are in any way 'complete'. The analysis of ideology stands in a dialectical relationship to the

development of resistance.

In turning to the question of 'acceptance' Mann (1986) has made a distinction between 'normative' and 'pragmatic' acceptance of ideology. Normative acceptance being the inculcation of the belief in the veracity, 'naturalness' and universality of a particular world-view imposed in the interests of the reproduction and maintenance of power. Normative acceptance implies the integration of the individual into the particular belief system. On the other hand, pragmatic acceptance refers to the acceptance of the consequences of a system of belief and action whilst not an internalisation of the beliefs as such. Pragmatic acceptance does not imply the integration of the individual into the belief system, but refers to the individual 'going along with it'. This variable is a useful one, and will inform the later operationalisation of a working concept of ideology for empirical inquiry.

In a wider sense, the acceptance of a 'reality', the 'reality' of everyday life, has been theorised from a phenomenological direction by Berger and Luckmann (1967). They have pointed to how the routines of the everyday are accepted as 'normal', due to the very fact that they are everyday, and as such are not contested. Berger and Luckmann have thus pointed to the 'solidity' of everyday life as a reason it is accepted as such. The everyday 'reality' of work, work organisations and relations may be accepted on this basis. The notion of the 'habitus' as formulated by Bourdieu (1991, 1992) echoes this. For

Bourdieu, the reproduction of everyday life relates to the creation and reproduction of certain 'dispositions' which generate practices, perceptions, attitudes and propensities to act in a certain way. These coincide with the conditions of existence, of which the habitus itself is also a product. In this way the 'habitus' is both structured by actions and perceptions, but is also structuring of actions and perceptions.

What these kinds of views suggest, in connection with the general theme of ideology and the particular problematisation of the concept by Abercrombie et al, is that there exists what we might call a 'background ideology', which is the backdrop against which the choices, actions and decisions that the individual makes in their everyday lives, occurs. In this way we can again enliven a more dialectically sensitive version of ideology which does not theorise in a deterministic way, but refers to the tendencies to act in certain ways and not others. This enables the development of a concept of ideology which is sensitive to subjectivity, the active creation of 'reality' on the part of the social actor, and the Foucauldian notion that power produces the subject rather than simply represses.

If we politicise the notions of the 'solidity of everyday life' and the 'habitus', especially through reference to the specific ideological nature of the organisational setting, we can see the notion of ideology re-emerging to the foreground. We can recognise the externally derived and

imposed, consciously and technocratically developed nature of normative appeals made by management, as ideology. This notion of 'background ideology' is the backdrop against which both normative and pragmatic acceptance orientations to ideology occurs. This is what Marcuse (1964) meant by the tendency towards 'closing of the universe' of politics and discourse which stands in dialectical relation to the breaking of these features through resistance.

### **Ideology and Truth.**

A second set of key problems which the Marxist debate around ideology involves is the debate around the relationship between ideology and truth. This general question, in relation to the ideological nature of science, relates to a large part of the substantive analysis in subsequent chapters in terms of the critique of the managerial scientisation of culture and motivation in organisations. As discussed in chapter 1, sensitivity to post-Modern and deconstructionist epistemologies, epistemological nervousness and the desirability of an 'open work', all require the eschewing of a truth-orientation and the move towards a more interpretative stance with regard to an ideology-critique. With such an epistemology and the use of the concept of ideology, a 'truth-centred' approach becomes obsolete. Such an ideology-critique is not in the business of demarcating truth from falsity, but in using the concept of ideology as a critical tool with which to understand the nature and

content of the process of (capitalist) social reproduction. This takes us onto a further related concern, the relationship between ideology and the social construction of knowledge. The key route taken in the substantive critique of the managerial scientisation of culture and motivation, as well as the abstract development of a methodology for the study of ideology will connect with the general thrust of the hermeneutical, phenomenological and interpretative approaches. Such an approach is connected to a critical reappraisal of the content of the social construction of knowledge within relevant managerial discourses.

With a 'depth hermeneutic' (Thompson 1984) the insights stemming from the recognition that knowledge and 'reality' are socially constructed will be supplemented by the recognition that this process also involves a politics of the social construction of knowledge/reality. Thus this takes us straight back to the concept of ideology. However, part of this debate necessarily involves one of the major potential stumbling blocks of an ideology-critique. This refers to the problem of a value orientation which is inevitable within any social critique. I shall attempt to steer clear of suggesting on the one hand that my ideology-critique proves the 'falsity' of capitalist managerial strategies of control, and thereby the truth of my own values. On the other hand I shall not go for the outright post-Modern relativist position of just offering up one

more narrative, which fails to relate itself to power issues. As outlined in chapter 1, I shall accept the 'narrative' status of my thesis, but the argument I wish to construct implies that practically, that is politically, some 'narratives' are 'better' than others (whilst not 'true').

Therefore, instead of a truth-centred approach which demarcates ideology from truth, I shall provide a critique of managerial ideology against the backdrop of a notion of 'degrees of ideology'. This attempts to deal with some of the valid criticisms of the orthodox Marxist use of ideology, that Marxist critiques are themselves based upon a particular socially constructed view of the world. Rather than a futile attempt to find some firm objective grounding for a Marxist critique outside a value-oriented view of the world, I shall accept my position as value-laden. However I shall argue from a humanist position that some value-laden social theories are more ideological than others. In parallel to Popper's (1969, 1972) notion of 'degrees of falsifiability' which holds that whilst scientific hypotheses may not be true, they can be demonstrated to have more efficacy and can stand as theory until disproven, so with ideology. Whilst all social theoretical positions may be value-oriented and therefore none can justifiably claim 'truth', some can be demonstrated as more efficacious than others on the basis of humanistic argument. In this way 'degrees of ideology' can be demarcated without reference to the problematic notion of objective truth.



To develop a point made above, all theoretical positions can be considered to be 'formally biased' (Feenburg 1988), in that all theoretical positions have a particular view of the universe and are informed by assumptions which tends to preclude other views. This amounts to something similar to the notion of the 'paradigm' as articulated by Kuhn (1970). Given this 'formal bias' all theories can be seen as ideological, and thus only partially at best related to any notion of truth. However, we can maintain a demarcation around the notion of 'degrees of ideology' if we recognise that whilst all theories may be formally biased, some are more 'substantively biased' (Feenburg 1988). This is because some theoretical position are inherently geared towards conditions which imply social, political and economic inequalities within the practical, concrete realm of material existence. For example management theory is underpinned by a basic assumption that some individuals can be used as means to pursue the end of others. In this way one can demarcate degrees of ideology which relates not to truth but to an ethical underpinning which holds that the only universal 'truth' is the humanism of concerns to expand human freedoms and negate the use of humanity as a resource for the ends imposed by another. I therefore shall not be attempting to prove the 'truth' of my thesis but shall refer to this humanistic argument as a basis for its defense. This goes back to the notion of ideology as 'solving' the contradictions between the practically possible alleviation of domination and exploitation, and

the reproduction of said domination and exploitation which arrests the development of a more humanistic organisation of society.

In relation to a more phenomenological orientation, I shall move away from any latent positivistic fascinations with the idea of a fixed, objective version of truth, a notion which is inappropriate for social inquiry, and use the concept of ideology as a conceptual tool for a practical-political critique of the given (in part ideologically reproduced) existent conditions and shaping of subjectivity. Thus humanism at the practical level forms the politico-epistemological antidote to the inappropriate obsession with positivistically 'proven' truths (Marcuse 1955, Marx 1968, Adorno 1973, Sartre 1991).

Pursuing the connection between Marxist concerns with an ideology-critique and more phenomenological/hermeneutical orientations, Thompson (1984) distinguishes between two forms of ideology-critique. Firstly, Thompson shows that one aspect of the study of ideology is comprised of the analysis of the construction of meaning and the formulation of what is said in discourses. This raises an alternative 'truth-claim', as another interpretation which provides the basis for the critique of established truths. The focus here is on truth.

Related to this truth-oriented interpretation is the second approach identified by Thompson. This study of ideology is based upon an interpretation directed towards the explication of how the generation of meaning drives

domination. The focus here is on authenticity, which renders possible not only the analysis of meaning-serving-domination, but also how relations of domination produce and sustain particular meanings. It is this second basic approach which Thompson seems to favour and the one which informs the way ideology is understood here.

However, Thompson argues that neither of the two approaches outlined above establish that relations of domination are 'unjust' or 'inhuman'. For Thompson, the epistemological aspects of the study of ideology need to be related to a more ontological aspect which relates the critique of ideology not as (un)truth but as (in)justice. For Thompson's Critical Theory, following a Frankfurt School tradition, humanism seems to form the ontological underpinnings for a critique of ideology which has no use for the problematic concept of fixed, objective truth. The focus is now upon the 'truth' of humanised relations and the freedom from domination. For Thompson '...it is important to recognise the difference between inquiry into the truth of a statement on the one hand, and deliberating on the justice of a particular social arrangement on the other' (Thompson 1984 p.132).

The study of ideology should, according to this view, concentrate on the humanistic justice of social arrangements measured in relation to a declared set of humanistic ends such as the attenuation of social control and the alleviation of the attendant poverty, starvation, misery and unfreedom, rather than attempt to delineate some

objective truth. Chapter 1 was a declaration of such a value-position relating to this thesis.

To establish the 'falsehood' of ideological statements therefore means here the establishment of how meanings are constructed which reproduce a system of social arrangements based on domination. That is, pursuing the notion of 'degrees of ideology', how certain theoretical positions reproduce a 'substantive bias' over and above a 'formal bias'. The 'falseness' of this 'substantive bias' is given by its character as the unnecessary reproduction of the domination of one by another. The 'truth' of other statements is only given by their character as arguments geared towards the construction of more humane social arrangements and the expansion of human freedom. The epistemological arguments around the concept of ideology, by developing in connection with an ontology, become political arguments around versions of humanism and freedom. Thus, through this demarcation of 'degrees of ideology' and the linking of ideology-critique with justice and humanism, the notion of truth can be dispensed with without collapsing into relativism. Such an approach is commensurate with an 'open work' (Eco 1989) in that it is open to debate as to the humanism to which it refers, the changing nature of the human subject and the historical potential for the expansion of human autonomy.

This brings us to the question of the concretisation of ideology-critique which proceeds through a linking of Marxist critique and hermeneutical/phenomenological

perspectives which lie in the interpretative tradition as a whole. This also relates to the development of a more sophisticated and nuanced version of ideology open to notions of human agency and subjectivity. Forester (1985) seeks the application and concretisation of a Critical Theory analysis for an understanding of social action and the structurally embedded conditions within which action takes place. For Forester this requires the combination of phenomenological and ethnographic concerns of social inquiry with more orthodox Marxist criteria to allow for an understanding of the 'concrete constellation of action'. Forester argues that the 'applied turn' in Critical Theory involves an understanding of;

1. the phenomenologically meaningful experience of social action.
2. the structural staging of that action.
3. the institutional contingencies of practical action.
4. relations of control, authority and power.
5. the requirements and possibilities of resistance, of social action cast not simply as instrumental politics but also as emancipatory praxis.

Forester argues for the application of Critical Theory such that its focus changes from '...disembodied forms of 'consciousness' to concrete constellations of action, to specifically situated patterns and instances of claim-making performances (for instance the claims of (neo)Human Relations management), of so called experts or of bureaucratic officials' (Forester 1985 p.xi). Chapters 8

and 9 take such a trajectory and are about developing such an 'applied turn' specifically to (neo)Human Relations management. For Forester this allows the critical theoretical inquiry to illuminate the 'situational, interpretative, and judgemental character of social action...and to understand power not as a simple possession but '...as an ensemble of relations in which diverse historically situated subjects have variously showed chances, abilities and capacities for action' (Forester 1985. p.xiii). Thus Forester, in conjunction with the others discussed above can be seen as laying the grounds for the development of a more sophisticated formulation of the concept of ideology which draws together ideology as a tool for social critique with more interpretative understandings.

#### **Towards a Methodology for the Study of Ideology; Social Critique and Discourse Analysis.**

The methodology for the study of ideology developed here relates to this general proposition, of combining Marxism and the interpretative perspectives. This is as a response to the criticisms of truth-centred and deterministic analyses. For this reason it is my intention to turn to a discussion of epistemological attempts to understand the basis of the shaping of meaning and discourse, and ways in which an understanding of it may be approached. This is what I shall generally refer to as the hermeneutical tradition.

Such a hermeneutical understanding of a particular discourse can be related to a concrete, empirically detailed analysis and linked to an ideology-critique of the politically interested shaping of meaning. However, given the recognition of this interpretative and hermeneutical perspective, it could be argued that the concept of ideology is now defunct and holds no relevance. I see this as an unhelpful conclusion.

The concept of ideology does need to be made more sensitive to competing 'realities' as they are socially and culturally shaped, but knowledge and belief also continues to be politically shaped by external agencies. For this reason the capacity of the concept of ideology to say something which is critical of this process needs to be maintained even as it is made more hermeneutically sensitive. Mannheim's (1936) call for a 'sociology of knowledge' connects here with the development of what we might call a 'critical sociology of knowledge', as a route to an ideology-critique.

Discourse analysis (Parker 1992, Parker and Burman 1993) has attempted to clarify the grounds for something like this critical sociology of knowledge by developing the grounds for a discourse analysis. Parker (1992) identifies successful discourse analysis as involving the following criteria.

1. A discourse is realised in texts: Parker argues that we find discourses, or pieces of discourse in texts which are '...delimited tissues of meaning reproduced in any form

that can be given an interpretative gloss'.

2. A discourse is about objects: Discourse and language should be seen as giving objects a reality, '...discourses are the sets of meanings which constitute objects...'

3. A discourse contains subjects: 'A discourse makes available a space for particular types of self to step in'. As such discourses place subjects into a context.

4. A discourse is a coherent system of meaning.

5. A discourse refers to other discourses.

6. A discourse reflects on its own way of speaking.

7. A discourse is historically located.

(Parker 1992. p. 17).

In laying out these criteria, Parker is attempting to establish the grounding for a sophisticated and social form of discourse analysis which does not suffer from the potential failings of idealism. By highlighting these criteria, we can begin to demonstrate the general epistemological basis for the empirical study of (neo)Human Relations texts as a justifiable object of critical inquiry. Parker goes on to identify three other criteria, which he calls 'auxiliary criteria'. These are of more particular interest to us here in establishing a definition, methodology and operationalisation of the concept of ideology. These are;

8. Discourses support institutions. Here he argues that discourses are implicated in some way into the structure of institutions and the institutional creation of meaning.

9. Discourses reproduce power relations. 'We should talk



about discourse and power in the same breath. Institutions for example, are structured around and reproduce power relations' (Parker 1992. p.18). Therefore Parker recommends that discourse analysis should include; firstly looking at which categories of person (class?) gain and lose from the employment of a particular discourse; and secondly looking at who would want to promote and who would want to dissolve the discourse. And therefore finally;

10. Discourses have ideological effects. Lying behind discourses is a 'political' position. For Parker, discourse analysis has had a 'deleterious' effect in that the category of ideology has 'virtually disappeared'. He stresses the potential link between a discourse analysis and an ideology-critique. In this way we can begin to respond to the requirements of Abercrombie et. al. in finding 'evidence', 'institutional' location and 'details of origin' of ideology.

However, Parker warns against assuming that all discourses are ideological, and argues that we can distinguish between those discourses which are true and those which are false. As I have argued above, I feel the 'degrees of ideology' demarcation is more helpful here. Parker argues that the final 'radical steps' in a discourse analysis proceed through; firstly showing how a particular discourse analysis connects with other discourses which sanction oppression; and secondly showing how the discourses allow dominant groups to express their narratives about the past in order to justify the present, preventing those who use

subjugated discourses from expressing their own history. This informs the epistemological base for the critical interpretation of (neo)Human Relations discourse developed in chapter 8 and 9. In relation to the above discussion linking Critical Theory to subjectivity, Burman and Parker (1993) sees the use of something like a critical sociology of knowledge in its discursive, textual and hermeneutical form as being increasingly influential in social psychology for the study of 'what goes on 'inside' the individual'. They argue that attitudinal aspects of individual lives are 'created by the language that is used to describe them', as language becomes organised into discourses. We might point out here that this already begs the question as to the managerial/institutional power to so organise language, discourse and meaning. As Burman and Parker put it, 'Language organised into discourses...has an immense power to shape the way that people ...experience and behave in the world' (Parker and Burman 1993. p.1). Therefore a critical discourse analysis stands in intimate relation with an ideology-critique of the power-oriented shaping of subjectivity, meaning and belief. Significantly, they argue that discourse analysis should not proceed as a unified methodological certainty, nor should it reify language out of social encounters, but rather, '...discourse analysis offers a social account of subjectivity by attending to the linguistic resources by which the socio-political realm is produced and reproduced...'. This places discourse analysis as '...the latest successor to, or version of, approaches

such as hermeneutics' (Parker and Burman 1993. p.3).

However, despite this assertion of the social context of discourse analysis I feel Burman and Parker's account suffers from one major potential flaw. Their equation of an analysis of language and discourse with the analysis of socio-political power, useful though that is, is in danger of collapsing back into an one-dimensional, empiricist account of power focusing upon only the observable outcomes of power situations. This position is already a pluralist account of power with all the attendant assumptions concerning its operation and distribution. Burman and Parker's account of the study of discourse alone as the route to the study of power and ideology does not emphasise a social theoretical basis for such analysis strongly enough. Their position cannot deal with an analysis of power where there is no discourse, and where the operation of power and ideology has worked to a priori circumvent competing discursive strategies, to 'close the universe of discourse' (Marcuse 1964). So whilst there is the possibility of relating the work of Burman and Parker to an ideology-critique, they fail to account for the societal wide potential for ideology to shape belief and expression before a particular discursive encounter.

Further Parker, despite some protestations to the contrary shows a tendency towards textualism and a universalisation of discourse as the empirical indicator. He recognises the power inherent within most social/discursive encounters and relates discourse analysis to an ideology-critique. However

his warning that not all discourses should be seen as ideological and his view that 'true' and 'false' discourses can be distinguished from each other tend to contradict this. Ideology understood as the societal shaping of meaning is likely to pre-date any discourse, where else would any organisation of a discourse come from? It is clear that all theory, that is discourses, are ideological. The very selection of a partial meaning and the construction of it into a 'coherent system' (such as this thesis) is in itself ideological, although as was shown above, some may be more ideological than others. As to Parker's notion that discourses can be demarcated by some notion of 'truth' and 'falsity', this is particularly unhelpful. To do so is crude, would constitute a regressive move away from the use of critical sociological categories and demonstrates a 'truthism' embodying a latent positivism which is shown to be inappropriate by everything else that Parker himself says.

#### **A Research Strategy; Depth Hermeneutics, Language and Power.**

Therefore, whilst travelling a similar trajectory to Parker, overcoming some of these problems involves turning to 'hermeneutical' accounts which more strongly emphasis the social theoretical contextualisation. Such accounts steer clear of universalising notions of discourse and conceptualises ideology in a more sophisticated way. An example of this is found in 'depth hermeneutics' (Thompson

1984). A 'depth hermeneutics' is able to develop a sociology of knowledge/discourse which is sensitive to the socially constructed nature of discourse, meaning and language, whilst also being able to maintain a critical socio-political inquiry into the historico-material context of that discourse.

Habermas' debate with Gadamer (1975) informed the purported 'linguistic turn' in Habermas' work (McCarthy 1978, Thompson 1981, 1984, Thompson and Held 1982, Roderrick 1986, Holub 1990). Originally Habermas turned receptively to hermeneutics as part of the wider critique of empirico-analytical and positivistic approaches in the social sciences (Adorno 1976). This was propelled by the perception of Gadamer and Heidegger as representatives of the 'ontological turn' in 20th century hermeneutics. This 'turn' moved away from developing rules for understanding texts to become an epistemological and ontological element of a philosophy of both being and method. This connects with the general historical development of the interpretative tradition of social research, with phenomenology, ethnography and the development of qualitative research methods. It also relates to the theoretical development of the general proposition that reality is socially constructed and being-in-the-world is the seat of our interpretative understanding. Habermas' discussions of Gadamer's work (1975) is in terms of a theory of language and language-use. Such a position perceives a 'plurality of languages', given a plurality of

interpretations of socially located reality constructions and discourses. Modern hermeneutics therefore argues for the application of principles of understanding which analyses the speaker's (writer's) pronouncements through a process of 'translation'. Hermeneutics aims to enable us to understand the 'always already situated nature of the interpreter'.

Still at the linguistic level, and by way of a connection between the 'depth hermeneutic' in particular, and the general proposition that language is a source of social power, Bourdieu (1991) has pointed to the linguistic element of social forms of coercion and constraint through accounts of the concrete ways in which this can occur. Bourdieu's analysis sees everyday linguistic interchange as situated events relating to social structures and contexts of power. He points towards the power of particular, 'proven' sets of linguistically derived and conveyed meanings. Here Bourdieu echoes Marcuse's (1964) relating of language to power in his notion of the 'language of total administration' and the linguistic form which this takes through 'internally self-validating analytical propositions'. In these ways, in connection to other institutional sources of power, we can see language as a source of power, certain languages become legitimated and dominant, become 'victorious' languages (Bourdieu 1991). A critique of this process of power-as/through-language can be provided by an analysis of how particular 'languages' emerge historically. This suggests a historical dimension

to the social/discourse elements of the 'depth hermeneutic'. The historical emergence of the specific (neo)Human Relations discourse around managing subjectivity and culture is given in chapter 8. Bourdieu's concern to analyze how the 'official' language of emerging nation-states becomes a 'victorious' language is paralleled in chapter 9 by an analysis of how the 'official' language of (neo)Human Relations management becomes 'victorious'. This is presented as an empirical indicator of the more general integrative, normative and ideological project of managerial technologies of cultural compliance.

This radicalisation of the hermeneutical stance mirrors Habermas' subsequent more critical responses to the hermeneutical position. Habermas argues that hermeneutics should not separate itself from methodological and epistemological attempts to deal with the nature of society as a whole in its rejection of positivism. He argues that hermeneutics should resist the tendency to become meta-critical and fail to connect with this social 'reality' which is to be criticised. To do this would mean that hermeneutics would collapse into a linguistic relativism. Holub (1990) summarises the Habermasian position when he writes, 'In short, we cannot be concerned solely with the structure of understanding or the possibility of understanding, we must also take into account the validity of understanding' (Holub 1990. p.64). This implies that an ideology-critique which connects with the hermeneutic understanding of discursive constructions of meanings

should also be connected to an inquiry into to the system of power and power-laden structures across the social totality. Already we are moving towards the recognition that a hermeneutical understanding needs to be connected with a social theory. As Habermas (1989) suggests, hermeneutics should 'be situated at a different level', connected with Critical Theory, and with 'an emancipatory political practice'.

Thus we can see that Habermas is arguing for the retention of the Critical Theoretical stance for critique over and above the methodological aspect of the possibility of a hermeneutical, interpretative understanding, as the basis for the study of ideology. Depth hermeneutics starts and finishes with a recognition of the power-laden nature of much of discourse and language. Language is no longer seen as an emanation of public dialogue, there may be no correlation between speech, discourse, action and the collective generation and sharing of meaning. Thus with this recognition,

Depth hermeneutics requires a pre-understanding that reflects upon language (ie. a socio-political theory which informs a view of language-in-use), it sets up assumptions about the way in which the human mind (social institutions) function and the way in which symbols are produced and subjected to distortion.... depth hermeneutics proceeds from the notion of a distorted communication that needs analysis and correction (Holub 1990. p.71)



Thus interpretative understandings are related to a critique of the totality, connected to the politics of meaning and knowledge construction as well as the recognition of its social nature. Habermas' (1989) turn to the notion of the 'ideal speech situation' is central here. He has shown that a positivistically derived theory of objective truth which presumes the centrality of science as a route to truth, is flawed. Thus the 'truth' of social encounters should be measured with reference to the consensual or dissensual nature of linguistic encounters. That is, if argumentation within an ideal speech situation arrives at a consensus, then this consensus would be rational and 'true', in terms of an ethical orientation rather than a truth-centredness.

However most social and linguistic encounters do not occur within such ideal speech situations, and occur within relations of domination. Thus the linguistic and discursive aspect of social enquiry can provide a platform for social critique as discourse becomes the vehicle for the reproduction of relations of domination within the field of meaning construction, that is ideology. We have here the linguistic equivalent of the notion of 'substantive bias', referred to above. Language organised into discourse which enshrines power relations proffers a 'speech situation' which is already biased even though the linguistic resources may be open to all involved. (Neo)Human Relations management discourse which a priori establishes the existent organisational relations as the arena of discourse

is a graphic example of this, despite or even because of their 'humanism' and 'democracy'.

Thompson (1984) explicates a schema of how this 'depth hermeneutic' could be operationalised as a specific study of ideology. For Thompson, pursuing a Habermasian line, ideology-critique is propelled through an analysis of the social, cultural and linguistic shaping of meaning, is propelled by the '...study (of) ways in which meanings serves to sustain relations of domination (Thompson 1984). For Thompson the study of ideology should be set within a specific socio-historical context and conceived of in terms of particular institutional and structural terms. Thompson focuses on the study of ideology which is on the one hand capable of critical theoretical inquiry, whilst on the other is sensitive to the active nature of subjectivity, the social creation of 'reality' and the notion that power is involved in the 'production' of the subject. Thompson argues for a conception of ideology which involves some account of the relation between action and social structure, an account which implies a subject-object dialectic and implicitly at least relates the fundamental understanding of ideology to the illusory reconciliation of lived contradiction (Larrain 1979). Thompson echoes Forester (1985) when he argues that the three levels involved in such an inquiry are;

1. an inquiry into action, whereby agents participate and intervene in the social world.
2. an inquiry into social institutions, whereby specific

institutions viewed as constellations of social relations, and 'sedimented' institutions are understood as configurations which can persist in various forms which may enshrine power relations in a more general way. (The institutional obverse of ideal-speech situations)

3. an inquiry into social structures, conceived of as 'a series of elements and their interrelations which conjointly define the conditions for the persistence of a social formation and the limits for the variations of its component institutions' (Thompson 1984 p.149).

For Thompson an analysis with these levels of abstraction realises aspects of the phenomena of power within the structure-agency relation. Power at the action level, in the most general sense, is the ability to pursue ones own interests, is the power to act. Power at the institutional level is the power which enables and empowers the institutional actor to make and implement decisions delimited by the remit of the institution, Weber's 'effective co-ordination'. Such power is therefore structured by the particular place/function which the institution occupies as part of the more general structuring of the social process. For Thompson, these levels of analysis form the backdrop of (institutional) power relations against which ideology should be studied. This version of the ways in which the construction of meaning and signification relate to the reproduction of power relations (in institutions) also involves 3 elements;

1. Legitimation, whether on rational, traditional or

charismatic grounds, whereby the institutional-structural system cultivates belief in its legitimacy.

2. Dissimulation, relations of domination which are concealed, denied, 'blocked', in various ways.

3. Reification, the presentation of a transitory, historically contingent state of affairs as if it were permanent, natural and 'outside history'.

Thompson's theory of power and ideology moves in the general hermeneutic/phenomenological direction and away from sterile structuralist accounts of ideology due to its concern to bring into the study of this ideologically-laden-meaning-construction analysis of language. Agreeing with Foucault and Parker in that the study of the reproduction of power relations and ideology is grounded in the shaping of meaning, Thompson argues that the analysis of language and discourse becomes fundamental, as language and discourse is the principle medium for the construction of power related meanings. In relation to a consideration of Bourdieu, Thompson writes of the ideological aspect of language and discourse, 'One seeks not only to be understood, but also to be believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished' (Thompson 1991). Power relations are seen as shaping the meaning of what is said as well as the means of saying it, power relations are represented in meaning due to the differential power to 'make a meaning stick'. This formulation of ideology takes into account the nature of meaning and the way it is mobilised to create a world-view, which is sensitive to the differential capacities and

interests at the individual, micro-level, but which still maintains the necessary link between this and the reproduction of power relations and structures.

This approach, and the discrete methodology offered by Thompson which is discussed below, seems eminently suitable for the study of the creation of ideological meaning and reproduction of power found in the (neo)Human Relations managerial discourses. Such discourses are concerned to mobilise organisational meaning, discourse, language and culture so as to control the organisational subject and culture. As will be shown in chapter 9 the effects of such discourse is precisely to legitimate managerial authority, dissimulate contradictions in the managerialist attempt to mobilise the individual subject into the organisational functions, and reify the organisation as in the common good.

#### **A Methodology for the Study of Ideology.**

Before we operationalise a conceptualisation of ideology in more general terms, it seems useful to discuss the related issue of a discrete method for the study of ideology. The link between language and ideology offers the possibility of the elaboration of a 'methodology of interpretation'. Thompson (1984) proposes to combine both an analysis of domination and meaning in a study of ideology by using 'depth hermeneutics'. This is comprised of 3 principal elements; (a) social analysis, (b) discursive analysis and (c) the interpretation of meaning.

## **Social Analysis.**

In Thompson's 'depth hermeneutic' the study of ideology is inseparable from the social-historical analysis of the forms of domination which meanings serve to sustain. The three levels at which social analysis proceeds include (a) the identification of the **specific contexts** within which action (speech) and interaction occur, within which agents pursue their aims; (b) a concern with **institutional limits to action**, and the analysis of the institution as a complex of social relations forming a relatively stable frameworks for (inter)action which also generate action within those frameworks and delimit acceptable behaviour. For Thompson institutions are the loci of power and the crystallisation of relations of domination. It coincides with one of the central planks of this thesis that Thompson identifies the institutional/organisational site as a significant complex of power relations. Thus the analysis of the specific strategies of (neo)Human Relations management is a way of grasping the operation of ideology at the normative level; (c) a concern with structural elements which **condition 'structurate' institutional frameworks**, rather than a view of the institutional, organisational site in an isolated, reified way. For Thompson, The relation between wage-labour and capital 'structurates' the institution of G.M. for example, in the sense that it specifies certain conditions for the persistence of the institution, conditions which the institution cannot exceed without a change of structural

type. (Thompson 1984). That is, the 'practical contradictions' referred to by Larrain (1979). It is central to the critical nature of the sociology of knowledge/discourse proposed here, in conjunction with an ideology-critique, that it proceeds against the backdrop of a critique of capitalism and the socio-economic relations which this implies. The nature of wage-labour relations and the exploitation inherent therein are assumed as the essential feature which characterises the relationships between management and worker and thereby 'structure' the specific institutional framework. Thus whilst an ideology-critique moves away from an over-emphasis on a productivist account towards an analysis of discourse and meaning construction it does not neglect socio-economic features of class related power relations. In the pursuit of this social analysis element, below I shall turn to the more developed theoretical accounts offered by Marcuse as an articulation of these concerns with societal power relations and the analysis of capitalist society as the 'specific context' and 'institutional form' within which such power tends to operate. This is apposite in that Marcuse's work offers an insightful 'social analysis' commensurate with the critique of the integrative nature of (neo)Human Relations management strategies. His work is also commensurate with the specifically linguistic route for that critique. In this way chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 form the 'social analysis' component of the 'depth hermeneutic'

### **Discursive Analysis.**

The second element of a 'depth hermeneutic' methodology is a discursive analysis. This is the element of an overall study of ideology which emphasises the expression of ideology as connected to specific 'linguistic constructions'. The levels of analysis which Thompson proposes for the analysis of discourse are; (a) the study of discourse as narratives which display their own internal logical, articulated structure. This relates to ideology in that the narrative logic of discourse functions to legitimate a particular perception through a particular discursive structure; (b) the argumentative structure of discourse. Thompson writes 'Forms of discourse, as supra-sentential linguistic constructions, comprise explanations and chains of reasoning which may be reconstructed and made explicit in various ways' (Thompson 1984 p.138). For Thompson, the reconstruction of the argumentative structures of discourse can highlight the ideological function of dissimulation, as well as legitimation. It can highlight how ideology conceals domination; (c) the analysis of syntactic structure as the analysis of the role played by syntax in discourse. This study involves the recognition of the way particular syntactical structures relate to nominalisation; passivisation and conflation; the use of pronouns; and the structure of tenses, as these elements of syntax relate to the linguistic process of reification. In chapter 6 I shall refer to the work of Marcuse which exhibits similar concerns with the



argumentative and syntactical structures of pronouncements as having ideological effects. Marcuse also offers discrete critical concepts with which to pursue such a discourse analysis. Also involved in a discourse analysis is an inquiry into its historical emergence. Chapter 8 is taken up with such a history, of the general shift within management discourses towards the cultural and subjective aspects of managing labour. Chapter 8 also identifies the 'leading authors/texts' of this discourse as a concrete empirical indicator of its general themes and concerns. Chapter 8 thus describes the content of the (neo)Human Relations management discourse and as such it forms the 'discourse analysis' component of the 'depth hermeneutic'.

#### **Interpretation.**

However rigorous and systematic the methods of discourse analysis may be, they can never abolish the need for a creative construction of meaning, that is for an interpretative explication of what is said.

(Thompson 1984 p.139)

Thompson includes an interpretation of meaning in his 'depth hermeneutic' which goes beyond the methods of the analysis of discourse and its formal structures. For Thompson, the ideological process of mobilising meaning in order to sustain relations of domination involves the 'splitting of the referential domain'. That is

The terms of a discourse carry out their ideological role by explicitly referring to one thing and

implicitly referring to another, by entangling these multiple referents in a way which serves to sustain relations of domination. (Thompson 1984 p.139)

Thus for Thompson, to present a study of discourse as ideological requires the deconstruction of the meanings of the discourse by **unfolding the referential domain**, specifying the **multiple referents** and showing how this **entanglement** sustains relations of domination. Therefore, after an empirical description of the (neo)Human Relations discourse, it is this interpretation of meaning, again in conjunction with Marcusean Critical Theoretical constructs, which I shall be most concerned with in chapter 9. The application of Marcusean Critical Theoretical constructs in conjunction with a discourse analysis of argumentative and syntactical structures allows for a specifically critical **(re)interpretation of meaning**. Articulated in chapter 9 is a concrete example of this with reference to the specific pronouncements of the 'leading authors' of the (neo)Human Relations discursive community. Chapter 9 therefore forms the 'interpretation of meaning' component of the 'depth hermeneutic'.

**Summary: Operationalisation of the Concept of Ideology.**

Given the above discussion, it would seem apposite to now detail an operationalised version of the concept of ideology for use in the concrete critical study of (neo)Human Relations management theory. This may not be

strictly possible, as the dialectical nature of such analyses do not easily fit with the scientific notions of operationalising concepts for deterministic scientific analysis. However, by way of a summary, it seem worthwhile to attempt to say something about the way in which the concept of ideology is to be taken forward given the above discussion, and how it relates to a critical analysis of data collected.

1. The first point to reaffirm is that I shall not attempt here to 'prove the truth'. As was indicated above what will be advanced here is a negative critique from an openly declared ethico-political position, **humanism**. This relates to the basic premise that exploitation and domination are both unnecessary and unjust. The basis for the study of ideology is a **negative critique** which holds that ideology is the part of the process whereby these conditions are **reproduced and sustained**. Thus the conception of ideology used here relates to a **critical** conception. It takes a **dialectical** orientation which analyses the relationship between the production of **ideas** and the reproduction of **material condition**. It argues that **mechanisms** of ideology relate to the reproduction of **social and economic relations**. It holds that these relations are reproduced within a particular **socio-historical context**, in that the production of ideas and the reproduction of social and economic relations relates to the specific reproduction of a **capitalistic organisation of society and economy**.

2. A significant manifestation of this socio-economic

context, one which often has the power to develop 'victorious languages' is the institution and the management thereof. Implicit in the conceptualisation of ideology therefore is a notion that agency is dialectically interrelated with structurally conditioned contexts for action.

3. In relation to this, and to the problematic notion of subjectivity, it is argued here that the subject is active in the creation of a 'reality' and this stands in a dialectical relation to the power which 'produces' subjectivity.

The specific attempt to delineate such an analysis proceeds through;

4. Ideational elements. The study of the content of produced ideas, meanings and significations which relate to the reproduction of beliefs, values, communications which attempt to have a normative effect in terms of reproducing power relations. In the discourse analysis in chapters 8 and 9 the content and origins of (neo)Human Relations management discourse will be directly related to the tendency towards stronger ideational/ideological uniformity and control.

5. Phenomenological/experiential elements. This involves the analysis of the impact of the social order upon the individual. It involves the analysis of the relationship between these effects and the meaningful experience of action generated by the active participation of the individual in the creation of their own structured world.

This aspect relates to;

6. Institutional structures and a social analysis. The experiential and discursive elements of analysis implied by the partial adoption of a phenomenological/hermeneutic stance relates to the notion that institutions/organisations are the **specific, structured contexts** for agency, discourse, interaction and the shaping of meaning. The institution/organisation is one important **mechanism** whereby ideology is conveyed and the context which thereby **shapes and limits** action. This relates to the 'social analysis' component of the 'depth hermeneutic'

7. Discursive elements. The 'depth hermeneutic' provides the methodological link between the use of the concept of ideology for the critical analysis of the reproduction of the social totality and the phenomenological/experiential aspects of that process of social reproduction. It does this through its emphasis upon **language and discourse** and through the critical approach to language as official or 'victorious' (Bourdieu 1991) as the vehicle for ideological reproduction. This involves the analysis of **discourse as narrative, argumentative structures of language use and syntactical structures**. These factors relate to the methodological approach to the study of ideology as conveyed through language as it conveys and shapes meaning and belief. The analysis of 'official' discourses, in this case the critical analysis of the 'official' discourse in 'leading' (neo)Human Relations managerial texts, is therefore a route to the **concretisation** of critical

analysis of ideology and the shaping of meaning which this implies. The discourse within 'leading' managerial texts will thus form the data-base for a 'depth hermeneutical' analysis. This will form an example of this concretised analysis of the ideological nature of the process of social reproduction in general, and of institutions/organisations in particular.

8. **Normative and pragmatic acceptance.** A necessary and useful variable included in this operationalisation of ideology is the variation in ways in which ideological shaping of meaning, discourse is received and (not) accepted. This variable formulated by Mann (1986) will be included in the operational use of the concept of ideology as a necessary qualification and antidote to an over-emphasis on ideology. However, the question of 'acceptance' requires detailed field-work which (problematically) would try to gauge the origins of the internal beliefs of individuals. As the focus here is upon the organised discourse of a particular, developed theory, this level of analysis is beyond the scope of this study. Therefore the normative/pragmatic acceptance stands in the background as a theoretical corrective to ideology-centredness rather than as a specific component of operationalisation.

9. **Over-determination.** The application of the concept of ideology for subsequent critical analysis will not demonstrate an 'ideology-centredness'. That is, ideological or normative 'compulsion' will be understood as standing in a relation to other forms of 'economic compulsion'. The

reproduction of social, economic and institutional/organisational relations is conceived of here as being **over-determined**, in that various forms of compulsion coincide to produce certain effects. The emphasis in the subsequent critique will be upon ideology and the **tendency** for ideology to impact upon the individual. It will not be a one-sided, deterministic account of ideology, but an 'open work'. This view also involves the rejection of a naive truth-centredness in favour of a humanistically grounded interpretation of the (in)justice of social/organisational conditions, against the backdrop of the notion of 'degrees of ideology'.

10. **The Historical Emergence of Discourses.** As part of the 'social analysis' component of a 'depth hermeneutic' and the situating the particularities/organisation of a discourse in the 'discourse analysis' component, there is a need to develop an insight into the **historical emergence** of a discourse. In particular the historical emergence of the (neo)Human Relations management discourse which embodies the concerns with the control of the subjective and cultural aspects of organisational relations is presented in chapter 8.

Given the above operationalisation of the key features of the use of the concept of ideology for critical analysis at the methodological level, it is useful to highlight here some of the more specific, technical constructs which will also be used in this critical reappraisal of (neo)Human

Relations discourse. Central to this critical re-reading of (neo)Human Relations managerial discourse in the light of the methodological concerns discussed above will be the following;

**Legitimation.** This refers to the way in which discourses, in relation to structural imperatives and contingencies, reproduce and re-present the sectionally interested perceptions and activities of management as somehow neutral and value-free, thus providing such discourses/practices with greater authority. This relates to a radicalisation of the Weberian schema, whereby ideology can also be seen as part of the 'grounds for legitimacy' which help to reproduce managerial authority and authority relations.

**Dissimulation.** This refers to the way in which an understanding of relations of domination and their reproduction is concealed, denied, confused or fragmented, through linguistic, conceptual or symbolic means and the way in which a critical understanding of social relations tends to thus be negated.

**Reification.** This refers to the way in which transitory elements of the process of social/institutional interaction are re-presented with a fixed, 'naturalised' identity which they do not merit.

**Universalisation.** This refers to the re-presentation of historically contingent social phenomena in a de-historicised way such that these forms of social organisation and relations appear as normal, natural and disinterested.



**Conflation.** This refers to the conceptual alignment of certain aspects of the social process with other aspects in such a way as to re-present these features as normally coinciding, where such a conceptual elision is an emanation of the sectional interests of a particular group.

Given this conceptual clarification of how I understand the concept of ideology, a discussion of the methodology for an ideology-critique and the operationalisation of features of this approach to the study of ideology, let us now turn to the application of this approach for the specific, concrete study of a particular empirically identifiable social phenomena. The 'social analysis' component (chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7) will outline Marcuse's Critical Theory both as the general social theory required by the 'depth hermeneutic' and highlight various critical conceptions to be taken forward for the 'interpretation of meaning' component. Chapters 8 and 9 together form the 'discourse' analysis and 'interpretation of meaning' components.

Against the backdrop of the discussion in Chapter 1 of 'epistemological nervousness' and the Critical Theory orientation which underpins this thesis, the conceptualisation of ideology has been clarified here. The clarification of this difficult theoretical issue has involved elements of the history of the concept. It has also involved attempts to develop the use of the concept through discussions of the relationship between ideology and truth, and the notion of formal/substantive bias. Therefore, in pursuit of an 'open-work', the notion of

degrees of ideology has been proposed which allows for an ideology-critique without spuriously arguing for the universal truth of one's value position. This allows for a developed and sensitive response to the post-Modern and deconstructionist criticisms of Critical Theory whilst maintaining the potential for the critique of social conditions and cultural relations. Specifically this has involved demonstrating that language, knowledge production and meaning creation are related to power relations/structures. This chapter has developed an explication of the specific methodology which will be used in the concrete critical analysis below. This proceeds through a 'depth hermeneutic' which involves a 'social analysis' of concrete social, political and economic conditions; a 'discourse analysis' of the specifics of (in this case) (neo)Human Relation management theory; and the development of an 'interpretation of meaning' of this discourse. The specific technical components which make up the details of this methodology have also been outlined. The concrete empirical analysis of organisational power and ideology as it impacts upon subjectivity and culture can thus proceed through such an operationalised concept of ideology. The first component of this 'depth hermeneutic' method is the 'social analysis'. To develop this I discuss in the next chapter the Critical Theory of Marcuse. A detailed exposition of his work will show that as he combines a critical approach to not only societal wide power structures but also experiential, psychological,

cultural and linguistic aspects of power, his work is an eminently suitable basis for the development of a subsequent 'depth hermeneutic'.

## SOCIAL ANALYSIS

## CHAPTER 4.

### SOCIAL ANALYSIS: THE CRITICAL SOCIAL THEORY OF HERBERT MARCUSE AND THE IDEOLOGICAL NATURE OF (NEO)HUMAN RELATIONS MANAGEMENT.

In response to Forester's (1985) call for an 'applied turn' in Critical Theory, I shall apply the key features of the work of Marcuse to the development of a Critical Theory of (neo)Human Relations management in particular, and organisations in general. Specifically, this will be developed in terms of extracting various themes from the work of Marcuse for an ideology-critique. Given this 'applied turn' I shall not develop an internalist account of Marcuse. Discussions of the historical development of Marcuse's work, along with that of the Frankfurt School (Jay 1973, Tar 1977, Bottomore 1984, Wiggershaus 1993), and secondary text assessments of his work (Jay 1973, Tar 1977, Schoolman 1980, Kellner 1984, 1989, Geoghegan 1986, Pippin 1988) are numerous enough as to make such an inquiry unnecessary. However, it is hoped that through the 'application' of the critical concepts of Marcuse, the continued relevance of the Marcusean legacy will become apparent.

Above I discussed the 'open' nature of my approach. In line with this I shall not claim that the work of Marcuse is universally superior to that of the other theorists discussed so far. One of my principal aims is to argue that the work of Marcuse as been largely ignored or not taken account of within the critical theory of organisations. The

presentation of its significance for the development of a critical theory of organisations, through its 'application', is therefore the contribution I hope to make. The work of Marcuse offers a fertile theoretical resource which operates at various important levels for a Critical Theory of organisations. Marcuse's analysis offers an insight into the production of subjects whilst at the same time relating this subjective level of analysis to historical, structural, political-economic aspects of the social conditions within which subjects exists. His work offers a 'philosophical' analysis into subjectivity, meaning, culture and discourse whilst maintaining a political commitment to social change. His analysis is therefore at once historical, critical and dialectical. It offers the theoretical resource for both a 'negative critique' of existing social, economic and cultural conditions whilst maintaining an 'emancipatory interest' in the potential for the expansion of human freedom, creativity and autonomy. It is for these central reasons that I turn to an account of the work of Marcuse, which informs the more 'applied' discussions below as they develop within the 'depth hermeneutic' research strategy. It should be noted that Marcuse's social analysis is related to the general dialectical position he adopts, and to the 'dialectic of civilisation' in particular. This implies that Marcuse's formulations should not be misread as being somehow 'complete'. By this I mean that a critique of rationalised domination is the critique of tendencies

towards this. As highlighted in the Preface, Marcuse's dialectical formulations are concerned with countervailing tendencies which may on the one hand lead to a consolidation of domination and repression, whilst on the other 'explode' such domination and repression.

The social analysis of Marcuse has 4 themes which have relevance as the basis for a 'depth hermeneutic', which throw up critical concepts applicable for a critical discourse analysis and interpretation of meaning of the strategies to control culture and subjectivity found in (neo)Human Relations management. These are;

(a) the notion of 'new forms of control' whereby individuals and groups become active in their own control. This is discussed in chapter 5; (b) the notion that culture and language are aspects of such a control. This is discussed in chapter 6; (c) that an underlying 'technological rationality' and 'one dimensional thought' are key to understanding the historical development of such politico-administrative systems. This is discussed in chapter 7; (d) a social psychological aspect of power and control, to understand the impact of power upon subjectivity. It is to this aspect of Marcuse's work that I turn to first. Central to the thesis developed here is the question of subjectivity, and the operation of power upon it. It is in Marcuse's radicalisation of Freudian psychoanalysis that we find Marcuse's earliest and most extended treatment of the question of subjectivity. It is however somewhat arbitrary to start with Marcuse's social

psychology as it forms an integral part of a wider social analysis and relates intimately with the other themes developed in chapters 5, 6 and 7. However I shall begin with his social psychological work as its focus is most clearly upon subjectivity itself, and expand this analysis out to wider socio-political considerations subsequently.

### **Marcuse's Social Psychology and the Radicalisation of Psychoanalysis; The General Theoretical Context.**

Marcuse develops a humanist Marxist inquiry in relation to the meta-psychology of Freud. This brings together a critical analysis of subjectivity and of objective historical and material conditions, exhibiting both existential and political-economic aspects. The basic position which Marcuse expounds, most notably in Eros and Civilisation, is both the radicalisation and historicisation of the work of Freud, culminating in the notion of the 'dialectic of civilisation'.

The analysis here concentrates on the broad theme of 'civilisation'. However, given the important part that organisation has played in the historical development of civilisation such a focus does not detract from the significance of these meta-psychological debates for the development of a critical social psychology of organisations. It is for the historico-political analysis of social subjectivity, the impact of civilisation upon autonomy and the analysis of the social and cultural



negation of this potential at the level of subjectivity, that Marcuse turns to the work of Freud. In this 'philosophical enquiry into Freud' Marcuse argues that subjectivity geared towards the expression of human freedom and pleasure, the 'Pleasure Principle', is transformed by the artificial maintenance of the struggle for survival geared towards a particular interaction with the material world, the 'Performance Principle'. Civilisations impact upon subjectivity, and the repression of self which its institutions require involves renunciation and submission which proceeds through a socio-culturally reproduced sense of guilt. Marcuse turns to Freud's 'allegorical history' of the Primal Horde and the development of the 'Brother Clan' as a metaphor for the civilisational process of the domination of the subject. This metaphor has potential significance for the development of a politicised critical theory of organisations, and an inquiry into its ideological nature, as it shows the operation of social and cultural features upon norms and subjectivity.

A contribution to the Critical Theory of organisations through this psychoanalytic dimension also involves an analysis of the emotional and psychological transformations which the individual, as part of a group/organisation, goes through. It is concerned with how this transformation in subjectivity relates to the domination of the individual by the organisation through the establishment and introjection of a particular 'Reality Principle'. More specifically to the Critical Theory of organisation, the simultaneous

repression and continued existence of the Pleasure Principle makes up the 'subterranean history' of the organisation (Burrell 1993), as well as offering an input into the debate about the principles which could guide the development of alternative organisations. Civilisational reproduction of institutional domination, understood both as process and as existent state of development involves repression from without, from primal father to brother clan to modern organisation; and repression from within, the individual development and introjection of guilt through the development of the super-ego. This is at least in part produced by the organisation and specific managerial techniques encouraging the psychological as well as cultural identification of the individual with the organisation and the introjection of the 'reality' it requires.

The (repressive) civilisation and its organisational forms/relations are in part enforced and sustained by what Freud calls the '...eternal primordial struggle for existence', the contemporary form that this takes according to Marcuse is the ideological reproduction of the notion of scarcity. Scarcity teaches us that we cannot live freely to satisfy our own instinctual desires, life cannot be an end in itself but must be oriented to the reproduction of certain material action as determined by historical and material conditions.

This historicised analysis of the renunciation and repression of instincts is the basis for Marcuse

radicalised version of Freud's theory. It provides the social and political grounding for the theoretical link between the analysis of psychic levels of 'surplus repression', the Performance Principle and the ideological reproduction of industrial society and its organisational forms. In this way, Marcuse articulates the link between the material and the subjective.

For Freud the centrality of guilt and repression for the building of civilisation is such that a non-repressive society is impossible. However, for Marcuse, the 'hidden trend' in psychoanalysis is found in its critique of the rationalisation of repression, and its questioning of the connection of civilisation and barbarism, progress and suffering, freedom and unhappiness. In short this metapsychology of psychoanalysis relates for Marcuse to a more general questioning of the equation of Reason with repression and its manifestations in industrial capitalism. Whilst questioning and uncovering the dynamic of civilisational domination, Freud's position culminates in the essentially conservative argument concerning the inevitability of the repression of individual instincts, and the possibility of freedom only within this wider ambit of repressive restraint of instincts. Freedom can only be 'freedom in civilisation' and this is essentially antagonistic to happiness. Marcuse radicalises Freud's insights by arguing that instinctual repression does not equal the removal of the unconscious and the potential for the reassertion of the Pleasure Principle. He attempts to

articulate the psychic counterpart to the political dimension of the radical potential of 'new sensibility' and expanded autonomy (Marcuse 1979, Gorz 1989).

For these reasons, Marcuse is concerned to articulate the significance of the work of Freud for the critical analysis of the repressive transformation of individual subjectivity by specific socio-historical institutions. The specifics of (neo)Human Relations management strategies can be conceptualised from within this framework. This proceeds through an ontogenesis, the growth of the repressed individual from early infancy to the repressed state of conscious societal existence; and phylogenesis, the repression and return of strengthened introjected repression involved in the rebellion against (symbolic) authority. This tends towards the development of the repressed social being in the fully developed 'administered society'. At both levels there is the potential for a contribution to the Critical Theory of organisations and the analysis of the socio-cultural control of subjectivity, as well as an analysis of the nature of that control in both political/structural and subjective/cultural aspects. Marcuse's politicisation of psychoanalysis thus relates more generally to a socio-historical anatomy of institutional power, one which demonstrates an inherent subject/object dialectic.

### **Ontogenesis: Origins of the Repressed Individual.**

Freud traces the development of repression within the development of the instinctual structure of the individual. In Freudian terms this is a struggle of the instincts of life and death. Freud's final theory of the instincts was not presented until the 1920's. However, throughout its development Freud's theory involves the dynamic union of opposites which make up the conscious and unconscious structures of mental apparatus. Freud's final version of his theory of instincts moves within this dynamic formulation of the structure of the mind whilst emphasising the common origins of the instincts before differentiation. This is based on the notion that when faced with external reality, instinctual drives tend towards achieving a state of equilibrium.

Marcuse is in part interested in developing this Id, Ego, Super-ego formulation. The Id is the 'oldest' and the 'largest layer' of the mental structures of the mind and is organised only in accordance with the Pleasure Principle. Out of the Id, and through the 'mediation' of external reality develops the Ego. It is geared towards the preservation of the organism in relation to a 'Reality Principle'. The integrative function and the normative changes encouraged by managerial technologies of cultural compliance can be related to this deeper subjective development. The integrative function of (neo)Human Relation management encourages a similar 'substitution' of the self-interest in sexual and sensual pleasure for an

organised sensibility which '...promises greater security and success' in relation to external reality, as chapter 9 will show in detail. For example, the development of the Ego as the mediation of the individual with the external reality is related to the mental process which are involved in the accommodation exhibited in the development of a 'corporate personality'.

Out of the Ego's mediation with the external reality develops the Super-ego, the identification with authority, which leads to the development of a kind of 'Morality Principle'. At the subjective level this tends to consolidate the integrative functions and the transformation of a sense of 'morality' into a 'Performance Principle'. As Marcuse puts it, 'Subsequently, a number of societal and cultural influences are taken in by the Super-ego until it coagulates into the powerful representative of established morality' (Marcuse 1966. p.32). This Super-ego or external restriction becomes introjected into the Ego. It becomes a 'conscience', the initiation of a sense of guilt and the internally driven need for the self-punishment of (wished for) transgressions. This development of a self-generated sense of self-restriction begins to explain subjective developments in organisations identified by Michels' (1962) 'psychological need for leadership', Sennett and Cobb's (1977) defensive presentations of the self, and Foucault's (1977) impact of surveillance structures on the subject. Such a politicised psychoanalytic view of socio-cultural and organisational

relations contributes to the understanding of the impact of such structures on the subjective development of self-repression. The individual, through the development of the guilt-ridden Super-ego thus comes to be the locus of the all-seeing, all-knowing self-control, comes to be the locus of their own repression.

However, significantly Marcuse argues that the Super-ego undergoes a 'change in structure'. As we shall see below, this tends towards the mobilisation of the services of the Super-ego in the pursuit of the interests of the organisation. This is one way of expressing the mental process underpinning the initiation of normative control found in the techniques of (neo)Human Relations management. The organisation, through its representatives, its authority, its imagery and its discourses can become a component of an externally derived and imposed Super-ego. Such a Super-ego aspect to subjectivity tends to become guided by a historically specific version of a 'Morality Principle', that is guided by a 'Performance Principle' underpinned by specifically industrial capitalist imperatives and technical interests. These repressions soon become, as initiated internally, unconscious, automatic, natural and part of the established reality. Established versions of normality and routine come to convey a specific sense of duty and purpose which is politically value-laden, and have such effects precisely because they are perceived as 'everyday' (Berger and Luckmann 1967, Lasch 1985). In addition to this, as required by the all-seeing, all-

knowing Super-ego, the regimentation of the self can tend to become increasingly total. As such it relates to the creation of the organised reality and a psychic version of a kind of panoptic arrangement, a Psychic Panopticon. Marcuse's politicised psychoanalysis complements and adds to the work of Foucault. The introjection of the requirements of the Super-ego and the identification of the self with one's own control ensures that the requirements of the Super-ego tend to be unrecognisable as such. In this way the subjective development of the self, in the context of industrial capitalist power relations tends towards domination becoming rational and as such ideologically reproduced. The technical development of an 'organisational culture' by management can be equated with the development of such an external Super-ego tendency and as such organisational control proceeds on the psychic level as much as on the cultural and political. In accordance with the established reality, organisational authority replaces parental authority as the introjected authority which requires the individual to feel guilt and exhibit a Performance Principle orientation within work relations. Marcuse argues that the specific historical forms of this domination needs to be uncovered as ideology. To contribute to the development of this, Marcuse develops new categories to provide a specifically historical analysis which is more sensitive to the particular forms it takes.



### **Surplus Repression and The Performance Principle.**

Marcuse provides us with the concept of surplus repression which he describes as '...the restrictions necessitated by social domination'. This is linked to the 'Performance Principle' which is described as '...the prevailing historical form of the reality principle' (1966. p.35). Basic repression and scarcity imply the universality of trends towards 'suspension' of pleasure and autonomy in civilised behaviour. Freud sees this as ensuring the incompatibility of the 'Pleasure Principle' with the given 'reality' and the necessity of the renunciation of instinctual desires. For Freud there is a fundamental antagonism between the 'Pleasure Principle' and the organisation required for the satisfaction of material needs.

For Marcuse on the other hand, this view of the inevitability/necessity of the repression of instincts is an example of surplus repression. Such repression is 'surplus' in that it is the consequence of a historically specific form of domination maintained by an unnecessary scarcity. The repressive regimentation of instincts being a repression over and above that which is required for the survival of the individual. The nature of such repression relates to the 'Performance Principle' in that it is surplus repression which facilitates the performance of historically specified functions within an industrial capitalist society. In this way the analysis of the reproduction of capitalist social and organisational

relations of power can be understood in their psycho-social aspects as well as their political-economic aspects. The surplus repression required by work in industrial organisation is for Marcuse but an extension of this more fundamental tendency of the reproduction of repression necessitated and created by the social organisation of scarcity in capitalist society, or the 'social distribution of scarcity'.

To present the repression of the individual in a context other than this is to universalise such repression and to fail to relate it to historical conditions. To do this is ideological in the sense that it is idealistic, but more it is to present repression and the renunciation of pleasure as being inevitable, as being the 'normal' conditions of life, and thus to reify it. Marcuse radicalises Freud's basic conception so as to maintain historical contingency and highlight the radical potential for a non-repressive material organisation of social life. As we shall see in chapter 7, this politicised analysis is linked to the ideas found elsewhere in Marcuse's work. The instrumental mobilisation of self-repression within the management of social psychological aspects of organisational relations and culture represents a sophisticated form of technological control, as subjectivity is modified by technical interests as much as by the ontogenesis of the self. The mobilisation of the instincts and the human propensity to repress them is mobilised by the organisation in line with its productivist/discipline requirements.

Surplus repression is parallel with the (neo)Human Relations instrumental mobilisation of culture in the organisation. Examples of specific institutional sites of surplus repression which Marcuse gives are the monogamic/patriarchal family, the hierarchical division of labour, the public control of the individual private lives and the de-sexualisation or 'containment' of sexual impulses (See also Leonard 1984). As such, surplus repression and the 'Performance Principle' are related to the organisation of life as much as it relates to life in organisations.

This is a critique of the repression of subjectivity which locates that repression in the basic requirements of the capitalist industrial economic system and its organisational forms. The 'Performance Principle' is enshrined within the ideological project of (neo)Human Relations management in that it is the presentation as rational of the domination inherent in alienated labour and organisational relations presented as the common pursuit of the material and emotional interests of all. The restrictions, renunciations and performances required by the system of wage-labour imposes upon the subject an ever more apparently rational, universal control precisely as it operates at the level of the individual psyche as well as on the political and structural level. The 'Performance Principle' operates on the individual as an external reality, as objective laws, technical necessities and requirements for the survival of the individual as well as

operating as internalised forces introjected by the individual as 'conscience'. Repression and domination occur as much on the level of the unconscious Super-ego through the introjection of the requirements of the 'Performance Principle' as on the level of the Ego through the imposition of externally derived material, technological conditions. The organised, organisational universe is as much an external Super-ego as it is the rational realistic universe.

### **Repression and Groupness; Phylogenesis and the Origins of a Repressive Civilisation.**

Chapter 2 in part discussed some of the organisation studies which have focused upon group psychological processes. The psychological processes the individual goes through in the initiation into the group and the maintenance of their group membership has relevance to the understanding of how this general phenomena described by Marcuse relates to organisations. Marcuse does not perhaps pay enough attention to this group psychological dimension in the work of Freud, although he is obviously concerned with Freud's meta-psychology which relates to the group psychology.

Freud (1921) sees no essential contradiction between the psychological study of the individual and the study of members of groups, whether that be as a member of '...a race, of a nation, of a caste, of a profession, of an institution, or as a component part of a crowd of people

who have been organised into a group at some particular time for some definite purpose (a class)' (Freud 1921, p.96). This has relevance for the explication of Marcuse's work, in that much of the misguided criticism of Marcuse's position proceeds on the basis that his amalgamation of the work of Marx and Freud is theoretically illegitimate. This seems to stem from a misreading or perhaps non-reading of Freud as some sort of therapeutic clinician and a neglect of the sociological or at least meta-psychological elements in Freud's work (1921, 1930), of which the above quotation is an example. Freud is as concerned with relational elements occurring in certain social contexts as is the subject-object dialectic found in Marxism (Fromm 1972, Larrain 1979, Zizek 1989). Freud offers the possibility that the reactions and behaviours which occur in these 'special conditions' are expressions of a 'special instinct', a social or herd instinct, which does not come to light in other non-group oriented situations. He develops an extensive inquiry into groups and their 'psychology' which has obvious relevance for the understanding of organisational relations and processes, as well as for the radical understanding of (neo)Human Relations management.

Group behaviour is characterised by a high degree of reciprocity as group members exert a mutual influence upon each other. Thus at its most general level, this is a concern to discover the mental and psychic processes which the group exerts upon the individual and how the dynamics

of groupness lead to irrationality, impetuosity, extreme reactions and the submergence of the individual within the group. The repressive nature of the introjection of the 'Performance Principle' and the Super-ego relate to this more social, group oriented and phylogenetic aspect of the modification of subjectivity. The nature of work and organisations can be discussed within this general theoretical perspective in that the existential and mental status of 'human resources' are directed by the management of the organisation on the psychic level as much as on the economic. Freud argued that the repression of instincts and the development of the Super-ego begins in childhood. This development culminates in 'civilised morality' in the adult, proceeding through 'an intensification of the sense of guilt'. However this ontogenetic development theory must, for Marcuse be supplemented by a wider psychological discussion of the social context of the group setting. Individual psychology is intimately linked with group psychology forming the conceptual bridge between the individual and the 'mass' psyche. This psychology can for Marcuse unmask the ideological veil from the construction of the individual personality, to 'dissolve the individual...(as)... his personality appears as the frozen manifestation of the general repression of mankind' (Marcuse 1966. p.57). For Marcuse the Ego-ideal which has shaped civilisation according to the bourgeois Western thought through autonomous reason and self-consciousness, has done so only in the 'soil of enslavement'. By

'dissolving' this idea of the autonomous Ego-personality a critical meta-psychology reveals the unconscious and pre-conscious forces involved and relates the development of the individual to the external repressive conditions. '...it reveals the power of the universal in and over the individual' (Marcuse 1966. p.57). This undermines one of the strongest ideological fortifications of modern culture, that of the autonomous individual as operating 'freely' in whatever social arena, for example the organisation as conceived by (neo)Human Relations management. For Marcuse, the concrete personality as it exists in public and private life conceals rather than represents the essence and nature of personality. The personality as it exists within the objective conditions of modern civilisation are characterised by Marcuse as '...the end result of long historical processes which are congealed in the networks of human and institutional entities making up society, and these define the personality and its relationships' (Marcuse 1966. p.57). It is the universal fate of instinctual drives to be subject to historical modification in relation to both ontogenetic and phylogenetic developments and the experiences of domination leading to the development of the Super-ego. Organisations and organisationally dominated life are perhaps examples of this historical modification of instinctual drives as well as an example of the universality of such modification. Moreover, the (neo)Human Relations management of subjectivity and culture are perhaps historically new in

that in the late industrial period the instinctual drives are mobilised and technologically directed through specific instrumental managerial techniques in line with external conditions.

Of course Freud's theory of this phylogenesis is strongly contested and is untestable. Perhaps Freud's ideas here are themselves a theoretical 'perversion'. Marcuse uses Freud's 'anthropological speculation' metaphorically, only in the sense of its 'symbolic value'. It provides an allegorical resource for the investigation of the historical dialectic within the development of civilisation.

#### **The Dialectic of Civilisation.**

The dynamic development of civilisation and its imperatives brings its own contradictory consequences, 'originating in renunciation (guilt) and developing under progressive renunciation (sublimation) civilisation tends towards self-destruction' (Marcuse 1966. p.83). It is the 'mediation' of such contradiction, at the levels of subjectivity and culture which this analysis essentially highlights. In this way it contributes to the wider analysis of organisation as ideology, as defined in chapter 3. This 'dialectic of civilisation', found in the process whereby the repression of instincts by the institutional structures of civilisation stands in a dialectical relation to the expression of its opposite, the breaking of the institutional impact upon subjectivity. The decisive features in both the ontological and phylogenetic basis for



the development of civilisation was for Freud the pervasiveness of guilt. Freud establishes a correlation between progress and the increased ontological centrality of internalised guilt. Freud represents the sense of guilt as '...the most important problem in the evolution of culture, and to convey that the price of progress in civilisation is paid in forfeiting happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt' (Marcuse 1966. p.78). Marcuse argues that this assertion is corroborated empirically through the increased discontent found in contemporary civilisation. The 'enlarged scale of wars, ubiquitous persecutions, anti-Semitism, genocide, bigotry and the enforcement of 'illusions', toil, sickness, and misery in the midst of growing wealth and knowledge' (Marcuse 1966. p.78, Fromm 1980, Elias 1982, Lasch 1985). The ontogenetic/phylogenetic development of an (external) Super-ego identification with authority figures leads to an 'abstention from the deed' of sexual or aggressive impulses (Marcuse 1968a). But instinctual and aggressive impulses re-surface intermittently as civilisation threatening aggressions which require 'renewed repressions'. The Super-ego subsumes the Id/Ego dynamic and requires that Eros be sublimated such that its services are enlisted in the building of civilisation (Elias 1982). This proceeds through the development of formal institutions in society which require/fulfil the Super-ego function of guilt and identification. Further, as the quantitative expansion of guilt and the renunciation of instincts becomes

increasingly associated with civilised behaviour a change in the quality of guilt appears. The rationality of guilt based upon wished for instinctual gratification disappears. According to Marcuse, Freud was unable to develop this idea of the irrational basis for guilt and Super-ego identification due to his essential conservatism. Marcuse argues that for Freud the existence and development of culture represented the highest rationality. This position has strong similarities with orthodox organisation theory's conservative position on organisations and organisational culture. The organisational context is similarly seen as representing an objective expression of the highest form of rationality to which the individual should respond, preserved from a rebelliousness which is 'automatically' labelled as pathological. This despite the fact that these irrationalities are produced by the internal contradictions of the processes themselves, requiring ideological 'mediation'. The defense of the development of civilisation which internally produce their own irrationalities thus requires the renewed and strengthened repression of the threatening transgressions through social and cultural apparatus, over and above the purely psychic. The managerial techniques which attempt to technologically control the emotional and psychological elements of organisational members being one modernised, rationalised variant of this process.

The process of civilisation is primarily progress-in-work, that is work for the procurement of the necessities of

life. For Freud such work is '...normally without satisfaction in itself', being inherently painful and without instinctual satisfaction. He maintains there exists a 'natural aversion to work'. For Freud the basic work in civilisation is non-libidinal, is labour which must be enforced through the sublimation of instinctual energy and its redirection into the civilisation building project. Culture '... obtains a great part of the mental energy it needs by subtracting it from sexuality', and '...the main sphere of civilisation appears as a sphere of sublimation' (Marcuse 1966. p.83). The basis of civilisation in sublimation thus involves the desexualization of mental energy altering the balance of Eros and Thanatos. The concrete example of the contemporary organisational form and its position within the civilisation process directed towards discipline, the renunciation of sexual/instinctual satisfaction in the pursuit of material production and the emotional identification with the symbolic representatives of the organisation relates to this. It also therefore shares similar irrationalities and dialectical contradictions, economic and existential.

Marcuse does however raise some objections to this smooth running argument. Not all work involves desexualization and not all work is necessarily unpleasurable. The analysis of this requires that a more informed distinction be made between types and contexts of work, such as the distinction between skilled and deskilled work, between wage-labour and a more meaningful autonomous interaction with the world,

between hierarchically controlled and self-directed labour. Further, Marcuse raises the objection that the inhibitions enforced by civilisation and culture effect the death instinct as much as the life instinct, weakening Thanatos as much as Eros (Marcuse 1968a). The social utilisation of mental energy in the services of civilising work is to some extent the utilisation of the death instinct and its aggressive manifestations. Thus for Marcuse the relationship between work and sublimation has been relatively neglected by psychoanalytic theory, which for Marcuse has succumbed to the prevailing ideological representation of 'productivity' in the conservative neo-Freudian emphasis upon the prevailing morality. Most work is and has been of a specific nature which for Marcuse cannot be legitimately understood in abstraction from its economic and historical context.

This is the point at which Marcuse again seeks to radicalise the Freudian position. Marcuse writes 'The work that created and enlarged the material basis of civilisation was chiefly labour, alienated labour, painful and miserable - and it still is' (Marcuse 1966. p.85). Of course the Freudian position would not disagree that work is essentially 'painful'. The radicalisation which Marcuse propels comes with the assertion that it need not always be so, that to understand the historical and economic context of the subjective alienation of labour is to at least theoretically begin to understand objective alienation and the possibility of non-alienated conditions. The nature of

work and organisational relations in contemporary society are shaped by the prevailing imperatives of the economic system within which they proceed. The notion that the universal requirement of the renunciation of instinctual desires is a basic feature of human existence ignores the objective conditions which unnecessarily reproduce scarcity and the 'surplus' nature of some repressions.

Marcuse equates the contemporarily predominant form of rationality (purposive rationality, technological rationality) as a manifestation, or at least as linked to such surplus repression. The 'rational organisational' forms which are predominantly guided by these forms of rationality are similarly manifestations of destructive, anti-human irrationalism, the aggressive use of humanity as 'human resource'. Despite the attempts geared towards the humanisation of organisational relations and practices, the context within which these practices occur can be related to the irrationality of surplus repression and socially utilised aggressiveness. When Marcuse writes of this destructive rationality, '...extroverted destruction remains destruction. Its objects are in most cases actually and violently assailed, deprived of their form, and reconstituted only after partial destruction; units are forcibly divided, and the component forcibly rearranged' (Marcuse 1966. p.86), he is also talking of the history of the rationality which underpinned the development of the factory system and the position of the worker therein; he is also talking of 'scientific management' and other

managerial projections of 'units of labour'; he is talking of the capitalist logic requiring competitive utilisation of 'resources', natural and human. The fact that this context is able to represent itself as more humane, more 'rational', more consensual, more participatory does not in itself change the fundamental nature of this rationality. Socially utilised destructiveness must for Marcuse inherently drive towards a destructive approach to life itself, must ultimately end in barbarism and technologically derived, scientifically sanctioned neglect of human life.

This rationalised destructiveness in its manifestations, its increased mastery over nature leads to the greater productivity and the satisfaction of human needs only as a by-product.

For Marcuse the smaller the level of surplus repression, the less repressive is that stage of civilisation. Thus by extension the smaller the level of surplus repression within the specific organisational manifestations of the historical conditions, the more humane that organisation can be said to be. In this way, Marcuse radicalises the view of the relationship between civilisation and repression of the instincts by making a discussion of repression historically sensitive and relating it to the objective conditions within which it occurs, not to mention in relation to the objective historical possibilities for the reduction of repression. The genuine humanisation of managerial theory and organisational forms would in this

view be intimately related to the reduction of surplus repression in relation to political, economic and social factors.

In this historical period, the increased productive capacity of the mature stage of civilisation without a corresponding relaxation of societally organised instinctual repression signals a more repressive society given those very objective possibilities. The management of contemporary organisational forms goes to reproduce this surplus repression. As we shall see below, the rhetoric of 'humanisation' does not alter this basic historical fact. In this way we can begin to see 'humanisation', through the lens of surplus repression as a 'repressive humanisation'.

The discussion above reveals the repressive modification of subjectivity as historically contingent. Organisational subjectivity is shown to be related to the perpetuation of regimentation in the interests of discipline. Organisations and the management of subjectivity and culture can be seen, in the light of this discussion, as the perpetuation of surplus repression in that it serves to maintain historically specific social, political and economic relations. Such a management of subjectivity can be understood as the techniques for the social utilisation of instinctual energy in the attempt to maintain this surplus repressive discipline.

This notion has great relevance for the discussion of the nature of power and authority within organisations in that

the technology of managerial attempts to direct culture and subjectivity proceeds through the attempt to engineer such a re-established domination from within the subject. The legitimation of authority on the grounds of rational, legal authority, is radically reformulated here as the irrationality of this rationalisation is highlighted, and the socio-psychological processes of this irrationality are expressed. This version of power and authority informed by the views of Marcuse is thus close to the versions of organisations as systems of power and domination found in the work of Gramsci, Michels and Foucault. It shows that individuals do not necessarily identify with the legitimated authority of the organisation due to some belief in the justice or superiority of the organisational form as it exists, but due to the dynamics of the group and through the maintenance of psychic equilibrium threatened by the feelings of guilt and the need for leadership.

Marcuse argues that '..the struggle of the oppressed has ended in establishing a new 'better' system of domination; progress has taken place through an improving chain of control' (Marcuse 1966. p.90). Historical developments in management theory are characterised by a similar revolution in the techniques advocated (although not in the underlying paradigmatic basis) such that Taylorism required management to go through a 'mental revolution', followed by the (neo)Human Relations 'revolution' aimed at challenging the received knowledge and initiating a more sophisticated system of managerial control. Attempts to humanise



relations within the organisation culminating in a pseudo-change which nevertheless brings a similar 'progress' in the effectiveness of the chain of control. In the case of (neo)Human Relations management this involves mobilising the very instinctual basis of the repressive nature of progress, guilt and identification with ones own domination, as chapter 9 shows.

As Marcuse writes, '...every revolution is also a betrayed revolution', ending in the 'psychic thermidor'. The development of the technology of (neo)Human Relations management was never a genuinely revolutionary impetus, but it has nevertheless ended in this thermidor, and in the reestablished, strengthened form of domination. The 'humanisation' of (neo)Human Relations management encourages the identification of the individual with the context of their own domination. This is again a repressive humanisation which can be seen as a specific case in point of surplus repression. This is one manifestation of the dialectical contradictions immanent in the development of civilisation, the contradictions between the real possibilities for liberation and the perpetuation of regimentation, the contradiction between the 'Pleasure Principle' and the industrialised mobilisation of the instinctual energy and identification. The 'humanisation' of managerial repression is the ideological attempt in the realm of ideas to mediate these contradictions and historically re-establish surplus repression.

### **Summary.**

What all the above shows is that Marcuse draws out the link between the 'ideology of advanced industrial society' and the psychological processes involved in the adjustment and self-adjustment of the individual subjectivity to the requirements of that society.

'The masters no longer perform an individual function. The sadistic principle, the capitalist exploiters, have been transformed into salaried members of a bureaucracy, whom their subjects meet as members of another bureaucracy. The pain, frustration, impotence of the individual derive from a highly productive and efficiently functioning system...responsibility for the organisation of his life lies with the whole, the 'system', the sum total of the institutions that determine, satisfy and control his needs...hate encounters smiling colleagues, busy competitors, obedient officials, helpful social workers who are all doing their duty and who are all innocent victims (Marcuse 1966. p.98).

As the subject is rationalised, rebellion has no 'rational' focus, no target, nothing to rebel against with any 'rational' strategy. The psychological preparation for the rationalisation of conformity proceeds, and is made more 'rational', more efficient as it is depersonalised. The ideologically driven requirements of the productive system,

the discipline and self-discipline are ensured as the 'Performance Principle' tends towards becoming the subjectively accepted. Technological rationality works towards re-initiating the subject into their own repression through a claim to be 'therapeutic', as chapters 7 and 9 will show. The 'Performance Principle' becomes the historically prevalent, politically (organisationally) maintained reality principle.

Thus we can see how Marcuse's concerns with existential and social psychological questions are intimately related for him with a material, political-economic critique of industrial capitalism. It is this combination of a psychoanalytic, group orientation, an (inter)personal psychology with an historical materialism which makes the work of Marcuse so illuminating for the development of a critical social psychology of organisations. We have seen how Marcuse attempts to demonstrate that the interpersonal, group psychological processes; the internalisation of guilt and the development of a Super-ego; and the maintenance of scarcity contribute to the (re)production of repression on the subjective level. Marcuse demonstrates how the civilisation process has an internal dialectic which whilst offering the alleviation from the struggle for survival and progress, also brings its own opposite. The civilisation process brings the 'change in the structure' of the Super-ego and the consequent internalisation of self-repression. Marcuse also demonstrates the historical specificity of this repression and argues that it is, as enshrined within

the Performance Principles, a surplus repression. It is surplus in that it is unnecessary for the basic social and sexual coordination of civilisation and is a consequence of a particularly historical organisation of social and economic life, namely capitalism. It is clear that such social psychological analyses hold potential for the Critical Theory of organisational behaviour. However, this dimension relates to other arguments within the Marcusean corpus which have been neglected by critical theories of organisations. It is to a full development of these that I now turn in theoretical terms before a distillation of the relevance of the work of Marcuse as a whole can be applied to the critique of (neo)Human Relations management. In the next chapter therefore I shall broaden the scope of the analysis, to show the relevance of Marcuse's socio-cultural analyses of power and 'new forms of control' for the development of a Critical Theory of organisations. This chapter, along with chapters 6 and 7 will in this way offer the 'social analysis' component of the 'depth hermeneutic'. This will enable the focusing of the criticisms of the ideological nature of the management of culture and subjectivity made above, to the specifics of (neo)Human Relations management discourse.

## CHAPTER 5

### NEW FORMS OF CONTROL.

A second general theme related to the above discussion of Marcuse's work, which has relevance for the critical analysis of (neo)Human Relations management, ideology and subjectivity in organisations can be summarised by the notion of 'new forms of control' (Marcuse 1964). This general analysis is part of a wider theme within his work concerned with the question of (un)freedom, authority and control. Marcuse's (1973b) analysis of authority moves in a discussion of the historically orthodox conceptualisation of freedom, and its distinction between the realm of freedom, conceived as internally generated free will, and the notion of unfreedom, as externally imposed authority, conceived as the prolongation of necessity due to the perpetuation of scarcity. That is, Marcuse's analysis of freedom and authority is developed against the backdrop of the contradictory nature of bourgeois capitalist society. He argues that the orthodox notion of freedom can be seen as contradictory when set within the context of the dialectic of civilisation discussed above. As we saw above this leads him to question the (ir)rationality of authority relations and the 'mental attitude' it creates in those subject to it. In this mental attitude Marcuse identifies the interpenetration of the concepts of freedom and authority and the dialectical nature of their relationship. It is the

ideological presentation of freedom within authority relations and the mental attitude which characterises the acceptance of authority as freedom that is the philosophical basis which underpins the politico-sociological discussion of 'new forms of control'. As we shall see below, the notion that individuals accept authority as freedom has relevance for the study of specifically organisational authority relations, and the question of ideology and subjectivity set against the control strategies of (neo)Human Relations management.

Within authority relationships Marcuse identifies two significant aspects. Firstly there is a 'certain measure of freedom', that is a voluntariness, a recognition that the bearers of authority are legitimate. Authority relations in this respect are not characterised by open coercion. However, the second element which Marcuse locates within the authority relationship is the 'submission', or the 'tying of the will' (and also of thought and reason) to the authoritative will of the Other.

For example, bourgeois individualism and the notion of individual freedoms within the context of authority relations provides the conceptual and political vocabulary, a deeper, more fundamental version of what Bendix (1972) has called a 'verbal dress', for the ideological presentation of authority as something other than authority. The capitalistic organisation of society is deemed to be the embodiment of freedom in the midst of authority and regimentation. The individual is encouraged

to accept the illusion of individual freedom as they accept the legitimacy of authority. Put more philosophically, the dialectical relationship between freedom and authority as conceived in the bourgeois society is negated, the opposites are conflated into a false unity, freedom becomes authority becomes freedom. 'Obedience to the law is Freedom' and 'work makes one free'; such statements are paralleled by the illusion of industrial democracy as it is formulated in orthodox terms. Here the 'freedom' to 'participate' tend towards the reproduction of the mental attitude which enables the individual or the group to feel that they are part of decisions which have already been taken. Marcuse expresses himself more eloquently when he writes 'Thus the authority relationship, freedom and unfreedom, autonomy and heteronomy, are yoked in the same concept and united ...' (Marcuse 1973b. p.51). The subject who now has the 'freedom' to pursue their own interests, as self-interested economic individuals, from within the context of the pursuit of the interests of the organisation loses the conceptual tools to distinguish between autonomy and control. Individuals tend to 'choose' to do what they have to do. The objective context within which this repressive humanisation operates, an example being the organisation, has a tendency to remain unquestioned and unquestionable.

One Dimensional Man (1964) explores similar themes. It starts with an expression of the contradictory nature of modern capitalist society, a theme which runs throughout

Marcuse's whole work. This is an expression of what Marcuse sees as the irrationality of modern society stemming from the dialectical understanding of its modernisations and rationalisations. For Marcuse the nature of social control has changed in that the capitalist system now has the ability to present itself as rational. Marcuse's analyses this in connection to historically new scientific and technological advances, an analysis which can usefully be applied to critical organisation theory. This historical analysis measures the reasonableness of this society and its organisations against its historically possible alternatives. It involves an analysis which attempts to transcend the established universe of facts, to talk of potentials, capacities and alternatives. Marcuse argues that such practically possible alternative socio-economic organisation is deflected by the ideological nature of capitalism, scientism and technological rationality. Technological progress appears to remove the very basis of such a Critical Social Theory through its ability to present a false reconciliation between the existent and the potential. This defends the given system of social (organisational) relations and thus diverts the possibilities for any radical social (organisational) change.

Against this backdrop, Marcuse argues that the technical apparatus within advanced industrial society should not be seen as the sum total of mere instruments isolated from their social and political effects, but located as



functioning within the social system as a whole which determines them a priori. The productive and distributive apparatus tend to mask the opposition between private and social needs, private and public existence which institutes a more effective and more 'pleasant' forms of social control. Such 'new forms of control' develop through integrating the needs and interests of the individual with, and therefore into those of society (the organisation). The emphasis placed upon the integration of the individual into the organisation by some managerial theory can be seen as an specific example of precisely this process. For Marcuse, traditional views of science and technology as neutral, as exemplified by management science and mainstream organisation studies cannot be maintained. He posits a view of science and technology as domination, as providing the specific techniques for more effective domination which is at once able to present itself as rational from within. Again the development and use of techniques in (neo)Human Relations management theory provides empirical evidence of this relationship between science and technology, and rationalised domination. This is discussed at greater length in chapter 7.

Technology is determined by a selection process, and once these choices have been made and institutionalised they tend to develop into a self-perpetuating system which prescribes social (organisational) relations. This has the effect of perpetuating and legitimating the power relations therein. The scientific and technological project thus

tends to shape the universe of discourse and action, intellectual and material values, ie. culture. Managerial technologies of organisational culture and compliance are likewise geared towards producing certain behaviours, attitudes and commitments. The managerial/engineering approach to socio-cultural technologies is an example of this type of technologically determined universe of rationalised domination. The nature of this 'new form of control' is for Marcuse characterised essentially by the ability of the society or the organisation to confine social and political relations and their possible outcomes to within the parameters of the pre-established system. It also involves the internalisation of the values and requirements of the system by the individual. Again we see the relationship between Marcuse's 'new forms of control' and his radicalisation of the psychoanalytic perspective discussed above.

The institutionalisation of conflict and the claimed plurality of power within the organisation can be related to Marcuse's notion of 'new forms of control' in that such a plurality is managed and is contained within the boundaries of the organisation and the organised version of reality. Again within the study of (neo)Human Relations management theory developed in chapters 8 and 9 there is specific empirical evidence of the phenomena which Marcuse is describing in the abstract. As Marcuse makes clear, the intensification of 'new forms of (managerial) control' have been developed to manipulate the needs and consciousness of

the individual. 'New forms of control' are found in the rhetoric of liberal pluralistic democracy as it tends towards the colonisation of the very talk of autonomy, self-determination and self-actualization. Nowhere is this illusion of democracy and autonomy so pervasive than the rhetoric of socio-cultural management found in (neo)Human Relations perspectives. Modern managerial controls attempt to integrate the whole individual. Industrial psychology and sociology are the legitimated scientific representatives of this project, geared towards the creation of the individual and organisational culture which identifies with its own control.

Marcuse relates this tendency towards one dimensionality to his critique of positivism as the predominant version of science and scientific method. This is particularly the case in terms of management theory and the 'operationalism' it exhibits. This 'operationalism' is characterised by the restriction of thought and understanding to something synonymous with a set of operations. This resonates with the more basic features of positivism in that understanding is expunged of any critical potential and is restricted to the empirical. As Marcuse writes, 'The radical empiricist onslaught thus provides the methodological justification for the debunking of the mind by the intellectual- a positivism which, in its denial of the transcending elements of Reason, forms the academic counterpart of socially (organisationally) required behaviour' (Marcuse 1964. p. 32).

The managerial attempt to create organised subjectivity and the underlying technological rationality found in management theory coincide to form the basis of its inherent ideological nature. Management theory, operating in terms of predetermined efficiency-oriented goals seeks theoretically and materially to adapt behaviour to the requirements of the organisation, whilst claiming a legitimacy and even humanism related to its claims of technological reasonableness. The rhetoric of 'self-actualization-whilst-pursuing-the-objectives-of-the-organisation' is perhaps the most sophisticated and yet obvious example of this ideological claim of reasonableness and humanism in management theory. Such ideology '... serves to coordinate ideas and goals (organisational culture and behaviour) with those exacted by the prevailing system, to enclose them within the system' (Marcuse 1964. p.19). In this way the (neo)Human Relations management project to coordinate and direct behaviour can be seen as an important representative of the tendencies towards a one-dimensional (organisational) reality.

The organisation attempts to place limitations on ideas and behaviour, ideas which step outside the organised organisational reality are ideologically deemed outside the limits of Reason. This attempt to ideologically limit reality and close the universe of discourse is not new, but for Marcuse we are faced with 'new forms of control' which are 'more ideological' than previously. The attempt to develop this total and totalitarian reality tends towards

the ideological transformation of any and all opposition to the system into a metaphysical irrationalism or utopianism. The (neo)Human Relations approach to the management of thought and behaviour in all its variants can be characterised as this ideological demarcation of the reasonable from the unreasonable/pathological as it projects the normality of integration into the organisation and its objectives as the only reasonable course, as chapter 9 will show in detail.

It is Reason itself which is for Marcuse the powerful moment around which ideology and control through integration revolves. Any more genuine potentials for humanised organisational relations is neutralised by the very conceptual and organisational framework within which (neo)Human Relations management operates. As Marcuse writes of this ideologically maintained universe, '...validated by the accomplishments of science and productivity, the status quo defies all transcendence... operationalism in theory and practice becomes the theory and practice of containment' (Marcuse 1964. p.28).

### **Repressive Tolerance**

Apart from the extended analysis of 'new forms of control' found in One Dimensional Man, Marcuse (1964) discusses 'Repressive Tolerance', which has relevance here in that it relates to the more general notion that individuals become active in their own domination, and the reproduction of power relations proceeds through the repressive aspect to

purported liberation and humanisation. The more general discussion of the socio-historical backdrop to 'new forms of control' above, and the discussion of 'repressive tolerance' below can be applied to the specific historical trend within (neo)Human Relations management as highlighted in chapters 8 and 9. Such an application can also characterise the 'humanisation' of the (neo)Human Relations perspective as a 'repressive humanisation'.

Marcuse (1964) defines 'repressive tolerance' as the situation whereby '...what is proclaimed and practised as tolerance today, is in many of its most effective manifestations serving the cause of oppression' (Marcuse 1964. p.81). Marcuse demarcates the potential for the expansion of tolerance and autonomy in contemporary society, given the potential for social and material change, from the institutional inability to translate such potential into emancipatory practice. Marcuse's radical humanism leads him to argue that 'tolerance is an end in itself' as it is the elimination of oppression and implies progress towards a more humane society. Marcuse argues that this potential is ideologically arrested and the politico-empirical analysis of 'tolerance' demonstrates its repressive nature. Democratic and authoritarian societies (organisations) alike demonstrate a rhetoric of tolerance, but do not practice tolerance. Witness certain versions of Industrial Participation/democracy and the post-Fordist team. What is 'tolerated' is the acceptance of already taken decisions and the autonomy to display discretion

within the controlled organisational context.

In relation to 'new forms of control', the effect of this 'repressive tolerance' is to transform political (organisational) action from an 'activity', where authority is tolerant of dissent, into a passive state whereby the governed tolerate the pre-defined system of authority. 'It is the people who tolerate the government which in turn tolerates opposition within the framework determined by the constituted authority' (Marcuse 1964. p.83). The established system of authority is already established and tolerated before politics, and it then only tolerates dissent from within these prescribed boundaries. In this way the established system of authority is internally self-validating. The resistance, which is 'already always present' is tolerated as it consolidates established authority rather than challenges it. Such tolerance by pre-established authority is in this way repressive. Management's 'tolerance' of self-actualization, a divergent plurality of interests, conflict, negotiation, dissent, competition and informality within the pre-established parameters of organisationally defined systems of authority are examples of this. However, the notion of 'strategic leniency' is perhaps the example par excellence of 'repressive tolerance', for purely operational, that is efficiency motivations.

As Marcuse argues, tolerance is extended to everything within the whole, and as such helps to perpetuate the whole as it already exists. Such a managerial tolerance is

repressive to the extent that the whole, of capitalist socio-economic relations within the organisation, are repressive. The rhetoric of 'participation' was always different from the discussion of 'participation' within academic management circles, where the illusory nature of 'participation' and the emphasis on 'feelings of participation' has long been recognised (Patemen 1970, Blumberg 1971, Kilmann 1985, Olins 1989). It is this situation of repressive tolerance which Marcuse (1964) describes as 'loaded' as it brings 'background limitations', a 'background ideology' referred to in chapter 3. Given this, the 'humanisation' of the managerial tolerance of a more active human subject within the organisation is a 'repressive humanisation' as it similarly operates in the context of, often even more precise 'background limitations' of organisationally defined imperatives.

#### **The Containment of Social Change.**

Given the existence of 'new forms of control', Marcuse explores the wider question of the containment of the potential for social change. This implies a repressive transformation of social action and perception over and above purely individual action. This is of particular interest for the development of a Critical Theory of organisations in that it relates to the general question of the relationship between working class opposition and the reproduction of capitalist organisations.



Marcuse argues that contemporary society is characterised by the assimilation of individuals into an identity as workers; the development of integrative leadership styles in business and industry; and the management of leisure time. These trends mark the unification of opposites in the political sphere, especially in the 'collusion' and 'alliance' between business and organised labour. The integration of individuals and workgroups into the organisation involved in the post-Fordism phenomenon is perhaps a contemporary version of this. This is so in that the older conflicts of the industrialised West have been modified and contained by the dual impact of technical progress (the modernisation of management techniques) and the threat of communism as the enemy without.

Clearly historical developments have rendered the statements of the impact of the enemy without as obsolete. Nevertheless the development of post-Fordist structures has involved the development of conflict or competition between work groups as an institutionalised replacement for the normative, cohesive function that previous symbolic enemies had. A state of 'internal union and cohesion' continues to be created, which differs from the 'normal' social process. Such trends point towards a social and cultural cohesion which is artificially engineered and managed, within society at large and in the organisation in particular. A study of the (neo)Human Relations approach to organisational culture, and the managerial attempt to create socio-cultural relations in the pursuit of

organisational objectives provides an empirical example of this tendency, as chapter 9 demonstrates. On these grounds Marcuse identifies what he calls a 'universe of administration' which transforms political conflicts into technical problems of administration. The mediation of such problems is contained to within the pre-established system of authority relations. As such, existing forms of social and organisational relations are stabilised and universalised.

The classical Marxist view, which sees the transition from capitalism to socialism as being essentially a revolutionary change in political structures and the socialisation of the means of production, is challenged by Marcuse. He argues that technological rationality is embodied in the productive apparatus as part of the capitalist rationality (Marcuse 1968). This applies to the hardware of the capitalist technology, but also to the technological rationality used in the subjective adaptation of the workforce and the socio-cultural technologies of (neo)Human Relations management. The socialisation of the means of production is for Marcuse the pre-condition for social change, but does not in itself constitute social change. This requires a corresponding change in the rationality embodied in the productive apparatus and their organisational forms. Marx argued that the organisation of production by the 'immediate producers' would bring qualitative change in that it would facilitate the satisfaction of freely developed needs and production for

use. However, for Marcuse the established technical apparatus engulfs both the private and public space (physical and mental) of the individual. This becomes the internalised medium of 'new form of control' and obviates the possibility of any such change, incorporating the individual within a reified political universe. Radical social change would thus for Marcuse require the change in both technological rationality, and also the organisational forms, relations and 'cultures' which are effected by such technological rationality.

For the growing majority in an affluent society this neutralisation of subversive imagination and its corresponding manipulation tends to be ensured by the installation and satisfaction of 'false needs'. The history of the (neo)Human Relations approach to management provides evidence of this process. We can identify this from Mayo's concern to ensure the 'spontaneous co-operation' of the members of the organisation to ensure both higher productivity and greater social solidarity, to the 'false need' of 'self-actualization' still within the prescribed arena of the organisation. This is evidence of the installation and satisfaction of false, manipulated and managed needs and conceptions which has been the locus of management, leading to the development of the specific strategies and techniques involved. The factors involved in this transformation include;

(1) the mechanisation of the quantity and intensity of physical labour. Notwithstanding the extremes of the

physical and biological manifestations of exploitation, mechanisation modifies the attitudes of the exploited. Given this mechanisation, the nature of wage labour becomes even more stupefying, mentally and emotionally exhausting, so creating more urgent needs for the development of techniques for the management of consciousness and the creation of the happy robot. The worker in previous times as the 'beast of burden' which was the living denial of the society which exploited him or her, has been replaced. The organised worker in the advanced and more thoroughly contained arenas of social life lives this denial 'less conspicuously'. The tendency is towards the more thoroughly incorporated individuals into the 'administered population', seduced by the 'drugging rhythm of the work'. Marcuse rejects the claim that this type of production can or does produce 'human satisfaction', and argues that 'being in the swing' is testimony to the rationalisation of domination. This situation is characterised by the managerially created and maintained illusion that individual satisfaction and fulfilment can be obtained through the pursuit of the interests and objectives of the organisation. This is the ideological concealment of exploitative relations of capitalist organisations. The nature of the ideologically reproduced humanised, 'participatory' organisational environment facilitating the human and social needs of the individual is hidden behind this veneer.

(2) With the growth of the white collar sectors there has

been an increased assimilation of individuals into the occupational structures in many key organisational arenas. There has been an expansion of the restriction of individual and professional autonomy given the rationalised relations of domination, guided by the technological rationality underpinning many organisational structures and practices. Thus whilst this 'professional autonomy' was always to some extent the 'enslavement of the job', for Marcuse it did offer some chance for the individual to make decisions. Marcuse sees this as being increasingly denied. Automation comes to alter qualitatively the relation between dead and living labour as it tends towards the point where productivity is determined by the machine, using individual labour as mere instrumentality. The management of production thus becomes routinised given this tendency towards a new type of thoroughly mechanised production (Gorz 1982). One can then perhaps see the (neo)Human Relations perspective as the attempt to adapt and routinise the social and cultural phenomena to this new economic reality. Management assumes the imperative of an ideological/normative function to persuade the worker to work in this new organisational situation, as opposed to being primarily concerned with the management of production as such.

(3) These changes in the nature of work and technology produce changes in the attitudes and consciousness of the worker, manifested in the widely discussed social and cultural integration of the working class into the

capitalist system as a whole (Gorz 1982, 1989). Marcuse rejects the idea that we can understand this integration without a consideration of the integrative experiences in the wider 'societal experiences' of the individual. That is, Marcuse rejects the idea that such integration is a change in consciousness alone.

'Assimilation in needs and aspirations, in the standard of living, in leisure activities, in politics derives from an integration in the plant itself, in the material process of production..... The negative features of automation are predominant; speed-up, technological unemployment, strengthen the position of the manager, increasing impotence and resignation on the parts of the worker' (Marcuse 1964. p.31).

So integration of the individual proceeds in a sense wider than simply on the level of consciousness in that changes in technological organisation bring about a 'mechanical community' and a 'larger interdependence which integrates the worker with the plant'. The worker now '... joins actively in applying their own brains to technical and production problems... (and they show) ... a vested interest in the establishment - a frequently observed effect of 'workers participation' in capitalist enterprises' (Marcuse 1964. p. 38. See also Pignon and Querzola 1970, Parker and Slaughter 1990). Given such

changes and the increased importance of the ideological/normative function of management, their role is to encourage this very sense of participation.

(4) This new technological work-world weakens the negative/historical position of the working class, as they are less conscious of the possibility of themselves as the living contradiction of the society (organisations) in which they live. The novel feature of this rationalised domination is thus the depth of the level of preconditioning of the instinctual, emotional individual aspirations, and the manipulation of the consciousness of the individual. For example, Maslow's (1970) 'self-actualization' and his claim that 'man (sic) must be what he is', is transformed into Herzberg's (1968) idea that man will be allowed to 'be what he is' within the prescribed universe of the organisation. Fundamentally therefore this ideological function of management is the illusory reconciliation of the contradictions between the human individual and all the potential that it entails, and the 'wage-labourer'. The human mind and body is reduced to the level of the instrument to be purchased and used by the organisation. The historical novelty of this situation is characterised by the use of administrative rather than physical controls (especially in industrial organisations). It brings changes in the nature of the work which determines social relations and the equalisation of the sphere of consumption, both in material terms and perhaps more pertinently here in the equalisation of the

consumption of a managerially produced (organisational) culture (Marcuse 1968a). For Marcuse this purported equalisation in no way compensates for the fact that the control of decisions of life and death, personal and national security, still rest in a place over which the individual has no control. That is the '...slaves of developed industrial society are sublimated slaves, but they are slaves nonetheless for slavery is determined....neither by obedience nor by hardness of labour but by the status of being a mere instrument, and the reduction of man (sic) to the state of a thing' (Marcuse 1964. p.38).

This domination in its pure form, the being of 'a thing' is not lessened by the fact that 'the thing' is animated, makes 'choices' and does not feel his/her being-a-thing. Alienation can be an objective condition, can persist with or without feelings of alienation. The reified organisational form increasingly tends towards tying all relations to and within the rationalised organisation. The mutual dependence of organisational relations is no longer one of the master/slave relationship, but enslavement continues as both sides are enclosed within the technical universe. (Neo)Human Relations and Post-Fordist industrial relations, as the 'solution' to this problem of working class opposition is the 'solution' of containing politics. This containment closes down the realm of politics and consciousness whilst maintaining orthodox capitalist relations of production.



Marcuse is not simply being dystopian or overstating a pessimistic view of the nature of political and social containment in advanced industrial society. Within the field of management and organisation theory there is **objective evidence** to support Marcuse's claims. The Post-Fordist plant where management emphasises the control of culture, the integration of the individual into the work team, where flexibility and commitment to the objectives of the organisation are of paramount importance, can be understood by using the theoretical framework which Marcuse provides here.

However Marcuse asks whether such philosophical inquiry into the nature of existence and the possibility of freedom are sufficient grounds to reject the real advances of democracy, perhaps not. At the organisational level, the practical, technological and managerial arguments (as well as the philosophical and political arguments) hold water. 'Self-actualization' can lead to greater efficiency. Therefore perhaps more self-determination would lead to even greater efficiency and productivity. Thus perhaps the repressive humanisation and pseudo-pluralistic participation of 'industrial democracy' schemes, the containing nature of Post-Fordist teamness and the administered 'self-actualization' of the (neo)Human Relations perspectives are themselves the barrier to that which they themselves espouse. That is, such an ideological emphasis on the release of human capability and freedom contained within the capitalist organisational universe of

action prevents greater motivation and innovation. Managerial theory is insufficiently thorough and far-reaching, operating within a managerially oriented paradigm restricted to a meta-paradigm of industrial capitalism. This is linked to Marcuse's argument that the theoretical and technological development of management is only legitimately understood in relation to the economic, political and cultural context in which it operates. Such theoretical and technological developments '... tend to make the whole immune against negation from within as well as from without... The reality of pluralism becomes ideologically deceptive. It seems to extend rather than reduce manipulation and co-ordination, to promote rather than counter-act the fateful integration' (Marcuse 1964. p.51).

Genuinely political relations would for Marcuse require the development of a new conceptual and practical framework. Autonomy of thought and agency would be more real if it negated the universe of pre-established givens. Autonomy requires a more thorough-going self-determination and the determination of a new range of needs beyond the realm of necessity and the struggle for survival. As discussed below, this requires a new set of organisational principles, relations and structures guided by a much expanded notion of organisational democracy, a new agenda for organisational relations beyond the given alternatives for organisations. The political and organisational principles of some new social movements and radically

democratic organisations are perhaps prescriptive forms of this expanded ontological and political conception and can be investigated on that basis.

### **Summary.**

As this chapter has shown 'new forms of control', 'repressive humanisation' and pseudo-pluralism are coterminous with continuous trends towards organisational self-affirmation and the consolidation of power therein. In relation to theories of power, a Marcusean analysis of power shows the absence of conflict due to the containment of possible perceptions and actions within the organisational context as the operation of power producing subjects/live attitudes. The debate between the unitary and pluralistic models of power in organisations comes full circle as pluralism in its contained form becomes evidence of unified power. As Marcuse writes 'Democracy would appear to be the most efficient system of domination' (Marcuse 1964. p.52). Managerially generated integration, as well as increased productivity and affluence makes such 'new forms of control' more pleasant. This is particularly apposite to the new managerial techniques located under the rubric (neo)Human Relations, as the concern to generate a team orientation involves an increased organisational loyalty, motivation and commitment to the organisationally aligned objectives in competition with other work teams. In this way the exposition of 'new forms of control' and 'repressive tolerance' contributes to the development of

the thesis here in that it describes tendencies towards the initiation of the active involvement of the subject into their own control. 'Repressive tolerance' contributes to the critique in that it shows the ideological and internally self-validating nature of (neo)Human Relations management as repressive in its purported 'humanisation'. This can highlight tendencies within management such that the 'tolerance' to resistance is afforded and dissent accepted whilst being within the pre-established orthodoxy of authority relations. These two conceptions of Marcuse therefore contribute to a deep analysis of the theoretico-political nature of worker-management relations as conceived from within (neo)Human Relations management theory. Fundamentally such an analysis highlights a dialectic of (un)freedom. This is understood as the expression of 'freedom' brought through initiation into the reproduction of conditions of unfreedom.

As will be discussed in detail in chapter 9, characteristics of (neo)Human Relations management theory exhibit such features. Such management offers self-actualization within exploitation; individual participation within the reproduction of capitalist authority relations. For these reasons, the highlighting of (neo)Human Relations management theory in the light of 'new forms of control' and 'repressive tolerance' shows the ideological nature of such theory as it exhibits the fundamental trajectory of 'mediating' the contradictions between the ideational aspects of organisational culture, commitment and attitude

with the materiality of exploitation and the instrumentalisation of the subject. That is, 'new forms of control' tend towards ensuring that the contradiction between a committed workforce and their simultaneous continued exploitation is facilitated. In this way the potential for more general social change is also 'contained'. As well as the political, this 'containment' is also encouraged in cultural and linguistic spheres of organisational behaviour by (neo)Human Relation management. Marcuse goes on to show how the specific arenas of culture and language exhibit the characteristics of 'new forms of control'. Such a critical analysis of culture and language are important for the general development of the social analysis component of this thesis, as well as contribute to the specific discourse analysis component developed in chapters 8 and 9. So it is to an analysis of this cultural aspect of domination; the linguistic/discursive developments of 'total administration' which the next chapter deals with.

## CHAPTER 6

### CULTURE AS DOMINATION. THE DISCOURSES OF TOTAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE AFFIRMATIVE CHARACTER OF CULTURE.

Related to the discussions in chapters 4 and 5 concerning the radicalisation of psychoanalysis and the concept of 'new forms of control', is the notion that culture and language operate to reproduce relations of domination. The liberal notion of culture adopted within contemporary organisation theory, as something neutral and benign is challenged through this application of the work of Marcuse to the specifics of (neo)Human Relations management. Such a critique of culture as reproducing relations of domination relates to the main themes of, firstly the impact of organisations upon subjectivity, and secondly the ideological nature of the organisational construction of knowledge, discourses and 'reality'. The critical analysis of organisation culture in relation to the reproduction of relations of domination clearly shows in both these respects the political as well as social nature of the construction of cultural knowledge.

Marcuse (1964) relates the analysis of political integration through technological rationality to the analysis of a corresponding cultural integration (Marcuse 1968a). A novel feature of industrial society is the removal of the antagonisms between culture and social reality, due largely to the industrialisation of culture and the corresponding assimilation of cultural production.

Culture loses its oppositional, transcendent elements which once presented another dimension of possible existence/reality. For Marcuse, this two dimensional reality has been liquidated through incorporation, as culture tends towards being organised, both in the sense that the transcendent elements have been expunged, but also in that culture has been reduced to something managed, to within and for the parameters of the institutional and commercial. Marcuse (1968a) provides a history of this reduction of culture. The basic position which Marcuse outlines is that culture in an industrial society has undergone a transformation such that it performs social and political functions affirmative of the existent society and social relations. Originally published in 1937, reprinted in 1968 in Negations, 'The Affirmative Character of Culture' (Marcuse 1968a) develops the view that culture in contemporary society has undergone a transformation, from being something which in previous historical periods was created through the direct experience of the community, to being something managerially created and maintained to be affirmative of the status quo. Culture is transformed from something which the group congregates around and shares, into something divided into high and low, something which is the expression of the glories of the bourgeois age as the repository of all that is universal.

According to Marcuse, central to ancient philosophy was the view that knowledge arrived at through experience should be directed towards practice. Here the separation between

practical (scientific) and experiential (cultural) knowledge was not great. Aristotle developed the hierarchy of socio-cultural value, a separation of functional acquaintance (necessity and usefulness) from philosophy (beauty). This separation had the consequence of reducing the original project of philosophy (knowledge as linked to practice and pleasure), and elevating that which was to become 'high culture'. The knowledgable pursuit of happiness is relegated to the worldly pursuit of material organisation, as linked to the ideologically driven idea of scarcity. Well being is relegated to the level of this-worldly goods, as autonomous self-determination at the level of cultural experience is correspondingly surrendered. 'Man thus subjects his existence to a purpose situated outside himself' (Marcuse 1968a. p.90), as the economic penetrates the existential. Marcuse thus relates this historical dimension of the reduction of culture to alienation and alienated conditions of life.

The management of organisational behaviour similarly reduces culture. (Neo)Human Relations perspectives claim a commonality, a common pursuit of interests. The practical application of knowledge and potential for any 'higher' ends is thus reduced to the pursuit of organisationally specified ends and thus involves the subjection of the organisational 'members' to the external purpose. Further, the 'higher' needs for self-determination and actualization (pleasure, fulfilment) are relegated to the practical purpose of maintaining the situation whereby the externally



derived purpose subsumes the individual. As explored in the previous chapter, what is claimed as self-actualization within such cultural discourse of (neo)Human Relations management is repressive humanisation. This has a cultural dimension, what we might call repressive acculturation. External purpose, as separated from the experiential world of real individuals, is the cultural counterpart of alienation, as 'culture' becomes something alien to the subject. Culture as imagination, desire and the genuinely collective generation of a belief system tends to be reduced and confined to the pre-established social and structural reality of the institution. We see evidence of this in the organisation which comes to define cultural reality for its members, culture within the organisation is operationalised as a managerial technique, as something imposed (Kilmann 1985, Lynn Meek 1988, Olins 1989).

The rhetoric of the Western/liberal ideals of humanism and individual fulfilment through organisational culture found in (neo)Human Relations discourse is used to reaffirm the repressive reality and the cultural traditions upon which they are based. On the cultural level, the fulfilment of the individual is entwined with the pre-established (organisational) universe. As Marcuse goes on,

As the great words of freedom and fulfilment are pronounced by campaigning leaders and politicians... they turn into meaningless sounds which obtain meaning only in the context of propaganda, business, discipline and relaxation

(Marcuse 1964. p.57).

This transformation of culture in industrial society negates the expression of the human potential, and cultural opposition tends towards being replaced by the sharing of socially derived and manipulated meanings, images and symbols. This is especially the case when we consider the use of culture in and by those who manage the organisation. Culture becomes the route whereby the individual is socially and psychologically integrated into the given. The sanitization of potential cultural opposition is ensured in large part through the rationalised administration of the organised/bureaucratized culture.

#### **Repressive Desublimation.**

As we saw in chapter 4, Marcuse turns to the use of psychoanalytic concepts to analyse the nature of the integration of subjectivity into the reproduction of relations of its own domination. One of the important aspects in the cultural facet of this is the notion of 'repressive desublimation'. Contemporary culture offers the promise of greater instinctual, sexual and cultural freedom in a way which consolidates the established reality of domination.

Marcuse was one of the earliest Critical Theorists to recognise culture as the ideological unification of opposites. High and oppositional culture becomes popular culture, becomes organised industrialised culture. This

popular culture moves in the equation drawn between it and increased material satisfaction and liberalised sexuality, thus the culture develops through a desublimation. It is however a desublimation which is repressive ,in that,

... it is desublimation practised from a position of strength on the part of society, which can afford to grant more than before because its interests have become the innermost drives of its citizens, and because the joys which it grants promote social cohesion and contentment. (Marcuse 1964. p.59)

This is related to the 'new forms of control' and repressive tolerance/humanisation found in the cultural strategies of the (neo)Human Relations perspective. To paraphrase Marcuse; it is a management practised from a position of control on the part of the organisation which can afford to grant more than before because (and indeed grants more than before as a way of creating a situation whereby) its interests have become the innermost (or at least recognised) drives of its members, and because participation which it grants promotes organisational cohesion and contentment. A cultural desublimation in a repressive society becomes repressive desublimation.

The decline of craft production and its replacement by the economic and organisational principles underpinned by a capitalist/technological rationality involve the subsumption of the Pleasure Principle into the Reality

Principle. (Marcuse 1966). This involves a 'de-eroticisation' of human activity, especially labour (Marcuse 1973). However, the victory of the Reality Principle and its manifestation through organisation and organised work reduces the need for sublimation and reduces the requirement of instinctual renunciation. Such renunciation is already achieved from within as a consequence of the (externally derived) Super-ego. Management through this type of control becomes, at the instinctual and cultural level, automatic as it proceeds through a self control. In this way Marcuse identifies the psycho-cultural aspect of control through self control. He makes the point that the social and organisational reality preconditions the behaviour of the individual when he writes

The individual must adapt himself to a world that does not seem to demand the denial of his innermost needs- a world which is not essentially hostile. The organism is thus preconditioned for the spontaneous acceptance of what is offered (or what 'performances' are required) (Marcuse 1964. p. 63).

Power tends to become automatic and continuous. Relations of domination which offer greater humanisation and freedom also requires the contraction of autonomous cultural and sexual activity. Subjective freedom becomes something accepted passively, and the humanisation offered is

parallel to the maintenance of conformity.

The very idea of installing a Reality Principle is essentially an illegitimate use of the concept of culture, analogous to the bastardization of the concept of culture in (neo)Human Relations management theory. The technological/organisational rationality asserts itself in the instinctual sphere, allowing greater satisfaction of socially prescribed and created desires, whilst reducing the desires of the Pleasure Principle to those compatible with the Performance requirements of the established society/organisation.

....the range of socially permissible and desirable satisfaction is greatly enlarged, but through this satisfaction the Pleasure Principle is reduced - deprived of the claims which are irreconcilable with the established society. Pleasure, thus adjusted, generates submission. (Marcuse 1964. p.75).

To again paraphrase Marcuse, at the organisational level, the range of permissible political participation is greatly enlarged (and management therefore claims a humanism), but through this humanisation the de-alienated political consciousness is reduced - deprived of the claims which are irreconcilable with the established organisational culture. An organisational culture referring itself to participation, democracy and teamness thus adjusts the individual and generates submission. The progressive

'humanism' in management and industrial relations is reduced to a recognition and compliance with the established (organisational) Reality Principle.

Marcuse's treatment of psychoanalysis involves reference to group psychology. The group becomes the social vehicle for the movement of culture within the organisation. In terms of the production of conformity, culture articulates the Performance Principle and the 'civilised' repression of instincts required by the removal of guilt and the internalisation of group norms. This cultural 'reality' is internalised and the Performance-orientation grows in the strength as does the acceptance of culturally imposed behavioral requirements within the group dynamic. The culturally shaped subjectivity of individuals comes to be recognisable as a politically shaped subjectivity and knowledge. The subject is '....led to find in the productive apparatus the effective agent of thought and action to which their personal thought and action can and must surrender' (Marcuse 1964. p.79). The compoundedness and intensity of such one-dimensionality, as distinct from less instinctually grounded ideological, political and cultural controls, is paralleled by the novelty of the socio-cultural, symbolic and psychological nature of the integrative emphasis found in management theory since the (neo)Human Relations perspective developed. Its ability to present itself as self-generating, self-legitimating and humanistic is the vehicle of this compoundedness. Given the ability of such a normative orientation claiming a humanism

to present itself as its opposite, effective coordination becomes what the individual who is being coordinated wants at the group/cultural level. Such an ideological stance moves from the claim that what is 'good for G.M. is good for the U.S.A' to the claim that 'what is good for G.M. is also good for the individual'.

Despite all this, counter-tendencies are recognised by Marcuse. The unconscious is still the reservoir of discontent and is perhaps open to political mobilisation and cultural expression which would challenge the pre-established system of power relations. As explored below, this 'new sensibility' could provide new guiding principles for social and organisational relations and behaviour if genuine self-directed cultural expression and value were expressed.

#### **The Closing of the Universe of Discourse.**

Marcuse therefore argues that the manipulated subjectivity tends to exhibit cultural facets to the political belief that the 'real is rational' and is the system which will 'deliver the goods'. The existent comes to be universalised and de-historicised. This is in part a reflection of the cultural closing of the possibilities of language and discourse to express the alternative, given the language of administration and the administration of language.

The universe of communication and mediation tends towards being controlled and technicised, contributing to the shaping of 'one-dimensional behaviour'. For Marcuse, '(one-

dimensional) language testifies to identification and unification, to the systematic promotion of positive thinking and doing, to the concerted attack on transcendent, critical notions' (Marcuse 1964. p.85). Such linguistic framing thus helps to generate one-dimensional habits of thought, reducing the dialectical conceptions of the tension between appearance and reality to one of identity thinking, the elements of autonomy and critique receding before such definition and designation. Or as Marcuse puts it, 'The concepts which comprehend the facts and thereby transcend the facts are losing their authentic linguistic representation' (Marcuse 1964. p.85).

This can perhaps be expressed by drawing an analogy between Marcuse's notion of one-dimensional language and Barthes' (1972) discussion of the colour of plastic. Barthes suggests that plastics are unable to possess a real depth of colour, but are characterised more by concepts of 'redness', 'blueness' etc. rather than real colour. Marcuse's ideas on one-dimensional language are similar in that such language, whilst having the conceptual ability to say things, is denuded of expressive potential. One dimensional language is increasingly unable to express transcendent or critical thought, is increasingly unable to hold a genuine depth of meaning. It seems apposite to relate the one-dimensionality of this 'plastic language' to the administrative nature of the official discourses of 'friendly fire'; 'body bags'; the Second World War ending 'not necessarily in the best interests of Japan' etc.



(Kellner 1990). We see managerial equivalents around organisational activities. For instance, witness the language around redundancy; the language of 'downsizing'; 'dehiring'; 'rationalisation'; 'realignment'; 'core-reemphasising'; and 'skill-mix readjustment'.

For Marcuse this one-dimensional language is the 'functionalisation of language', as a structure operating within the established and administered reality. The managers of the established reality therefore speak a language of performance, acceptance, consumption. Such language becomes a tool of the political and cultural 'fait accompli'. Functionalised language is operationalised as thing rather than communicative interaction. Human beings are reduced and linguistically conflated with their function, their potential uses within the technological rationality and their status within the organisation. The use of this operationalised language can be found in the theory and practice of (neo)Human Relations management and the socio-cultural technologies of the organisations, as chapter 9 shows in detail. Indeed the use of the phrase 'the organisation' is itself an example of this operationalisation. The concept is one-dimensional in that it has no meaning outside the universe designated by and equated with the publicized, standardised use. The 'organisation' is equated with its structures, name, procedures, symbols, imagery, etc. Other future possibilities and relationships which could occur within the organisation are absorbed and closed off. This specific

case in point is expressed in a more general sense when Marcuse writes,

The word (organisation, name, symbol) becomes a cliché, and as cliché, governs the speech or the writing; (and so by extension organisational relations) the communication thus precludes genuine development of meaning (organisational alternatives).... These terms are generally understood so that their mere appearance produces a response (Marcuse 1964. p.87).

For Marcuse, such one-dimensional discourse develops through a system of 'self validating analytical propositions' which contain critical opposition to the existent. Critical thought is contained to within the prevailing reduced usage of terms within institutionalised discourse. Critical thought is closed down by closing down definitions, which themselves are created a priori by the object of critique. As Marcuse writes 'The syntax of abridgement (the illusory/ideological reconciliation of contradictions through linguistic conflation) proclaims the reconciliation of opposites by welding them together in a firm and familiar structure' (Marcuse 1964. p.88). The 'self validating analytical propositions' specific to the socio-cultural trend within (neo)Human Relations management include, to name a few, such terms as 'industrial participation' (the participation in a system built on hierarchy and the denial of participation?), 'human-

relations management' (the management of the relationships between autonomous free-born men and women?), and 'flexible specialisation' (the commitment to a flexible approach to the work which is based upon the increased fragmentation of labour and the standardisation of tasks?).

A critical reading of such official management and organisation discourse provides empirical evidence of the process of which Marcuse writes and testifies to its one-dimensionality. As Marcuse writes, such a use of language... 'once considered the principle offence against logic, the contradiction now appears as a principle of the logic of manipulation' (Marcuse 1964. p.89). The universe of discourse is closed, and language both in, and about organisations becomes ideological in that opposites are conflated and the particular is conflated linguistically with the general. What is of sectional interest is linguistically presented as universal.

The linguistic conflation of opposites makes rhetorical conceptualisations immune from criticism, whilst presenting a pseudo-pluralism which enables 'conflict', 'dialogue' and 'negotiation' to occur within prescribed boundaries, (ie. repressive humanisation). The language of this type of discourse further strengthens the idea that the real is rational, and the only rational. Thereby linguistically and politically '...combining the greatest possible (organisational) tolerance with the greatest possible unity of control, over conceptualisations' (Marcuse 1964. p.90). Therefore there can be extrapolated a link between

repressive tolerance and the proposed notion of repressive humanisation, which moves in and through the illusion of more humanistic, enlightened management and this linguistic aspect. The functional reduction of language and the specificity of its humanistic claims found in (neo)Human Relations perspectives coincide in contributing to 'new forms of control' which are internally self-legitimizing and tend towards immunity from criticism, at the cultural level.

There is a tendency towards the creation of a symbolic and perhaps traditionalised association of certain nouns with specific 'explicatory' adjectives and attributes. The language of organisations tends towards ideology in effect because such established communications are transformed into sentences which become 'hypnotic formulas'. What Marcuse is here describing is of relevance to organisations in that he is partly describing the linguistic counterpart to what Michels (1962) describes when the leader of the organisation becomes the personification of the organisation and culturally located as authoritative. This 'plastic language' is demonstrated empirically through the identification of managerial catch-phrases or 'buzz words' and the meanings and associations attached to them. One specific way in which the normative/ideological appeal of such linguistic forms operates is through 'personalisation'. This personalisation of linguistic usage gives us 'our' M.P., 'our' town etc., and in relation to organisations and organisational membership gives us 'our'

manager, 'our' organisation, 'our' job. This expansion of linguistic usage into such areas creates an impression of the subject as an extension of the place, job, employer, enterprise etc. Individuals thus become linguistically, and then perhaps conceptually and culturally, extensions of the organisation, come to be understood increasingly as individuals only through their organisational 'membership' and functional Performance.

A further device involved in the creation of a linguistic imagery is that of hyphenation. This involves the linking of political, technological, military, personal characteristics and other elements into easily recognisable, and thus uncritically acceptable phrases. Examples which Marcuse gives are those of the 'science-military complex', the 'nuclear-powered...', which come to stand as recognisable phrases where the conflation of military with science, nuclear with the power of humanity are embodied but not recognised as such, creating the linguistically seamless join between the two, immune from any critical discussion. In the case of (neo)Human Relations management such hyphenation is best evidenced by its very title. In the phrase 'human-relations' and 'human-resources'. Here the seamless linguistic join is between the human individual and the instrumentality of the wage-labourer (another hyphenation) who can only be understood and related to as a 'resource' to be managed. Power relations are always already present in such linguistic formulations. Such language thus embodies the one-

dimensional conceptualisation which reduces the individual to the requirements of the organisation.

Related to this hyphenation, but perhaps more marginal is the acronymisation of language. Organisations in particular are reduced to a series of initials which have the tendency to remove them from a critical recognition of the nature of the organisation. Thus the politically laden 'North Atlantic Treaty Organisation' simply becomes N.A.T.O, less politically laden, and as such linguistically, culturally and politically more enshrined within the everyday scheme of things.

A critical analysis of grammar, the relationship between grammatical, logical and ontological elements, especially in relation to the subject can perhaps reveal the suppressed contents of this plastic language. Such a discourse analysis and critical interpretation of meaning as found in a 'depth hermeneutic' occurring in relation to a Critical Theory can re-establish the dialectical, two dimensional elements in potential thought and language and express the tension between the 'is' and the 'ought'. That is, to think and speak critically and historically. Linguistic opposition to one-dimensionality is thus the re-invocation of time and memory in the face of the dehistoricised universe of mechanised time and 'history as biographical details' (Marcuse 1979). Some radically democratic organisations try to emphasise an (anti) organisational behaviour which exhibits a change in this 'language as power' relationship, and a non-functionalised,

non-hypnotic language as the framework for radically democratised organisational communication. Such a linguistic/cultural opposition rediscovers more open-ended and humanised forms of communication. They seem to exhibit a conscious attention to developing a discursive context free from structured inequalities which approximates what Habermas has called 'ideal speech situations' (1989).

Linguistic opposition involves the language of a re-eroticised reconceptualisation of human subjectivity connected to the Pleasure Principle. It rejects the functionalised language which bridges the gap between politics and advertising as a reflection of the continuity between domination and administration in a technological society.

#### **The Research of Total Administration.**

For Marcuse the functionalised culture and language of one-dimensional tendencies are the 'outer layer' of the attempted coordination of individual subjectivity. Marcuse turns to two representative pieces of empirical research which he presents as specific examples of social scientific research concerned with this cultural coordination. Firstly, Marcuse specifically considers the Hawthorne Studies, of which he argues, 'The operational concepts terminate in methods of improved social control' (Marcuse 1964. p.108). According to Marcuse, the workers' complaints in the Hawthorne Studies were seen as vague and indefinite. Guided by 'operational thinking' (positivism) the research

'translated' vague statements by workers into precise conceptual statements to identify particular operations and conditions which gave rise to such worker dissatisfaction and de-motivation. Such research 'translation' changes the meaning of the actual statements from general/generalised statements about the prevailing social and economic conditions, to statements about particular phenomena and dissatisfaction which can be dealt with within the parameters of the prevailing organisational conditions and structures. Thus Marcuse writes of the Hawthorne Studies operationalised, positivistic research,

... the untranslated statements (eg. 'wages are too low') established a concrete relation between the particular case and the whole of which it is a case - and this includes the conditions outside the respective job (etc)...This whole is eliminated in the translation, and it is this operation which makes the cure possible (Marcuse 1964. p.110).

Thus what Marcuse is expressing here, in the specific case of the Hawthorne Studies is the operationalisation of research which reduces any possible 'solution' to a re-coordination of thought in line with the interests of the organisation as it is. Such a research agenda which is geared to providing an organisational cultural expression of such an ideological 'solution' is the conceptual basis for the repressive humanisation of the 'humanised'



managerial 'cure' within the pre-established organisational parameters. Chapter 9 demonstrates the (neo)Human Relations rhetoric of 'humanism' and 'cure' in detail.

The Hawthorne Studies research expresses the concrete position of the worker, but the positivistic translation disrupts the greater concreteness of such, and reduces it to a particular concreteness. The greater concreteness of the workers position, of the discontent as a worker is thus ideologically reduced to a complaint, not a social and organisational position, but simply about a position within the organisational culture, which is then amenable to 'technical solutions'.

The use of the term 'human' in (neo)Human Relations theory is not operationalised to the extent that 'relations' is, and is thus in need of some analysis as to how the concept 'human' is used and reduced. It is my contention, as already alluded to, that the use of the term 'human' in (neo)Human Relations thinking is one which relates to Marcuse's notion of repression and repressive tolerance. Despite imputed differences between (neo)Human Relations thinking and earlier management theories, the term 'human' does not refer to the whole person (attitudes, values, needs, group memberships etc.). Instead it is used within the conceptual universe of labour as a commodity, the purchasing of abstract labour power and the deskilling of labour. Within this purportedly humanistic (neo)Human Relation management theory, 'human' still essentially refers to the 'hands', albeit in a less mechanistic way

than previous managerial theories. This use of a concept of humanity parallels the 'skirting of the edge' found elsewhere in the (neo)Human Relations tradition. The idea that workers have needs, desire responsibility, can use their own initiative and can be self-directing are other examples of a management theory which goes as far as the edge of workers self-management but can not go conceptually, politically nor economically beyond the edge to encompass the logical conclusions of some of its findings. This position is, although essentially illogical, (re)supported by its scientificity, and relates to the more general 'therapeutic' effects of one-dimensional, positivistic science outlined below. So Marcuse writes,

In this context, (for our purposes here (neo)Human Relations managerialism) functionalisation has a truly therapeutic effect. Once the personal discontent is isolated from the general unhappiness, once the universal concepts which militate against functionalisation are dissolved into particular referents, the case becomes a treatable and tractable incident. (Marcuse 1964 p.111).

Discontent and potential opposition to the established cultural context is thus through functionalisation and translation, individualised. The individual worker becomes 'the problem' and can be treated as such. An example of this is 'management-by-stress' (Parker and Slaughter 1990),

whereby technology affords a kind of 'functional translation' of operational imperative into a matter of individual/cultural retraining. Zuboff's (1988) 'Information Panopticon' can be seen as an expression of something similar. The individual is perceived as being in need of 'help' or 'cure'. The 'inefficiency' of the individual is de-structuralised and relocated within the personal realm, as a functionalised part of the functionalised conceptual universe. Any transcendent opposition which might stem from the general discontent is thus neutralised and contained within the organisational culture and its procedures. As Marcuse writes '.... once the 'unrealistic' excess of meaning is abolished, the investigation is locked within the vast confine in which the established society validates and invalidates propositions. By virtue of its methodology, this empiricism is ideology' (Marcuse 1964. p.113).

So for Marcuse the 'history' of culture is the history of the transformation of the concept of culture and its reductive separation from the human fulfilments in the service of material necessity. It is the separation of the spirit from the body, the beautiful from the material, the unreal from the real. This 'history' is related to the developing objective conditions of industrial capitalism. The concept of culture itself is separated in this period into the notions of 'high' culture and 'low', or today 'popular' culture. Culture comes to be related to the

administrative technologies of the industrial system. At the same time, in dialectical contradiction, it is potentially the preserve of all that is great, beautiful and good in society.

Organisational culture is presented as something human and social, as distinct from the technical and structural, as something distinct from the 'work'. And yet (neo)Human Relations management 'engineers' a cultural technology to imposed 'culture' as something shared by all members of the organisation. As 'normative glue', culture is conceived of as something which can and indeed must be managed, something over which effective control should be maintained, as something which should be made 'appropriate' for the organisational task. Culture is seen as something technical, manipulable, controllable.

Affirmative culture is ultimately ideological in that it tends to mediate the contradictions between appearance and reality. In terms of affirmative organisational culture, it facilitates the identification of the individual organisational member with their own operationalisation. Affirmative culture performs the 'illusory reconciliation' of the contradictions between the mutability of bad experience/existence and the need for happiness to make such existence bearable. Organisational culture demonstrates this affirmative function in that it tends to be a vehicle whereby the organisation seeks to ensure the identification of the individual with their performances, whilst simultaneously identifying with the structures and

relations which require these performances. The organisation and what it requires of the individual thus through culture tends towards universalisation. Naturalised and dehistoricised organisational culture is affirmative of the given and negates the potential for change, it ensures in the realm of ideas the continuation of the given organisational form and relations. Affirmative culture is the political shaping of knowledge, representations, discourse and subjectivity.

### **Summary.**

In this chapter, pursuing an explication of the Marcusean perspective as it is relevant for a critical study of (neo)Human Relations management theory, we have seen specifically and in some detail how the (re)production of culture and language is held to relate to the (re)production of organisational power relations. Marcuse shows how cultural relations are intertwined with relations of authority and domination. This is so in that culture is reduced from something which is shared and collectively generated into something functionalised and manipulated, that is culture becomes a managed variable which is 'affirmative' of pre-established socio-economic conditions and cultural/linguistic interactions. The (re)production of culture falls under functional criteria and is seen as an operationalised variable by (neo)Human Relations management theory. For Marcuse this tendency is connected to the broader question of the socio-political shaping of

knowledge and as such is connected to his deeper critique of the effects of technological rationality, positivism and scientism which are explored in the next chapter.

This chapter has tried to extrapolate from the work of Marcuse aspects which are relevant to the critique of the specifics of (neo)Human Relations management theory as it exhibits this functional approach to culture, language and meaning production. This critique shows that (neo)Human Relations management theory exhibits features such as the repressive humanisation of organisational relations; demonstrates that its approach is guided by an underlying position similar to what Marcuse calls the 'closing of the universe of discourse', where language and communication operates within an artificially constrained research agenda and a correspondingly contained universe of perception and meaning; this has involved an analysis of the linguistic constructions themselves, where certain linguistic construction embody the underlying containment. Part of the critical analysis of these linguistic constructions, against the backdrop of the more general critical analysis of culture has been to show how language (within (neo)Human Relations management theory) proceeds through the loss of meaning characterised by the 'personalisation', 'hyphenation', 'acronymisation' and the general reduction of language and communication to a 'plastic language'. It is argued that such a critical analysis holds potential for the development of the Critical Theory of organisations in general and the specific critique of (neo)Human Relations

management theory in particular. This is especially the case given the 'depth hermeneutic' methodology proposed for the analysis of ideology in chapter 3. It is these critical conceptions which will be taken forward and applied in a more concrete way in chapter 9 as the 'interpretation of meaning' component of such a 'depth hermeneutic'.

Firstly however, there is one further aspect of Marcuse's work which needs to be elaborated for the fully developed application of his critical insights. This is an explication of his theories of rationalisation, specifically the rationalisation of relations of domination, and the critique of the 'technological rationality' underpinning this. It is with an analysis of this that the next chapter is concerned.

## CHAPTER 7.

### TECHNOLOGICAL RATIONALITY AND THE RATIONALISATION OF DOMINATION.

A fourth significant feature of Marcuse's work is his critique of technological rationality and 'one dimensional thought' (Marcuse 1964). In this critique, Marcuse relates the nature of reason and rationality to the changed nature of social control and a rationalisation of domination. He locates this rationalisation within the 'triumph of positivistic thinking' and to the political effects of the technological/utilitarian orientation inherent within one dimensional thought. In exploring this, it is constructive to consider what Marcuse considered to be its opposite, as the critique of one dimensional thought is articulated through the development of an alternative orientation.

In opposition to one dimensional thought, Marcuse discusses a 'negative thinking' or 'negative philosophy' which echoes a central theme of the Frankfurt School as a whole (Marcuse 1955, Fromm 1961, Horkheimer 1972, Adorno 1973, Adorno and Horkheimer 1979). This critique relates to the development of a critical, dialectical understanding of the world as process, where the 'truth' of a phenomena is not given by its formal (logical) definition but is enshrined in what the phenomena can become, its potentialities (Marcuse 1955). The truth of the 'is' can only be found in terms of its relation to the 'ought', the truth of becoming is greater than the existent. Reason, as the comprehension of this becoming is the route to truth and reality over and



above formal, definitional logic and the positivistic reduction of knowledge to method. In relation to this basic position therefore, the 'truth' of an organisation is found in its ability to become that which it can become, beyond any pre-defined definitions of what 'an organisation' is . This is the philosophical basis for an 'anti-organisation theory' (Burrell and Morgan 1979). Here the organisation is related to that which it could become in terms of the human, creative and spiritual needs of individuals and groups as part of the 'environment' upon which the organisation is 'contingent'. Thus a negative philosophical basis for a Critical Theory of organisations relates to the development of '... the conditions in which men and things become what they really are'.

#### **One Dimensional Thought and the Study of Organisations.**

However, Marcuse argues that a technological rationality and the negation of Critical Reason is predominant. The contemporary social reality is characterised by the continuum of domination which is epistemologically linked to pre-technological forms of Reason. Given the rationalisation of domination civilisation replaces a domination resting on the personal/charismatic with a form of domination which rests upon claims about 'the objective order of things'. The rationalisation of domination has new, more 'objective' legitimations, as scientific, and legal-rational legitimations replace more traditional ones. For Marcuse domination within this one-dimensional way of

thinking claims a higher rationality in its claim to be linked to progress, rationalism and humanism. (Neo)Human Relations management claims of humanism mean that management can be rationalised and develop more sophisticated techniques whilst still claiming a legitimacy by colonising the rhetoric of humanism, thereby being more 'legitimate' as it becomes more ideological. Opposition to this (irrational) rationalism is neutralised by a new social (organisational) structure where formerly negative, critical social forces are integrated by 'new forms of control' as discussed in chapters 4, 5 and 6. The integration of the potentially critical individual into the organisation through the political, cultural and psychological techniques found in the (neo)Human Relations tradition and its contemporary versions is as much an example of rationalised domination underpinned by a one-dimensional thinking, as it is evidence of more obvious political control. Such a rationalised domination creates '... a mode of thought which is immune against anything other than the established reality'.

The management of organisational culture and subjectivity emphasises the development of a cultural environment whereby the resolution of conflict can proceed within a similarly predefined conceptual and structural framework, of the organisation as it is. The orthodox academic study of organisations tends to operate within an ambit beyond which 'respectable' organisational theory does not go. A radicalised analysis of the predominant 'structural-

functionalist paradigm' within organisational studies (Burrell and Morgan 1979) can be articulated effectively through Marcuse's notion of one-dimensional thought. Within the 'structural-functionalist paradigm', the organisation is conceptually equated with 'the normal', as a given and universal reality which legitimately operates as the definer and arbitrator of the rational, over and above any more human or ethical considerations. The organisational universe is an example of the triumph of Logos over Eros, whilst simultaneously allowing Logos to appear as a neutral embodiment of scientific rationality. Values lie outside this 'real' universe and such considerations are defined as marginalised given their subjective nature, as less real than the hard facts of the objective world and the scientific investigation thereof.

Within the cultural and normative aspects of management, 'unreal' questions of subjective values geared towards the expansion of autonomy and political efficacy have no part. The development of managerial techniques which attempt to control subjectivity by using the rhetoric of a humanism is testimony not to the genuine humanism in management, but to the contradictory nature of the technological rationality underpinning such management.

Such a science/technology of management uses techniques which attempt to foster values which are efficacious to the interests of the organisation and develop a normative dimension to control whilst simultaneously claiming a legitimacy on the basis of scientific value-freedom and a

neutral rationality. The rational grounds for legitimacy is therefore in essence contradictory to the nature of some of the contemporary techniques used. The useable elements in the realm of ideas are operationalised by managerial technologies of cultural compliance, whilst any transcendent, oppositional elements in cultural values are resisted.

This is evidence of the contradictory nature of the application of purportedly objective science and technology to a social and organisational world in the pursuit of sectional interests, which offers an immediately legitimated 'rational' set of techniques. This is evidence of the reduction of science to 'scientism' and its ideological and socio-political effects. Scientism in management is not genuine science (the scientific approach to the investigation of the social world may even be inappropriate), and (neo)Human Relations management theory adopts the verbal dress of the rationality and neutrality of science. This however does not effect the central point here, that 'scientific management' and the science of management derives its academic and professional legitimacy from the illusion of objectivity whilst referring to normative and ideational criteria. In this respect the (neo)Human Relations approach to management which supersedes 'scientific management', also supersedes it in its ideologicalness, in its illusory scientificity which involves the attempt to technically manipulate the realm of ideas. Such management still moves in the scientific

reduction of knowledge to methodological principles and the corresponding suspension of critical thought.

We have in Marcuse's work an expression of the deep politico-epistemological basis for the critique of the ideology of this instrumentalisation. In particular, Marcuse articulates the link between the abstract philosophical analysis of scientism and the political process of domination. This is relevant to a critical theory of organisations as it demonstrates the link between the a priori establishment of the experiential universe and the dominant rationality of the instrumentalisation of individuals within management theory. The organisational instrumentalisation of subjectivity and body by the (neo)Human Relation tradition is the height of this 'reestablishment' of technological perceptions applied precisely to the social and cultural 'systems' within the organisations.

### **The Politics of Technological Rationality.**

It may be argued that the 'machinery of the technological universe' is or at least can be neutral in that specific techniques are not synonymous with the political selection process of a whole technology. However even this neutrality is prescribed, and culminates in a non-neutral effect as the social mode of production, organisational imperatives and authority relations. Thus technological rationality is the basic historical and conceptual underpinning of specific elements of technology. Thus whilst specific

techniques may be neutral, technology as a reflection of the society in which it exists cannot be neutral. Marx wrote, '...the hand-mill gives you the society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill society with the industrial capitalist', and Marcuse echoes this when he writes '...when technics becomes the universal form of material production, it circumscribes an entire culture; it projects a historical totality- a world' (Marcuse 1964. p.154). Marcuse relates the development of scientific method to this politics of technology. This involves the conflation of the purely scientific realm of thought and the discovery of a version of the 'truth', with the applied sciences which are concerned with the operationalisation of developments to control the natural and social worlds. Although Marcuse recognises the essential difference between pure and applied sciences, he argues that there is an intimate connection.

The question here is to what extent is this connection found within (neo)Human Relations management theory, and what impact does the applied, technological nature of the imperatives of much theory have upon its overall direction? Expressed differently can such theory be seen as an example whereby there is a simultaneous recognition and technical solution to 'problems' predefined from within an already existing productivist/instrumental meta-paradigm, as well as within a more conceptually rigorous and explicit structuralist-functionalist paradigm. To what extent does (neo)Human Relation management theory define its own 'pure'

science remit from within this meta-paradigm and proceed to develop technical solutions accordingly? Chapter 9 in part analyses the discourse of (neo)Human Relations management theory as it relates to the interests of professional management in terms of the received version of what constitutes 'the problems' to be solved. As we shall see, it provides evidence of the close link between the meta-paradigmatic and one dimensional nature of such theory, the technical imperatives it is thus faced with, and thus the politicised nature of technological rationality. It demonstrates the one dimensional nature of perceptions of the techniques which can and should be developed and the common assumptions around which theorists and practitioners operate, especially with regard to 'the problem' of labour. Marcuse argued that technological rationality tends towards a politically interested rationality. This rationality leads to the scientific elimination of independent substances (in the natural and social world). The totalised and reductive reason of science as method leads to a specifically 'practical' conception of the relation between object and subject, '...science has become in itself technology' as the logic of technical domination is embodied increasingly within the logic of science itself. Rationalisation and instrumentalisation develop the methodical organisation of matter (natural and human) as the '...stuff of control'. Rationalised domination is found on the epistemological level as much as on the political level. The science of management is perhaps the exemplar of

this rationalised domination as it develops its own particular science and technology. It is a form of rationality which embodies its control orientation within its very conception of the world as exploitable resources, as well as the subsequent techniques for more effective control of those exploitable resources.

Management theory can be seen predominantly as an instrumentalist approach within an a priori determination of the criteria of efficiency, productivity etc. Such an instrumentalist attitude and its ideology of neutrality is neutral in a methodological sense, but is only neutral within and to the prevailing perceptions which are themselves derived from the instrumentally determined organised/ organisational reality. Technological rationality projects formalised, functionalised means which are held to be prior to all application in concrete social practice. Thus bureaucracy, scientific management, organised, organisational culture are examples of this formally rational, instrumentalised means which, whilst presented as such are underpinned by a specific, politically active rationality and scientific world-view. (Neo)Human Relation management theory is perhaps novel in the closeness of the link between the underlying rationality and the techniques which it involves.

The one-dimensional tendencies within such a technological rationality (as found in management/organisation theory) is manifested in the particular engineering orientation to the questions of structure and function and the reduction of



subjectivity to operationalised primary qualities. This is the basis of the underlying unity of the meta-paradigm of the productivistic positivism of management theory, an underlying unity characterised negatively by the common neglect of the subjectivity and human potentialities in a dialectical conception. Adorno and Horkheimer write, 'By virtue of the rationalisation of the mode of labour, the elimination of qualities is transferred from the universe of science to that of daily life' (Adorno and Horkheimer 1979. p.50), and Marcuse goes on '...the internal instrumentalist character of this scientific rationality by virtue of which it is a priori technology, and the a priori of a specific technology - (is) namely, technology, as a form of social control and domination'. (Marcuse 1964. p.157).

The political nature of technology and technological rationality thus, for Marcuse relates to the fundamental scientific approach to the external world as a way of thinking, not simply from specific concrete applications. The instrumentalism within positivistic scientism characterises it as a particularly 'rational' ideological form of technological domination moving to define and redefine the world in its own image, as well as provide techniques of manipulation. Pure scientific objectivity merges with practical domination and provides the instrumentalities and conceptual universe for a domination which operates by initiating a one-dimensionality at the

conceptual level as well as at the overtly political level. A domination which carries its own internally derived legitimation through its ability to circumscribe the theoretically rational/realistic and thus the politically, culturally and socially rational/realistic. In this way, such technological rationality tends towards the ideological in that it enshrines a self-legitimation and a self-universalisation. The technological rationality of (neo)Human Relations management theory is similarly ideological in that it demonstrates the 'impossibility' and 'irrationality' of the conceptualisation and practice of autonomy and independence outside the technically derived organisational/organised universe. 'With respect to the institutionalised forms of life, science (pure as well as applied) would thus have a stabilising, static, conservative function' (Marcuse 1964. p.165). In this way Marcuse relates the political/ideological nature of science and technology to 'one-dimensional thought'. This position is summarised when he writes

... in the medium of technology, man and nature become fungible objects of organisation. The universal effectiveness and productivity of the apparatus under which they are subsumed veil the particular interests that organise the apparatus. In other words, technology has become the great vehicle of reification - reification in its most mature and effective form' (Marcuse 1964. p.168).

In his critical analysis of the work of Weber, Marcuse (1968b) can in essence be seen as providing an adjunct to his more general critical discussion of 'one-dimensional rationality'. He argues that for Weber, 'the concept of industrial capitalism...becomes concrete in the formal theory of rationality and of domination which are the two fundamental themes of Economy and Society' (Marcuse 1968b. p.203). The connection between capitalism, capitalist organisations, rationality and domination stems from,

...the specifically Western idea of reason (which) realises itself in a system of material and intellectual culture (economy, technology, 'conduct of life', science, art,) that develops to the full in industrial capitalism, and this system tends towards a specific type of domination which becomes the fate of the contemporary period; total bureaucracy (Marcuse 1968b. p.203).

Marcuse relates this history of politico-structural change to a history of changes in Western philosophy culminating in the triumph of positivistic science and technology. Marcuse argues that the work of Weber shows that the form of rationality in its specifically Western form is formed by and helps to form capitalism. The 'rationalist way of life' and the 'spirit of capitalism' stands in relation to the objective concrete activities of the capitalist mode of production. This 'elective affinity' of rationality and

activity (ideas and interests) has decided upon the specific form of power relations and their grounds for legitimacy, the legal-rational grounds for authority in bureaucracy. Marcuse's radical formulation sees this as rationality becoming domination, rational action becoming the maintenance of power. Rationalism, in the specific concrete activities of bureaucratization are evidence of what Marcuse refers to as the 'abdication of Reason' (Marcuse 1955).

Marcuse's treatment of Weber highlights three factors involved in purposive-rationality. Firstly the 'progressive mathmatisation' of knowledge and experience. This is related to the success of the natural sciences and leads to the increased scientisation of other areas of study and practice, culminating in the scientisation of the 'conduct of life' in the rationalised society (eg. organisational culture). Secondly a rational spirit is exhibited in the insistence on rational experimentation and proof given the adoption of the methodology of the natural sciences as equated with the rational. This relates to the 'language of total administration' discussed in chapter 6. Thirdly, this culminates in the decisive factor of,

...the genesis and solidification of a universal, technically trained organisation of officials that become the 'absolutely inescapable condition of our entire existence' With this last characteristic, the transition from theoretical to practical reason, to the historical form of

reason is effected (Marcuse 1968b. p.204).

Such rationalisation is viewed by Marcuse as the historically specific form of (surplus) repression and the surrender of the bourgeois realm of freedom (internal will) to the realm of unfreedom (external authority) (Marcuse 1968b, 1973b). Marcuse links the formal rationality of bureaucratization to the substantive project of capitalism and the modification of subjectivity in the pursuit of discipline. Industrialisation and rationalisation, along with its attendant repressions and irrationalities, are ideologically expressed simply as the 'fate' of humanity, as simply the 'iron cage' from which there is no escape, no rational alternative. The interests from 'outside' which determine such developments are presented as largely independent of the individuals and institutions which pursue them. The rationalisation of domination is presented as occurring due to 'its own logic'.

Marcuse rejects this notion that rationalised domination can be understood, as it is by Weber and Michels, as separate from the material interests in society, as a somehow 'objective technological law'. 'This fate (of bureaucratic domination) has become a fate and inasmuch as it has become a fate it can also be abolished. Any scientific analysis that is not committed to this possibility is pledged, not to reason, but to the reason of established domination' (Marcuse 1968b. p.215). In opposition to this one-dimensional thought Marcuse proposes

a 'qualitative physics', as the recognition of the relationship between truth and objectivity, and historical human agency, as well as the rejection of the reduction of human subjectivity to primary objective qualities. In terms of how this might relate to organisation theory, the link needs to be developed between qualitatively different theoretical/politico-cultural formulations and qualitatively different organisational practices, behaviours and relations; of how organisations might be informed by a qualitatively new science and a 'new sensibility' (Marcuse 1979). Also of relevance here is the reaffirmation of the dialectical tensions contained in 'another rationality', linked to the notion that truth lies in the tension between the 'is' and the 'ought', that truth lies in the notion of 'becoming' (Marcuse 1955). For Marcuse, this would constitute the practical application of 'negative thinking' in a specific socio-political arena. However, it is 'positive thinking' which has triumphed.

### **The 'Triumph of Positive Thinking'.**

One-dimensional thought tends towards the establishment of a particular social 'reality' through a 'therapeutic' function. It is here that (neo)Human Relations management theory provides the clearest evidence of such one dimensional tendencies, given the 'therapeutic' claims and emphases on integration it makes. Examples can be found in the conceptualisation of organisations as organisms; 'organisational doctors' re-establishing a state of

homeostasis; industrial psychology's emphasis on 'counselling'. Such 'therapeutic' claims are linked to the claims of a (repressive) humanism. They are one-dimensional in their reductive, ideological and essentially conservative nature, as a fundamentally instrumentalist conception. Such 'therapeutic' claims contribute to the containment of thought to the confines of the established universe of discourse. The (neo)Human Relations discourse provides evidence of managements claim to 'cure' the individual from any transgression of the established boundaries of (organisational) thought or behaviour through this integration and cultural identification with the 'rational' organisation. The ideological nature of this 'therapy' relates back to the 'closing of the universe of discourse', the 'therapeutic' correction of behaviour which the established one dimensional rationality may define as 'pathological'. This excludes critical thought and promotes a conformist way of thinking.

For Marcuse, one-dimensional thought is closely linked to the empiricist nature of positivistic thinking. Marcuse writes 'the (empiricist) analysis, via correction and improvement, terminates in affirmation; empiricism proves itself as positive thinking' (Marcuse 1964. p.170). This empiricist analysis tends to close the universe of investigation to the technical questions, in this case to the technical questions of management and is thus closely linked to a pervasive managerialism involved in industrial psychological and sociological investigation. Marcuse

defines positivism as encompassing the validation of cognition and experiential thought through relation to some notion of the experience of objective 'facts'; the orientation of cognitive thought to the methodology of the physical sciences, as a method of certainty and exactitude; the belief that progress in knowledge depends on this orientation, that 'correct' thinking must be empiricist, unified, physicalist; and that this positivism can demarcate truth from falsehood and re-orient wayward thinking through the aforementioned 'therapeutic' function when applied through specific technologies. Such positivism thus claims a produced harmony (again linked to a therapeutic reorientation) between theory and practice, truth and facts. This is achieved through a scientifically authorised comprehension and transformation of the (organisational) world.

This positivistically produced harmony and 'therapy' which is able to re-orient wayward thinking is clearly evidenced by the technocratic use of the concept of culture within the (neo)Human Relations management theory. This is reduced from a notion of the shared creation and generation of meanings to something used within the technological manipulation of the organisational relations to reorient thought to that required by the organisation. Such a technocratic use of the concept of culture thus tends towards having this 'therapeutic' effect upon subjectivity. It tends towards having the ideological effect of producing an affirmative 'correctness' of attitude sanctioned by the



organisation, as discussed in chapter 6. We have here in Marcuse analysis of the political impact of positive thinking, a conceptual/epistemological counterpart at the level of rationality to the social psychological formation of a group-mind and its tendency towards producing conformity to received norms and attitudes. Such a political impact upon subjectivity is doubly hard to resist given both its 'rationality' and its sociality.

For Marcuse therefore, positivist thinking displays a self-validation. It tends to be self-legitimizing of the boundaries of the rational.

Marcuse speaks of a 'philosophical behavioursim', as the movement between the two poles of 'pontificating authority' and 'easy-going chumminess'. He argues that this is a characteristic of positivistic thinking derived from the self-incurred curtailment of philosophy to the natural scientific project, and a masochistic attitude with which such philosophy surrendering itself up to scientism. This masochistic characteristic of philosophy is paralleled by something similar in the general arena of Human Relations, Personnel Management, Human Resource Management and managerialist social science. All exhibiting the same bipolarity between 'pontificating authority' and 'chumminess', developing out of a similar masochistic, alienated objectification of itself in/to/for the organisation. Managerialist social science ultimately moves between the 'pontificating authority' of Scientific Management and the 'easy-going chumminess' of the

(neo)Human-Relation perspective. As the detailed analysis developed in chapter 9 will show, such a formulation makes some sense. When Marcuse writes the following of one-dimensional thought in general, it could easily be applied to a (neo)Human relations managerialist social science underpinned by positivist thinking. He writes;

orienting itself on the reified universe of everyday discourse, and exposing and clarifying this discourse in terms of this reified universe, the (one-dimensional) analysis abstracts from the negative...by classifying and distinguishing meanings, and keeping them apart, it purges thought and speech of contradictions, illusions and transgressions (whilst initiating new illusions)...The therapeutic character of the philosophical analysis is strongly emphasised - to cure from illusions, deceptions, obscurities, unsolvable riddles, unanswerable questions, from ghosts and spectres. Who is the patient?' (Marcuse 1964. p.182).

The 'patient', and their 'suffering' is defined by the one-dimensional conception of the social world and by the political practice which it legitimates. The 'patient' and the 'illness' is defined by the manager and by the organisational reality as such a one-dimensionality in thought, language and culture is the restriction of those elements of social life to the parameters of the 'real'.

The 'therapeutic' co-ordination of the individual as a cure for an organisationally defined 'illness', as an individualised problem occurs on the technical level as the individual is helped to become more efficient, and on a more general normative level as the social and cultural reality of the organisation is reaffirmed. Power in organisations thus involves the ability to generate and maintain on both the practical and conceptual level a similar philosophical reduction of experience and thought to behind the curtain of the rationally, scientistically established world of empirically 'proven' positive facts. This is an especially effective 'new form of control' when, as in the case of contemporary (neo)Human Relations management perspectives, the rationally derived curtain is that of 'humanistic' organisational relations, participation and a 'plurality' of power in organisational negotiation. A unitary version of organisational power emerges from behind the facade of pluralism as real power is seen in the ability to circumscribe, here on the conceptual level, the nature and content of an institutionalised conflict.

Given the above, Marcuse writes, 'The technical achievements of advanced industrial society, and the effective manipulation of mental and material productivity have brought a shift in the locus of mystification...the rational rather than the irrational becomes the most effective vehicle of mystification.' (Marcuse 1964. p.187). Exactitude and (critical) analysis is as vital as ever as

positivist and empiricist social science has colonised the intellectual high ground, in management theory as much as anywhere else. However positivistic social science fails to be concrete with respect to the context and determination of the functions to which such analysis relates. For example structuralist-functionalist organisational analysis claims exactitude and scientificity without recognising its technical and managerialist underpinnings and the sectional interest which they stem from. For Marcuse the challenge to this type of social science requires the development of a qualitatively different social theoretical stance, but one which is still and perhaps even more exact and thorough. For Marcuse, 'exact' knowledge should not be reduced to the politically sanitised production of techniques. It should develop a more genuine exactitude, should be more empirical than positivism in that it would not so easily assume the relevance or irrelevance of certain variables. For Marcuse this qualitatively new knowledge would be a knowledge which understood its own historical and socio-political context. With relevance to the development of this type of knowledge in the field of organisation theory, Marcuse writes 'This context is larger than that of the plants and shops investigated... This real context in which the particular subjects obtain their real significance is definable only within a theory of society' (Marcuse 1964. p.190). That is to say, to develop a theory which locates the factors which determine, influence and require certain data and which make them relevant, whilst not hypostatizing society.

Marcuse therefore demonstrates his commitment to philosophy.

### **The Historical Commitment to Philosophy.**

For Marcuse the commitment to philosophy and rejection of positivistic social science revolves around the continuation of the commitment to universals such as Will, Self and Soul. Marcuse argues that positivistic philosophy, and perhaps more recently some post-Modern philosophies, have tended to exorcise such concepts. This philosophical commitment to universals involves a supra-linguistic analysis of the 'part' within the whole, but also an analysis which transcends the contained appearance of everyday reality. This philosophical commitment continues as part of the critique of the political and experiential process whereby universals are 'dissolved' as analyzed/sanitised particulars. Marcuse's commitment to philosophy maintains a critique of the process whereby 'circumstances' compel the individual to identify Mind with managed mental processes, their Self with the duties and responsibilities required for accordance with socially (organisationally) conditioned behaviour. The micro-linguistic analysis of traditional hermeneutics would be an example of the philosophical neglect of such 'circumstances' for Marcuse, and thus we can see that the 'depth hermeneutic' central to this thesis is commensurate with the Marcusean politics-epistemology. Indeed it could be argued that the continued commitment to philosophy is

the key similarity between Marcuse and the Habermasian development of 'depth hermeneutics'.

For Marcuse, philosophy and Critical Theory must translate and articulate social and experiential processes influencing and reducing Mind and Body. A problem with this formulation however is the invocation of universals by politically conservative philosophy, universals such as 'nation' and 'state', and indeed 'organisation'. Marcuse argues that these conservative universals are reified terms for entities which do not exist in any existential sense. Here we see that Marcuse's commitment to philosophy contributes not only to a critical theory of organisation, but to an 'anti-organisation theory' (Burrell and Morgan 1979). Conservative universals are collective terms for various forms of relations and activities (Bittner 1965, Hassard and Pym 1990). The organisational integration and operationalisation of sub-entities does give the 'organisation' an existence, in the sense that there is a tangibility to the effects and symbolic manifestations of the organisation, but this is evidence of the ideological conflation of the particular and historically contingent with illusory universals. As alluded to in chapter 3, Parekh (1982) makes similar criticisms of Classical Economics. The existence of entities such as the 'organisation' should not be equated with universals in any fundamental sense, as the reality of such entities is superimposed as an independent existence through ideological representations. The commitment to philosophy

involves a commitment to a 'transcendant' recognition that these entities should be translatable to economic functions and thus understood as historically contingent. For instance, in Essay on Liberation and Eros and Civilisation Marcuse articulates the political possibility to go beyond the institutionalised universalisation of repressive authority relationships, experience (of labour) and (self) perceptions. In terms of substantive political philosophy, this is a commitment to a negative philosophical reconceptualisation of the radical potential involved in genuine universals such as sexuality, labour and consciousness for the articulation of the potential of expanded autonomy and happiness. The purported difficulty in social theoretical investigation which involves such notions as subjectivity, happiness and autonomy is produced by the difficulty in translating these universals due to the division of experience between on the one hand world of fact, the 'is', and on the other the world of value, the 'ought', which scientism generates. Such a division is a priori imposed by the positivistic world-view and references to it as an arbiter of the epistemological status of a theory are as such already political. To counter this conservative position one can only refer to a radical humanism which does not claim truth but a concern to articulate the **practical potential** for the improvement of the human condition, discussed in chapter 1. This is to articulate the distinction between the actual and the potential which one-dimensional thought both generates and

closes down to the dimension of the actual. In the end Marcuse (1979, 1979b) proposes an aesthetic rationality which involves the glimpsing of other dimensions of reality and potentials for social and sexual existence which do not rest upon the reductionist, definitional logic characteristic of positivistic social science.

### **One Dimensional Thought, Technology and Progress.**

As part of his general critique of one dimensional rationality (Marcuse 1941, 1964) Marcuse develops a critique of one dimensional conceptions of progress. Marcuse (1970) makes a distinction between what he calls 'technical progress' and 'humanitarian progress'. This highlights the ideological nature of technological rationality in advanced capitalism, and uncovers the effect of this ideology upon the subjectivity of individuals (Marcuse 1966).

For Marcuse 'technical progress' is understood as a quantitative phenomena, revolving around the concerns for more knowledge, more techniques and more mastery over nature and humanity. Such a 'technical progress' tends to imply the conception of nature and humanity as having the status of **resource**. This underlying conception of humanity as resource is fundamental to (neo)Human Relation management theory, indeed the very notion of management is itself to a large extent an emanation of such a view. Management as the use of others to meet a person/professional/commercial end not determined by the



person being used is precisely to reduce humanity to a resource. The 'humanism' of contemporary management does not alter this underlying feature of the purely 'technical progress' of managerialism.

On the other hand, the notion of 'humanitarian progress' moves through the realisation of human freedom and potentialities, the reduction of (surplus) repression and of emotional and material suffering, That is, for Marcuse 'humanitarian progress' is a qualitative phenomena, or a qualitative reconceptualisation of the very notion of progress. These two conceptualisations of progress can be linked to the notion of degrees of ideology discussed in chapter 3. On both methodological and political levels, 'technical progress' is formally biased with a preconception of what is meant by progress given definite institutional imperatives. This incorporates a substantive bias in that some use others as a resource. 'Humanitarian progress' is formally biased in that it also has a teleology and preconceptions as to what will constitute progress. However it involves less substantive bias given its open-endedness and its refusal to define the human simply as resource. It is therefore less ideological.

There is for Marcuse an inner connection between these two conceptions of technology, 'technical progress' being the precondition for 'humanitarian progress', but 'technical progress' is also the negation of 'humanitarian progress'. Marcuse's conceptualisation of progress and the potentialities within the material conditions which

pertain, is a dialectical one. For him, 'humanitarian progress' can perhaps best be understood as the de-alienation of 'technical progress', the notion of the 'humanitarian' being distinguished from the (repressive) humanism which is the ideological solution to the contradictions of industrial capitalism. This is both based upon and creates the purportedly neutral 'technical progress' as something conflated with the common good. For Marcuse, 'technical progress' assumes firstly a high degree of mastery over nature as the basis for social 'wealth'. This is itself a 'technical' conceptualisation of 'good' and as such relates to the self-referential, self-legitimation of one-dimensional thought. Secondly, 'technical progress' involves the philosophical neutralisation of the concept of progress, the negation of the link between technological developments and human needs. This is the negation of the link between the necessary and the beautiful, the body and the mind, reality and the possible. This philosophical negation or 'splitting' parallels the cultural and political 'splitting' in other spheres of life (Marcuse 1964, 1966, 1968a, 1973).

Marcuse relates this reduction and negation of the concept of progress to the utilitarian nature of positivistic underpinnings of technology which leads to the relegation of the qualitative, humanitarian notion of progress to the status of 'utopian'. Marcuse argues that the form which this utilitarianism takes in contemporary society is linked

to the notion of (organisational) productivity and efficiency. This 'technical progress' related to (organisational) productivity and efficiency is also related to the technical concerns with transformation of human subjectivity as much as with the transformation of matter. Given this, the ideological negation of ontological/humanitarian questions about the nature of progress tend to remove the questions of whose interests the particular historical manifestation of progress are. The formal bias of 'technical progress' embodies a substantive bias of the movement towards specific ends. The easy assumption of the system and its technology as in the common good becomes a self-justifying proposition. Scientific management's notion that labour and the management of labour can be reduced to a set of purely technical questions is a concrete example of such a reductionist 'technical progress', which also ideologically negates the inherent political and existential questions involved. Marcuse writes 'It seems as though productivity becomes increasingly an end in itself, and the question of the application of productivity not only remains open, but is increasingly repressed' (Marcuse 1970. p.30).

A critical theory of organisations is improved given this critique of scientism and technologism. A critique of management technology which attempts to control the social and cultural aspects of the organisation is an example in a specific field of the ideological nature of the 'technical progress' which Marcuse describes. The

historical trends within (neo)Human Relations management theory described in chapter 8 relate to the imperatives of the technical coordination and social control of the aspects of the organisation.

Marcuse highlights a particular technised factor which also has a good deal of resonance with the notion that management and organisation, and their impact upon the subject. The example which Marcuse points to here is time, and the mechanisation of time. It is argued by Marcuse that the mechanisation of time is a particular characteristic of the modern, technical view of progress. Time is operationalised into work time and is thus separated from the lives of those whose time is subject to management. The clock becomes the most powerful piece of technology which changes the subject (Mumford 1936, Giddens 1991). For Marcuse this example is inherently linked to the view that technical progress, or more accurately the technicised conceptualisation of progress, is linked to disturbance, unhappiness, negativity and heteronomy. Technical progress so conceived, is or becomes an end in itself.

For Marcuse such a critique is linked to the radicalisation of Freud's general thesis that progress in civilisation is premised upon discontent and the renunciation of instinctual gratifications. The logic of the (neo)Human Relations position which holds that progress is best produced by increasing the 'happiness' of workers in the organisation can be seen as the 'solution' in the realm of consciousness to this fundamental contradiction. The

provocativeness of the (neo)Human Relations position is the recombining of the human and the technical elements within the organisation. But this 'happiness' of the human, the concentration on the 'human factor' (plastic language) within the organisation is motivated by essentially technical concerns. A provocative humanism, claimed by (neo)Human Relations position, can only be maintained if and when its logic and dynamic is transcendent of the existent objective conditions which fundamentally require the discontent of the individual in the name of necessity and productivity. That is, the 'humanism' of the (neo)Human Relations perspectives stems from a 'technical progress' and not a 'humanitarian progress'. As we saw in chapter 4, Marcuse defines the nature of repression as surplus repression which means that the technological maintenance of repressive conditions is not an historical inevitability. The technology of (neo)Human Relations management maintains a level of surplus repression. To the extent that the maintenance of civilised conduct and stable social relations requires some repression of instinctual drives, some basic repression is inevitable, Freud and Marcuse agree on this. The Reality Principle must govern or at least mediate the Pleasure Principle. But Marcuse questions why the particular, historically contingent reality should be based upon this 'productive renunciation' characterising surplus repression, and why this reality should be equated with progress. It is this qualitative questioning of the dehistoricised and dehumanised content

of 'progress', as linked to his more general themes of the critique of the nature of reason and rationality, which is fundamental for Marcuse. The organisation, given the centrality of the cultural dimension of management and the unquestioned centrality of progress through productivity, can perhaps be seen as the vehicles for this unprogressive progress. In parallel to this, the organisation as an end-in-itself culminates in the negation of the humanisation of production, the negation of the truly human creative potential. This situation is especially powerful in modifying behaviour where the moment of repression where managerial and organisation technologies revolves around the rhetoric of 'freedom' and 'democracy'. That is, the more 'pleasurable' the reality within the organisation the more secure is the system of repression. The more 'humanistic' the 'psychic prison' the more secure the prison is. In relation to the theoretical formulation of degrees of ideology, the more reasonable the formal bias of 'technical progress' the more secure is the substantive bias.

'Technical progress' as underpinned by a 'truth' orientation fuelled by positivism (Marcuse 1941, 1955) can be seen as a practical combination of a formally biased system of knowledge and substantively biased, practically interested and 'closed' technological orientation. 'Humanitarian' progress is a more qualitative conception, involving a formal bias given its underpinning values, but this formal bias does not necessarily culminate in a

substantive bias. The qualitative nature of 'humanitarian progress' involves an openness with respect to the historical possibilities of the content of progress, it does not embody the specific imperatives of greater control and mastery.

### **Summary.**

This chapter has elucidated the more conceptual, epistemological and philosophical aspects of Marcuse's work which relates to the critique of (neo)Human Relations management theory. Marcuse demonstrates the one-dimensional tendencies within orthodox scientific thought and technological rationality. He links this 'triumph of positive thinking' to a politics of knowledge and culture and relates these meta-theoretical objections to the more practical political consequences of theoretical pronouncements and technological strategies emanating therefrom. Of particular relevance here, we have seen how Marcuse relates the (spurious) 'therapeutic' trajectory within such technological rationality. Such tendencies serve to integrate the individual into (ideological) cultural patterns, beliefs and norms affirmative of existent authority relations. A critique of this 'therapy' forms a major point in the critical analysis of (neo)Human Relations management discourse developed in chapter 9.

A further aspect of this critique is the distinction Marcuse makes between 'technical' and 'humanitarian' versions of progress. This critically elucidates the notion

that whilst (neo)Human Relations management theory purports to be progressive, in that it 'humanises' organisational relations, it does so from a particularly affirmative perspective which exhibits a similar positivist and conservative tone. The 'progress' of (neo)Human Relations management theory is a 'technical' progress which has at its heart the reproduction of already existing authority relations and as such exhibits a substantive bias. This critique enables the resituating of (neo)Human Relations management theory as an contemporary example of technological rationality which has ideological connotations. As with the other aspects of the work of Marcuse which have relevance for the critique of (neo)Human Relations management theory, these aspects of critique will be taken forward for the detailed analysis of (neo)Human Relation management theory below.

The previous four chapters have been concerned with an exposition of certain aspects of Marcuse's work which form the 'social analysis' component of a 'depth hermeneutic' outlined in chapter 3. Such an exposition has sown the relevance for a critique of (neo)Human Relations management theory of the radical social psychology of Marcuse and his radicalisation of psychoanalysis; his discussion of the ideological nature of 'new forms of control'; his critical analysis of culture and language linked to the (re)production of power relations and the part these aspects play in ideological reproduction; and his critique of technological rationality, the positivistic/ scientific



underpinnings and the rationalisation of domination. These aspects have been discussed as and when they have been relevant for a critique of (neo)Human Relations management theory in general terms. However having discussed the details of this Marcusean perspective, it is now necessary to turn to a more detailed and concrete analysis of the (neo)Human Relations management discourse in the light of these critical conceptions. This again is in line with the 'depth hermeneutic' methodology, highlighted above. The prolonged discussion of the work of Marcuse forms the social analysis component of this method. We now turn to the discourse analysis and interpretation of meaning components advocated by Thompson (1984). The first aspect of this is to highlight the historical emergence of a constellation of discourses which all revolved around the growing managerial concerns with socio-cultural relations in general, the human subject in the organisation, questions of motivation and meaning in work and ultimately the development of managerial techniques to increase control over such aspects of organisational behaviour. The contemporary 'leading authors/texts' in the historical development of this discourse will then be empirically identified. This will form the 'discourse analysis' component of the 'depth hermeneutic' to allow for the subsequent critical 'interpretation of meaning', in the light of the 'social analysis', in chapter 9.

## DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

## CHAPTER 8.

### SUBJECTIVITY AND CULTURE IN (NEO)HUMAN RELATION MANAGEMENT THEORY; THE HISTORICAL EMERGENCE OF A DISCOURSE AND ITS LEADING AUTHORS.

As outlined in chapter 3, a necessary component of the 'depth hermeneutic' research strategy central to this thesis is a 'discourse analysis'. This chapter will be concerned with two aspects of such an analysis, firstly a brief discussion of the historical emergence of the managerial discourses which revolve around questions of subjectivity and culture. This history will explore some of the broad structural features against which this shift of emphasis within management theory occurred. It will also suggest that a 'human relations movement' (Hollway 1991) is at the heart of this shift. Secondly, it will provide an empirical indication of the leading authors and texts within this 'human relations' discourse. Such a discourse analysis will then enable the 'interpretation of meaning' component of the 'depth hermeneutic' to be developed in the next chapter. This will enable the analysis as a whole, relating to the critical inquiry into the ideological nature of organisations and the power-laden reproduction of subjectivity and cultures within organisations, to be developed.

## **The Historical Emergence of a Management Discourse Around Subjectivity and Culture.**

Chapter 2 has explored some of the existent critical organisation theory which focuses upon the issue of subjectivity and culture in organisations. To contribute to this I have suggested the application of the Critical Theory of Marcuse. To develop such an applied analysis, it was also suggested that a 'depth hermeneutic' strategy would be germane. This however requires the development of a specifically discursive analysis and an inquiry into the historical emergence of the particular discourse in question.

At its most general, the historical background to the concerns with subjectivity and culture within organisational theory relates to a structural dimension. This refers to the rationalisation and bureaucratization of organisations and society. This historical process brings with it the unintended consequences of making the question of consensus, commitment and meaning within work problematic. Part of this is the general shift from mechanistic approach to management and organisational design to more 'organic' approaches. These more 'organic' approaches tend to revolve at least in part around the control of the human, social and cultural features of organisations. An analysis of rationalisation and its unintended consequences raises question first and most thoroughly explored by Max Weber (1964, 1968). However, post-Weberian and 'human relations' scholarship does more

to emphasise social, subjective and cultural features within the history of organisational studies in the sense that the informality of organisations was recognised (Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939, Mayo 1949, Gouldner 1954, Burns and Stalker 1961, Blau 1963, 1972, Merton 1968, Lawrence and Lorsch 1969). Although these theorists in no way constitute a recognised 'school', such management and organisation theory can be seen as making the following points. (a) most fundamentally, that the dysfunctional nature of bureaucratic structures and 'scientific management' practices stem from the structural, personal and relational features of such formally rational systems; (b) that social and individual action within these formal systems of rule-governed behaviour, result in inefficiency, ineffectiveness, goal-displacement and over-conformity; (c) that informal practices and attitudes contrary to the organisations declared aims will arise; (d) that a depersonalisation of relations within the organisation, and between the organisational representatives and potential clients will arise; (e) management should therefore assume the responsibility for the control of social, cultural and motivational factors inside the organisation.

For these theorists such dysfunctions arise due to the immanent qualities of bureaucratic and 'scientific management' formalism, not due to some particular pathological incidents.

Contemporary versions of a structural emphasis signalling this historical shift are found in 'post Modern' debate in

organisation theory (Burrell 1988, Clegg 1990). This points firstly to the dysfunctions of bureaucracy, and secondly to the increased effectiveness of less rigid, hierarchical, and more decentralised organisational forms. It was in part due to this recognition that the focus upon socio-cultural and informal aspects of organisational behaviour emerged within managerial discourse. The relative breaking up of the bureaucratic form as the norm within capitalist industry is the most contemporary aspect of the historical process which has given impetus to the development of a managerialist approach to subjectivity and culture (Alvesson 1989, Lepietz 1992). In recent years similar shifts in debate around decentralisation, de-differentiation and 'voluntarism' within the labour process, flexibility within the team orientation have fallen under the rubric of 'post-Fordism' (Piori and Sabel 1984, Sayers, A. 1985, Pollett 1988, Murray 1989, Rustin 1989, Clegg 1990, Parker and Slaughter 1990, Brenner and Glick 1991, Lipietz 1992). If Fordism was and is about large scale centralised productive units; an intense division of labour; the deskilling of work characterised by the separation of conception of work from its execution; and Tayloristic management principles all culminating in a notion of 'the one best way' of organising, then the practical move away from this method of organisation has been labelled 'post-Fordism'. Leaving aside whether, or to what extent such changes have occurred, (Pollet 1988, Murray 1989, Brenner and Glick 1991) at its most general

level 'post-Fordism' is purportedly characterised by the following; a decentralisation of the large monolithic productive unit into smaller units operating a more batch production orientation; a return to a 'craft' production process and a 'reskilling' of the flexible worker; the attempt to facilitate more flexible responses to the contingencies of diversified markets; and a deconstruction of established hierarchical relations within the organisation (Piore and Sabel 1984). These structural changes in organisational responses require the facilitation of a more committed workforce, integrated into the organisational project. For such organisational structures and strategies to succeed this integrative and normative aspects is of increased importance. As Willmott (1993) points out the growth in the concern with corporate culture and integrative aspects of managerial concern with worker subjectivity can be seen as 'an important ideological element within the global restructuring of capital' (Willmott 1993. p. 518), as post-Fordism emphasises teamness, co-operation and collaboration within and across traditional organisational boundaries.

The decentralisation and fragmentation of the bureaucracy, and the end of the 'one best way' of Fordism forms the structural backdrop for the development of managerial strategies for the control the organisation understood as a social, cultural and political system and the managerial focus on subjectivity.

The other important general and structural aspect of

historical shift of emphasis was the development of a full employment economy in the West in the 1950's and 60's which meant that labour and the attitudes of the workforce was seen as an important variable by capital (Bendix 1972, Baritz 1974, Anthony 1977, van der Wee 1986).

Given the decentralisation of many organisations and the emphasis on the control of socio-cultural factors which these structural changes create, management has been faced with a historically new set of imperatives (Bendix 1972, Baritz 1974, Anthony 1977, Parker and Slaughter 1990). The historical development of the managerial strategies for the control of the human component and socio-cultural aspects of the organisation is therefore revealing and forms the data-base for the critical analysis developed below.

The historical development of the specific function of personnel management, along with industrial psychology and sociology can be related to the more general historical development of managerial concerns with the control of socio-cultural factors. (Fox 1966, Chrichton 1969, Cherns 1972, Henstridge 1974, Anthony 1977, Watson 1980, Thompson 1983, Rose 1989, Steffy and Grimes 1993).

Fox (1966) shows how by the 1920's British Personnel management were concerned to be the 'human engineer who goes into the factory to see that all the human machines are working at their highest potential' (Fox 1966. p. 14). The imperative to deal with socio-cultural aspects came from the need to control informality and subjectivity. We see here that at the heart of the historical development of



personnel management was the dual function of the coordination of material factors and the control of human factors of production. This is a specific case of the more general proposition that the technical function and the ideological function have always been central to the management profession in general as well as to the 'human relations movement' in particular (Pollard 1965, Alvesson 1989, Hollway 1991).

Steffy and Grimes (1993) argue that Personnel and Organisational Psychology (POP) as a discipline has developed from positivistic 'knowledge-producing' roots common with scientific management and human engineering which has developed into Human Resource Management. Given the historical development of such managerial endeavours, it has been argued that experiences of work have had an impact on the social production of individual identity (Sennett and Cobb 1977, Salaman and Thompson 1980, Rose 1989, Knights and Willmott 1990, Thompson and McHugh 1990, Collinson 1992).

This is evidenced by the growth in the post World War 2 professional management and administrative endeavour to reshape or 'correct' the behaviour of others. Salaman and Esland identifies psychiatry, social work, industrial and occupational psychology and personnel management as examples of the organisational/institutional site and professional discourse within this historical trend.

There has been a historical growth and professionalisation of these 'people-working' professions, of which personnel

management and organisational psychology are part. For Salaman and Esland this 'therapeutic' control is related to the growth of technological rationality in relation to the understanding and control of human behaviour, the subsequent bureaucratization of specialisms and the rationalisation of human behaviour. It also signals the shift in the nature of control and domination which arises as such 'therapeutic' control stems from the professionalised impact upon subjectivity. In this way the workplace setting, as the reproduction of definite socio-economic relations impacting upon the identity of individuals, relates to a critique of ideology and the ideological impact of organisations. Formal rationality as exemplified by the mechanistic, bureaucratic structures and processes also relates to the ideological nature of domination as it is able to equate itself internally with the 'rational', technical necessity, so masking the sectional interest which often lay behind particular decisions (Anthony 1977, Burawoy 1979, 1985, Edwards 1979, Alevsson 1989).

The historical emergence of the organisational psychology discourse is worth commenting on here in that it forms part of the technological armoury which the history of the management of subjectivity highlights. Thompson and McHugh (1990) have shown how socially produced identities are a 'central factor' in delineating the experience of work, and how the management of the 'subjective factor' in organisations forms a route whereby the experience of work

and individual identity is managed. However, in connection to the main point being developed here, we can see how the historical emergence of organisational psychology discourse is part of the technicist reproduction and transformation of identities formed in the workplace.

Another aspect of the general historical emergence in organisational studies of a discourse around subjective and cultural features is the 'culturism' in organisational analysis (Willmott 1993). Whilst tangentially recognising the social network within the organisation, such analysis does more to emphasise the specifically cultural and symbolic components of the organisation.

In recent years this has been an area of particularly rapid growth in managerialist, instrumentally oriented organisation theory (Davis 1984, Graves 1986, Olins 1989, Denison 1990, Hampden-Turner 1990, Lessem 1990, Kotter and Heskett 1992, Aldersey-Williams 1993). This historical shift of emphasis has not however escaped critical attention (Turner 1986, 1990, Alvesson 1990, 1993, Willmott 1993).

The general approach to 'culture' here is a technological approach to corporate identity and symbolism from within this general managerialist perspective. The rationale behind such analysis involves the technological attempt to operationalise culture, motivation and identification to within the pre-established ambit of the organisational culture. The development of this general concern with culture is thus shown to be linked with the fundamental

concern with organisational efficiency and success, especially with regard to motivating its personnel through the generation of a collective, normative framework and shaping subjectivity. The general concern within this area of organisational studies involves both the attempt to analyze the cultural features of organisational culture, the 'honest grapplers' (Turner 1986. See also Willmott 1993); and the attempt to generate operationalised corporate cultures as some magical formula to solve the problems of recalcitrant labour and to socialise individuals into the corporate universe (Peters and Waterman 1982, Davis 1984, Kilmann 1985, Graves 1986, Olins 1989, Denison 1990, Hampden-Turner 1990, Lessem 1990, Kotter and Heskett 1992). The historical development of such technicist research into organisational culture comes from the general 'human relations' perspective. As Willmott writes, the origins of corporate culturism lay in managerial gurus promotion of 'excellence' through a 'strengthened' organisational culture (Peters and Waterman 1982), in Human Resource Management and in the concern with the symbolic dimensions of organisational life (Gagliardi 1990, Turner 1990). These managerial strategies all relate in some way back to the general 'human relations movement' central to this historical development. These views all emphasise organisations as being socio-cultural systems of human and social interaction, which is intimately linked to managerial imperatives of controlling these variables so as to maintain a state of internal cultural equilibrium. The

management of organisational culture is a specific case of the general scientific integration of the individual and potential sub-cultures. Externally it is concerned with the projection of an appropriate 'corporate personality' into the environment.

Willmott highlights the inherently ideological nature of corporate culturism in its attempt to 'solve' in consciousness the practical contradictions of capitalism. He highlights how corporate culturalism approaches the human subject to be managed in terms of a human nature which is to be 'simultaneously respected and exploited', in such a way that any 'humanism' within such managerial strategies and the theories which underpin them is inherently geared towards increased performance. This relates to the notion that such managerial strategies are characterised by a 'repressive humanism', discussed in detail above.

There seems little point in entering into a prolonged, purely descriptive account of the basic features of the (neo)Human Relations approach to management as such. This has been adequately achieved elsewhere (Reothlisberger and Dickson 1939, Mayo 1949, Pollard 1965, Blumberg 1971, Bendix 1972, Baritz 1974, Anthony 1977, Burawoy 1979, Edwards 1979, Giddens 1982, Thompson, P. 1990). Suffice to say that in our historical overview of management and organisational theory which emphasises the subjectivity of individual workers and workers culture, the specific

developments within the (neo)Human Relations approach to management are the most significant and widespread. Indeed it can be argued that the specific developments of (neo)Human Relations management gave rise to the more general 'human relations perspective' referred to above as the underpinning assumptions of the various management and organisational theory so far discussed.

The historical development of the managerial concerns with the subjective features of work relations and the subsequent development of the (neo)Human Relations technologies of cultural compliance can be related to the bureaucratization of the organisation. This can also be related to the rationalisation of the managerial claims of professionalism and the legitimacy in dealing with both technical and cultural issues in a neutral way, as a 'technical necessity' (Bendix 1972, Burawoy 1979, Edwards 1979, Rose 1989). Such a management of subjective and cultural aspects depended upon the internalisation of a new set of moral and ethical imperatives by the worker, that implied a new work ethic, 'a new type of worker' (Gramsci 1971). The development of (neo)Human Relations managerial discourses/technologies which impact upon the normative and subjective features of work emerge historically in relation to this wider history. It became necessary for such management to develop techniques of normative control to ensure that individuals would react in ways which responded to the 'spirit of the firm', because the increased size and complexity of production had made direct forms of physical

control less viable. Taylorism was the zenith of the rationalisation of work performance which relate to the basic technical function of management, whilst subsequent developments within the social and cultural technologies of (neo)Human Relations management relate to the basic ideological function, what Baritz (1974) and Alvesson (1989) have referred to as the 'increased need for ideology'.

As with the specific specialism of personnel management, so with (neo)Human Relations management in general. The bureaucratization of the enterprise and the rationalisation of management confronted it with new, often contradictory problems. On the one hand managerial authority was defined in terms of their bureaucratic position and technical expertise, but on the other hand the day-to-day running of the efficient enterprise required a more communicative interaction between workers and management. The ideological appeals made to workers to internalise a false mediation of this contradiction produced imperatives for the new cultural and symbolic technologies of cultural compliance and the normative managerial project. This problem was historically approached in two ways by management (Bendix 1972, Baritz 1974). Firstly management emphasised a shared universe of discourse between workers and management, a mutuality of interests, an appeal to the 'good faith' and sense of commonality amongst the workforce. Secondly management have historically encouraged the view of a contractual obligation on the part of workers, that they

'owe' the organisation something. Such contractual relations are expressed as an even playing field which workers are free, as 'free wage labourers', not to enter should they wish. A third element might be added to Bendix's distinction. Particularly in (neo)Human Relations management, there is a 'therapeutic' tone to the discourse whereby management purport to 'cure' workers of the 'pathology' of unco-operative behaviour and so forth. These emphases signal the historical shift to represent management as the technically necessary coordinative function in the common interests of all, as the neutral 'third force'.

In the early years of the 20th Century examples of the historical emergence of (neo)Human relations management discourse are connected to the representation of industrial work relations and the legitimacy of management. These legitimations tended to emphasis Social Darwinist and individualist features, as exemplified by Smilesianism and the 'captains of industry' ethos of the late 19th and early 20th Century (Bendix 1972). The individualism within this ideological mediation reached its height in the New Thought Movement of 1890-1915 which emphasised the power of individual thought and action as the basis for the demarcation of the successful and those to be denigrated as lazy and indolent, thereby legitimating class division.

However, the unionisation of workers within industrial society raised historically new problems for management and the legitimation of their authority. It also brought new



contradictions between this virulent individualism and the recognition of the need for collective social action. The growing political challenge of unionised workers brought with it the perception for management that the consequences of 'the labour problem' was something which would have to be 'solved', rather than ignoring the consequences of social inequality as somehow a natural consequence of social organisation. Given the structural and organisational features of industrial enterprises and their growing bureaucratic nature, the notions of individualism and the 'survival of the fittest' became increasingly contradictory to the organic solidarity and interdependence which the industrial system was beginning to exhibit. Initiative within the established constellation of work relations came to replace the emphasis on outright individualism as the source of legitimation of the relative position of workers within large organisations. The demonstration of this historical movement in the early 20th Century implies the emphasis upon a more inclusive, integrative impetus as opposed to the earlier exclusive, judgemental ethos.

Two examples from the time can be given, one is the rejection of the crude Tayloristic 'economic man' conception of human nature, in favour of the recognition of the sociality of workers, as outlined by Mayo's original Hawthorne Studies. At a more general level Ewan (1976) points to the impetus towards the 'Americanisation' in the first few decades of the 20th Century U.S Social

administration. Both are based upon a shift from individualistic legitimations of inequality towards a managerial/administrative recognition of the importance of social solidarity and integration. It can be no coincidence that the historical emergence of the (neo)Human Relations management discourse as such occurred in the USA at this particular time, and exhibited a similar underlying Durkheimian concern (Mayo 1949). Such shifts were the wider historical backdrop against which the emergence of (neo)Human Relations management techniques developed after World War 2. This integrative concern and the new imperatives faced by management gave rise to new strategies born of more sophisticated techniques.

Management turned to the burgeoning social sciences for the theories to begin to develop these social, cultural and motivational techniques which focused on normative control. Baritz (1974) discusses the historical growth in the relationship which developed in the first half of this century between the social scientific community and the imperatives of management. It was and is the social scientific community's growing involvement with these new industrial issues, firstly in psychology and then in sociology which facilitated and influenced much of (neo)Human Relations managerial theory. There was in Baritz's words the historical 'need for knowledge'. This culminated in the situation whereby, whilst certain commercial and strategic aspects of the firm were dealt with through established methods by management, the

'manipulation of people' and techniques for the adaptation of the workforce came to be of paramount importance.

Such managerial technologies which centred on the control of the human aspects of the worker did not develop without resistance from those who doubted its relationship to improvements in profitability and efficiency, but develop it did. One of the first theoretical fields which attempted to facilitate such managerial techniques was Industrial Psychology, at first through the development of selection and individual personality tests. As Hollway (1984, 1991) argues, this emphasis is still the stock in trade of Industrial/Occupational Psychology. The concerns with personality, motivation, selection and training around which industrial psychology revolved, gave impetus for the development of the (neo)Human Relations movement which was to challenge the simplistic assumptions of 'scientific management' and other mechanistic approaches, if not replace such approaches as the dominant paradigm of management (Hollway 1991).

By the 1930's the management of industrial capitalism was beginning to come to some important recognitions. Firstly that workers had to be considered as human beings who would respond to personnel programmes, counselling and were motivated to work by factors other than simply maximising their financial return. Secondly, in relation to this workers had to be considered as members of groups which were able to develop and sustain their own sub-culture and values. Although not many firms actually developed

managerial strategies to deal with such factors in the 1930's, these recognitions were to become the basis of standard (neo)Human Relations management theory for the control of individual subjectivity.

Hollway (1984, 1991) shows that the development of the fundamental assumptions of management and their relation to the workforce gave rise to the development of the discrete techniques developed within the general 'human-relations movement'. However, Hollway understands this 'human-relations movement' as more than the specific technical and managerial developments coming from the work of Mayo and his followers. She understands it as being characterised by the more general discourses concerning the control of social, psychological, cultural and relational aspects of work in the attempt to facilitate greater organisational efficiency. These are industrial psychology, the social and cultural emphases of Mayoism, post World War 2 developments in the (neo)Human Relations management of motivation, Organisational Behaviour and Organisational Development, organisational culture and symbolism. This also relates to contemporary Human Resource Management.

Hollway (1991) argues that this 'human-relations movement' has become the dominant approach of understanding organisational behaviour, and is immanently related to the development of specific techniques in the interests of management. The general development of the 'human-relations movement' as a social-psychological paradigm of understanding is linked to the historical development of

managerial imperatives and techniques. Hollway (1991) refers to the assertion made by Braverman (1975), who himself cites Drucker and Soule, that Taylorism was not superseded, but became so institutionalised as a way of organising the physical design of work, that it ceased to be an issue of debate or recognition. Hollway implies the same about the 'human-relations movement', that its basic features have become so central to contemporary management that it significantly contributes to the basic assumptions of a general management paradigm.

Hollway (1991) argues that by the 1950's, the 'human relations movement' was firmly on the map of management and organisational theory, especially in the area of management training. However this emphasis on 'changing behaviour' still tended to proceed through a behaviouralist perspective. This led to problems of 'authenticity' and the charge of manipulateness. In response to this the 'human relations movement' moved away from the purely behaviouralist position to emphasise the 'whole person' as the site for change as workers began to 'see through' the rhetoric of 'humanism'. Given this shift, Hollway argues that 'Human relations premises underpinned much of the theory of organisational behaviour, through their influence on the development of social psychology' (Hollway 1991 p.111). Thus Hollway posits a continuity between the historical emergence of the general 'human relations movement' discourses in the 1930's and 1950's, and the specific developments of Organisational Behaviour and

Organisational Development in the 1970's. In terms of Organisational Development, Hollway argues that McGregor, in the 1970's, was one of the first behavioral scientists to talk systematically about 'the organisation', organisational programmes and strategies for the facilitation of change '...from a human relations perspective'. Hollway goes on to argue that the development in the 1970's of 'industrial participation' and 'industrial democracy' also stand within the general 'human relations movement' in that they relate to the central human relations concern with motivation.

Organisational Culture in the 1980's also stands in the general 'human relations movement' in that it deals with

...the same old human relations imperatives: participative management, democratic leadership, team building, consensus, planned change, conflict resolution and employee opinion surveys... the study of organisational culture remains within human relations and social psychology, a position which successive approaches to organisational change have not departed from since the 1930's. (Hollway 1991 p.137)

The contemporary debate around 'post-Fordism' which in part focuses upon team building, workers self-directed quality control circle, organisational culture (touted as a discovery from Japan) and the encouragement of 'flexibility' (ie. commitment) on the part of the worker

seems to exhibit very similar features and thus can also easily be located within the general 'human relations movement'.

Thus having established the underlying unity of the 'human relations movement' and discussed its historical emergence as a discourse through its essential concerns with the social, psychological and cultural features of organisational dynamics we are in a position to argue that the critical theory of organisations which is developed below can deal with these essential features rather than illusory differences and internal disputes of emphasis within the managerial community. It is the analysis of these underlying features and the ideological consequences of the techniques developed, set against this historical emergence of the discourse located in the wider context of the social totality which is the basis for the contribution to a critical theory of organisations. The discourse of the (neo)Human Relations management theorists will therefore form the data-base for a critical account of the impact of the organisation upon the subjectivity and consciousness of the individual given this history. However, to enable a more focused discourse analysis and a critical interpretation of meaning, it is necessary to highlight the specific content of this discourse, set against its historical emergence. To facilitate this, the discursive analysis continues through the empirical identification of the leading authors and texts which specifically convey (neo)Human Relations management theory.

## **Empirical Indication of (Neo)Human Relations Management Theory.**

Set against the broad historical backdrop described above, it is necessary to, as it were, 'pin down' this historical trend to something open to detailed critical empirical analysis. For the study of the ideological nature of these managerialist strategies using the 'depth hermeneutic' approach it is necessary to empirically demonstrate the content of the (neo)Human relation discourse. This empirical indication can be gained by demonstrating the significance of the work of 'leading authors' and the (critical) interpretation of meaning found in these key texts. The empirical demonstration of this significance will be made up of 3 elements. This will allow for a degree of generality as well as an appropriate level of specificity. The 3 elements will also enable the triangulation of this empirical demonstration to thus claim a higher degree of justification (Bulmer 1984, Denzin 1989).

Firstly, I shall draw upon secondary sources which have identified writers and texts which are held to be of significance in the (neo)Human Relations discourse. Secondly I shall demonstrate that these writers and texts are discussed widely within their community by developing a citation index. Thirdly through the collection of statistics of library use, I shall demonstrate that the



education of managers into the (neo)Human Relations discourse proceeds at least in part through initiation into ideas developed by these writers and texts. This will not be presented as evidence that these writers and texts are the most referred to, used or discussed. It will be presented as evidence that they are often referred to, used and discussed. It will therefore be claimed that they are significant and characteristic of the (neo)Human Relations discourse. As such it is claimed that a critical theoretical analysis of such texts can legitimately stand as an ideology-critique of the (neo)Human Relations theory and its discourses around the manipulation of subjectivity.

#### **Secondary Sources.**

Pugh and Hickson (1989a, 1989b) provide a description of ...the contribution that many prominent writers have made to the understanding of organisations and their management...the views of leading authors whose ideas are currently the subject of interest and debate...(contributions which) ...continue to form part of the flow of concepts and theories which nurture the field (Pugh and Hickson 1989a. p.1)

Pugh and Hickson identify such 'leading authors' in various fields in management and organisation theory. A specific group of authors within (neo)Human Relations management theory have relevance for us here. Pugh and Hickson group

the 'leading authors' in this field as operating within the general concern with 'People in Organisations'. The authors that Pugh and Hickson (1989b) identify as 'leading authors' are as follows;

**Mayo**

**Argyris**

**Likert**

**Herzberg**

**McGregor**

**Schein**

**Blake and Moulton**

**Fiedler**

**Lawler**

**Kanter**

They also identify the Tavistock group of writers, specifically **Trist and Herbst**.

Huczynski (1993) also provides secondary source data which has relevance for the identification of 'leading authors' in the (neo)Human Relations discourse. In the 'management idea families' of Human Relation and (neo)Human Relations, Huczynski identifies the following as the 'most popular writers', in Human Relations management discourses;

**Mayo**

**Brown**

**Reothlisbeger and Dickson**

and in (neo)Human Relations;

**Argyris**

**Bennis**

**Likert**

**Herzberg**

**McGregor**

**Maslow**

**Schein**

**Blake and Moulton**

The 'leading authors' who occur in both lists, and who are thus agreed upon by both Pugh and Hickson research, and Huczynski research to be 'leading authors' or 'most popular writers' within the general Human relation perspective are therefore;

**Mayo**

**Argyris**

**Likert**

**Herzberg**

**McGregor**

**Schein**

**Blake and Moulton**

#### **Citation Index.**

To begin to confirm this secondary source data through triangulation, I shall now turn to a citation index of these 'leading writers'. This will test the contemporary level of interest, discussion and debate of the work of these writers by indicating the number of times their work has been referred to and cited in academic journal articles. This citation index is developed by using the

BIDS electronic data-base system. This allows the number of citations for each author for each year back to 1980 to be developed. Such a citation index allows us to measure the level of significance of the sample authors/texts within managerial discourse. Such empirical indicators are however not exact and need to be qualified with several points.

1. The citations may not be strictly from managerial discourses, and citations of the sample authors may on occasion be in terms of discourses unrelated to management.

2. The inquiry into the specifics of (neo)Human Relations discourse is what informs this thesis and the citation index as developed through BIDS does not relate only to this particular field of managerial discourse.

3. The citations measured of the sample authors may include citations in articles which are entirely negative or critical of their work and reject their ideas out of hand.

4. Such a citation index measurement can not determine whether the sample authors are the most cited, but only whether or not they are often cited. There may be unknown authors who are cited more often and are more significant in terms of a citation index. This seems unlikely however in that their very 'unknownness' tends to preclude them from being cited often.

5. We cannot determine from this purely statistical analysis determine the level of influence that the sample authors have in managerial discourses, only that attention is paid to their work.

So the data collected through this citation index is not a

definite indication that the sample authors/texts are the 'leading authors' in the (neo)Human Relations field. It can however indicate the level of significance they have in terms of the discourse, and it does offer a way of triangulating the findings in the research of Pugh and Hickson, and Huczynski.

The BIDS citation search was applied to the authors identified in the sample in terms of citations of two of their representative texts. Where only significant numbers of citations for one text were found these were recorded. The representative texts for each author in the sample which were measured for citations is as follows.

**Mayo** - Social Problems in an Industrial Civilisation.

**Argyris** - Personality and Organisation; Integrating the Individual and the Organisation.

**Likert**- New Ways of Managing Conflict; New Patterns of Management.

**Herzberg** - Work and the Nature of Man; The Motivation to Work.

**McGregor** - The Human Side of the Enterprise.

**Schein** - Coercive Persuasion; Organisational Culture and Leadership.

**Blake and Moulton** - The Managerial Grid.

With reference to the texts above, the chart below shows the number of times each author in the sample was cited in each year.

	Total	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989
Mayo	232	8	15	18	14	14	18
Argyris	331	14	14	22	13	14	20
Likert	424	16	22	23	19	24	25
Herzberg	656	14	32	42	29	44	43
McGregor	445	28	25	28	26	27	33
Schein	49	1	0	2	0	1	5
Blake and Moulton	29	0	0	1	1	1	1

  

	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981
								/0
Mayo	19	20	17	16	19	24	11	12
Argyris	23	25	22	34	38	24	34	37
Likert	28	25	29	33	37	38	61	44
Herzberg	47	58	60	45	49	57	73	65
McGregor	30	27	29	31	33	32	46	48
Schein	12	12	6	0	5	2	2	1
Blake and Moulton	4	4	3	4	1	0	6	3

This shows that there has been a significant level of attention being paid to the work of Mayo, Argyris, Likert, Herzberg and McGregor over the last 15 years and that these authors can thus be regarded as being 'leading authors' in managerial discourse, albeit with the qualifications alluded to above in mind. This corroborates the research findings of Pugh and Hickson, and Huczynski. However, the citation index findings tend to contradict the research findings of Pugh and Hickson and Huczynski with regard to

the status of Schein, and Blake and Moulton as 'leading authors'. The citation index suggests that little attention is paid to their work in journal articles. For this reason the triangulated confirmation of these two authors is not possible and they can not be assumed to be a significant element in managerial discourses. For this reason Schein, and Blake and Moulton will be dropped from the sample 'leading authors'.

#### **Statistics on Library Use.**

A further element of the triangulation of empirical data on the nature of (neo)Human Relations discourse used here is the collection of statistics on the use of relevant texts from Nottingham Trent University Library. To a large extent Kuhn's (1970) notion of the paradigm resonates with the notion of the intra-community discourse being discussed here. One of the major points emphasised by Kuhn in relation to the development and maintenance of the 'normal science' which characterises a paradigm is the initiation of new scholars and practitioners into the paradigm. We can gain an empirical indication of the nature of the initiation into the (neo)Human Relations paradigm/discourse by collecting statistical data on the lending of texts from libraries. Nottingham Trent University Library keep such material on computer files and such data was accessed. Such data will give an empirical indication of the authors/texts that initiates into the (neo)Human relations discourse are/were asked to consider and digest.

The figures below show the number of times the work of each member of the sample author/text list was borrowed from Nottingham Trent University Library over the year 1993-94.

Mayo - Social Problems in an Industrial Civilisation	45
Likert - New Ways of Managing Conflict	14
Likert - New Patterns of Management	51
Argyris - Integrating the Individual and the Organisation	18
Argyris - Personality and Organisation	26
McGregor - The Human Side of the Enterprise	33
Herzberg - The Motivation to Work	44
Herzberg - Work and the Nature of Man	77

This shows a significant level of reference to the texts of the sample authors by students being initiated into the (neo)Human Relations paradigm. However students do not always refer to primary texts during their initiation into a discourse, and so it is necessary to construct some way of attempting to explore the use of secondary texts as it relates to this initiation.

In order to attempt this, and to fully triangulate the empirical data from secondary research and citation indexes, the following method was used. After collecting indicative reading lists from general management courses run at Nottingham Trent University, from HND level up to MBA level, a random selection of 25 texts was made which were shown to deal, at least in part with the (neo)Human



Relations discourse. It was assumed that if the scale of borrowing of these types of secondary texts was significant it would support the proposition that the 'leading figures' within the (neo)Human Relations field were of central significance. This is because the secondary texts tested for the scale of borrowing all, at least in part, dealt with similar issues as a matter of central importance. These issues can be shown to revolve around;

motivation.

the integration of the individual.

leadership style.

cultural factors.

personnel management.

The following chart shows the 25 texts selected at random from the indicative reading lists of management courses and the number of times each one was borrowed from Nottingham Trent University Library in 1993-94.

Handy - Understanding Organisations	601
Torrington - Personnel Management	569
Buchanan and Huczynski - Organizational Behaviour: An Introductory Text	384
Morgan - Images of Organisations	258
Peters and Waterman - In Search Of Excellence	231
Child - Organisation: A Guide to Problems and Practice	228
Pugh and Hickson - Writers on Organisations	213
Kanter - When Giants Learn to Dance	177

Armstrong - Personnel Management; A Handbook for Employers and the Manager	159
Pascale and Athos - The Art of Japanese Management	141
Dessler - Personnel Management	134
Handy - The Age of Unreason	129
Stewart - The Reality of Management	105
Kanter - The Change Masters	101
Denison - Corporate Culture and Organisational Effectiveness	98
Schein - Organisational Psychology	87
Handy - Gods of Management	78
Deal and Kennedy - Corporate Culture	75
Attwood - Personnel Management	70
Flippo - Personnel Management	64
Ouchi - Theory Z	47
Kilmann et al. - Gaining Control over Corporate Culture	38
Zander - Making Groups Effective	27
Lawler - Power and Politics in Organisations	24
Lawler - Pay and Organisational Development	17

These statistics may suffer from the same potential inaccuracies as those related to the citation index above. One cannot conclusively say from this data that the secondary texts referred to here are the most borrowed, only that some of the random sample are often borrowed. Such data tends to corroborate the findings of the two other aspects of this triangulated data. Taken together, all three pieces of data show that there are leading themes within the (neo)Human Relations management theory, and that there are 'leading authors' whose work is regularly and

often discussed in relation to this discourse. It may be claimed that such 'leading authors/texts' and the secondary texts which refer to them are therefore empirical indications of the nature of this discourse and the aspects around which it is organised. For these reasons it is justified in taking the texts of these 'leading authors' as indicative of the nature of (neo)Human Relations discourse as a whole. It also becomes justified to approach such 'leading authors/texts' as the object of critical study which can then be related to a critical study of the central features of the whole (neo)Human Relations discourse. That is, we can see these 'leading author/texts' as an objective empirical indication of the general historical background discussed above.

Given this, the following 'leading authors/texts' will be taken to represent the (neo)Human Relations discourse as part of the 'discourse analysis' of a 'depth hermeneutic' and will be subject to critical 'interpretation of meaning' in the light of the 'social analysis' element of a 'depth hermeneutic'. The 'leading authors/texts' are;

**Mayo** - Social Problems in an Industrial Civilisation.

**Argyris** - Personality and Organisation.

**Argyris** - Integrating the Individual and the Organisation.

**Likert** - New Ways of Managing Conflict.

**Likert** - New Patterns of Management.

**McGregor** - The Human Side of the Enterprise.

**Herzberg** - Work and the Nature of Man.

## Herzberg - The Motivation to Work.

### Summary.

Having explored the abstract theoretical work of Marcuse in previous chapters in the context of their relevance for a critique of (neo)Human Relations management theory, this chapter has been concerned to provide a more focused and sustained historical account of such management theory. It has been concerned to highlight some of the general historical and contextual conditions for the emergence of (neo)Human Relations management theory as a specific discourse, with its own internal concerns, logics and imperatives. It has cast a fairly wide net discussing the underlying growth in managerialist concerns to control cultural and subjective aspects of the organisation. It has also been concerned with discussing the specifics of the (neo)Human Relations management theory itself. It has discussed the underlying features, the continuities and internal contradictions of such a managerialist perspective on cultural and subjectivity.

This chapter has also offered an empirical account of the (neo)Human Relations discourse and has highlighted the 'leading text/authors' involved. This will enable a more focused treatment of a discourse analysis required by the 'depth hermeneutic' method alluded to above. After empirically demonstrating the central significance of these 'leading texts/authors' the subsequent chapter deals with

a (critical) interpretation of meaning, in the light of the critical concepts extrapolated from the work of Marcuse. This (critical) interpretation of meaning, in relation to a social analysis is also required by the 'depth hermeneutic' method. Such an inquiry also allows for a clearer and more fully developed critical theoretical account of culture and subjectivity to enable a general contribution the critical theory of organisation facilitated by the application of the work of Marcuse.

## INTERPRETATION OF MEANING

## CHAPTER 9.

### THE CRITICAL INTERPRETATION OF MEANING OF (NEO)HUMAN RELATION MANAGEMENT THEORY.

As part of the 'depth hermeneutic' method for the study of ideology, we now turn to a critical analysis of the work of the 'leading authors/texts' within the (neo)Human Relations discourse. This discourse analysis and interpretation of meaning is set against the Critical Theory discussed in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 and applies the critical theoretical constructions developed in the work of Marcuse. This 'interpretation of meaning' component takes the form of a critical re-appraisal of the meaning, rhetoric and conceptualisations of the (neo)Human Relations discourse. The 'leading authors/texts' identified above provides the empirical indication of the significant elements of this discourse to be analyzed.

To begin this interpretation of meaning we can refer to Huczynski (1993) who highlights the recurring features of the (neo)Human Relations discourse. From Huczynski's discussion of the 'key ideas of (neo)Human Relations theory' we can extrapolated the following as key features around which this discourse has developed.

1. Leadership style.
2. Motivation.
3. Individual needs and personality.
4. The question of human nature.
5. The nature and impact of group orientations upon

individual behaviour.

## 6. Organisational culture.

However this description does not take us very far in developing a critical interpretation of the (neo)Human Relations discourse. The application of the critical theoretical constructs stemming from the discussion of the work of Marcuse for a critical theory of organisations contributes to this, as does the application of the concept of ideology.

Chapter 3 discussed the relevance of the operationalised concept of ideology, as formulated within a general humanist Marxist perspective for the analysis of the (neo)Human Relations theory of organisational subjectivity and culture. The central features of this discussion were,

1. The notion of ideology as the 'solution' in consciousness to the practical contradictions of the capitalist organisation of economic and social life.

2. The notion of 'degrees of ideology' and the centrality of the notion of 'substantive bias' as the way in which degrees of ideology can be demarcated.

3. Ideology as operating through legitimisation, reification, dissimulation, dehistoricisation and universalisation.

4. The 'depth hermeneutic' method for the study of ideology which involves (a) a social analysis; (b) a discourse analysis made up of a critical analysis of narrative structure, argumentative structure and syntactical structure of a discourse; (c) the interpretation of



meaning. In chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, the 'social analysis' of Marcuse identifies the following key theoretical constructs which offer relevance for a contribution to the critical theory of organisations.

1. **New forms of control**, whereby the individual is initiated into the reproduction of their own control. This has a social psychological dimension expressed through the notion of an **external super-ego**. It also relates to the general notion that culture operates in a way which reproduces relations of power and domination.

2. **Repressive humanisation**, as a construct connected to Marcuse's discussion of 'repressive tolerance' and 'repressive desublimation'. Such a repressive humanisation would, if successful be related to the initiation of a **voluntary compliance**.

3. The nature of **technological rationality**, as linked to the nature of 'technical progress' as distinct from 'humanitarian progress', which exhibits the characteristics of one dimensional thought.

4. The '**therapeutic**' function of one dimensional rationality which moves through the rhetoric of the re-initiating the individual into relations of power as a 'cure' to 'irrational' behaviour.

5. The corresponding **rationalisation of relations of domination**.

6. The focus on **one dimensional/plastic language** as it moves through the linguistic/syntactical presentation of discourses 'contained' within the 'closed universe of

discourse' and the 'language of total administration'.

Having highlighted these critical theoretical constructs brought forward from the operationalisation of the concept of ideology and the critical theory of Marcuse relevant for the critique of (neo)Human Relations management, we can now begin to apply them to the specific critical analysis of the sample authors/texts identified as central to the (neo)Human Relations discourse. We can begin this by making some general points concerning the ideological nature of the empirical indicators of this discourse. All the texts in the sample exhibit the following features.

1. An articulation of attempts in theory to provide ideological 'solutions' in consciousness. The discursive rhetoric in the sample is consistently guided by the practical problems that industrial management are faced with given the capitalist organisation of work and society. The expression of this ideological 'solution' takes various forms, but all have in common the attempt to deal with the practical contradictions involved in the following recurring features. Firstly, the contradiction between the managerialist concern to generate a heightened sense of commitment to the organisational task/goal and the need to improve strategies of control. Secondly, the contradiction between the attempt to integrate the individual into the organisation as a system which confirms their continued exploitation. Thirdly, the contradiction between the managerialist rhetoric of self-actualization, personal

growth and self-awareness and the managerialist use of the human individual as a resource to meet the ends heteronomously determined by management. Finally the contradiction between the attempt to initiate a heightened sense of motivation and meaning, and the deskilled nature of industrial work. The sample consistently exhibited an attempt to provide a rhetoric which presented a 'mediation' of these practical contradictions in the realm of ideas, as well as an unwillingness/inability to articulate theories which went beyond this inherent managerialist perspective.

2. Given this, the sample of texts consistently exhibited a 'substantive bias'. The theoretical constructs expressed in the sample revolved around the basic notion that (neo)Human Relations theory was concerned with the generation of ideas geared towards the improvement of methods of control over 'human resources'. This demonstrates an inherent 'substantive bias', over and above a 'formal bias', in that it approaches the human subject as a means to be used and determined in the pursuit of ends determined outside of that human subject. It is this 'substantive bias' which is the essential feature of a managerialist perspective, one which all the sample texts exhibited. Therefore the sample texts exhibit a high degree of ideologicalness. This is also evidenced in the common technological rationality which the sample texts exhibited. This developed through the rhetoric of 'scientific' (or at least 'systematic') theoretical developments geared towards the instrumental ends of predicting and controlling human

conduct. This association with both 'humanism' and '(social) science' exhibits a consistent attempt in the sample texts towards a self-legitimation developed through a pre-established distinction between itself and the management theory classified as 'old', or 'ordinary'.

3. All the sample texts exhibited a dehistoricising reification of the organisation and organisational relations as a pre-established universe of discourse which was taken for granted as a neutral ambit for debate. The sample texts consistently exhibited an unwillingness/inability to step outside this reified ambit of discourse and inquiry into the nature of the organisational system of relations they had taken for granted. This has the ideological effect of universalising the historically contingent organisational relations and dissimulating the nature of those economic, political, social and cultural relations which make up 'the organisation'. That is, there was a consistent neglect of the totality of socio-economic and political relations within an industrial capitalist society which, as it were, 'come before' the organisation.

4. The sample texts consistently exhibited an institutional power attached to their discourse related to the 'scientific'/academic nature of their theory.. This discourse was presented as an embodiment of Reason, reasonableness and objectivity. It was consistently presented as the development of a neutral science and technology in the common good. This feature common to all

the sample texts is evidence of the dissimulation of a capitalist world-view. This also dissimulates the liberal assumptions underlying the unity of (neo)Human Relations theory concerning the neutrality of the enterprise, the commonality of managerialist objectives and the pathology of worker-management conflict. This theoretical colonisation of reasonableness relates to the underlying technological interest in rationalising relations of power and exhibits the characteristics of one dimensional thought.

5. The argumentative/syntactical structure exhibited by the sample texts was consistently couched in terms of an a priori established discourse of 'superior'/'subordinates', management/workers, supervisors/members. This showed the argumentative structure of the sample texts as moving through the establishment of 'self validating analytical propositions', where the basic nature of the inquiry is 'always already present' given the nature of the syntax. Discussions of the (neo)Human Relations theory and changes to this management-worker relations was consistently set against this 'containing' backdrop. The specific syntax of the sample texts consistently tended towards giving voice to a pre-established world-view. The best example of this syntactical evidence is found in the nature of the phrase 'Human Relations management theory' itself. This displays the syntax/argumentive structure which is founded upon the essential assumption of the neutrality of the sample texts developing a theory of the way in which relations between

humans is to be managed. Such syntax/argumentation dissimulates the underlying managerialism of this assumption.

6. In their inquiry into human personality, motivation, human needs, and the group/cultural context of the shaping of the self, the sample texts consistently demonstrated the technological rationality geared towards the development of not only theoretical understanding of human conduct, but improvements in the control of human behaviour. This developed in a way which exhibited a managerialist concern to initiate the human subject into the organisational system of relation as a normal state of affairs. In this way there was a consistent emphasis in the sample texts on the integration of the individual into the organisation. This is evidence of the theoretical development of managerial strategies understandable as 'new forms of control'. Here the human subject is encouraged to internalise the objectives of the organisation as their own. A critical social psychological interpretation of the meaning of this managerial strategy is available through reference to the notion of an external agency of self-supervision, analogous to Marcuse's notion of an external super-ego. Here the individual is encouraged to take responsibility for their own organisational effectiveness, which contradicts their a priori reduction to the status of 'subordinate'. Again the sample texts exhibits the tendency towards the ideological 'solution' of practical contradictions.

7. The managerialist theories exhibited in the sample texts are consistently ideological in that they fail to analyze the totality of organisational relations and contexts within a capitalist organisation of society and the economy. Such a position consistently tends towards a one dimensional approach in that it develops through a self-incurred reduction of theoretical analysis to the pre-established boundaries of the organisation and managerial function.

8. The sample texts consistently demonstrated a technicist concern with the socio-psychological question of individual identity and personality. The instrumental/technological rationality within the sample texts reveals a concern to establish a degree of control over the individual personality, the formation and maintenance of 'identity' and the need for a positive presentation of the self. In various ways, the critical (re)interpretation of meaning of the sample texts confirms (neo)Human Relations management concern to mobilise these socio-psychological and group process into the services of the organisation. Such management control strategies exhibit the attempt to manipulate the conditions whereby individuals could meet these 'existential needs'. Such a discourse also consistently exhibited the theoretical interest in the installation of an 'external' super-ego mechanism geared towards the initiation of the individual into their own control and 'moral' surveillance. In this way such a discourse mirrored the over-determined nature of the

ideological/needs based manipulation of the individual subject. Over and above these general, common features found in all of the sample texts, there were more specific elements which have a bearing upon a critical 'interpretation of meaning' of this discourse. It is to a detailed analysis of these features that I now turn.

### **Repressive Humanisation.**

Mayo's (1949) concern with the 'seamy side of progress' involves his inquiry into developments in an industrial civilisation which culminate in '...the increase in unhappy individuals'. Mayo expresses a 'humanistic' concern with the emotional and cultural plight of the individual in industrial civilisation. This 'humanism' is a repressive humanism however in that Mayo sees the solution to these problems as being located in the re-affirmation of the industrial community and the implicit involvement of a presumption of the 'naturalness' of pre-established power relations within capitalist organisation. (Re)integration into the system is offered as the 'solution' to individual unhappiness.

Mayo writes,

Every social group, at whatever level of culture, must face and clearly state 2 perceptual and recurrent problems of administration. It must secure for its individuals and group membership,

(1) The satisfaction of material and economic needs.



(2) The maintenance of spontaneous co-operation throughout the organisation.

Our administrative methods are all pointed at the materially effective; none at the maintenance of co-operation. The amazing technical success of these war years shows that we -our engineers - do know how to organise for material efficiency. But problems of absenteeism, labour turnover, "wildcat" strikes show that we do not know how to ensure spontaneity of co-operation; that is teamwork (Mayo 1949. p.9).

We see therefore Mayo's overriding concern is with the engineering of a 'spontaneous co-operation', to ensure the survival of the industrial system which a priori tends towards the negation of co-operation and historically rests upon the development of relations of power. The very notion of the imposition of a 'co-operation' which is to be 'spontaneous' is contradictory, is evidence of the wider contradictions of the capitalist economic and social organisation. Mayo is faced with a particular manifestation of this. Thus we see the 'humanism' of Mayo is a repressive humanisation in that it refers to the imposed 'spontaneity' of a heteronomous 'co-operation' within the pre-established universe of these power relations. Mayo reifies the notion of 'teamwork' as a common good based upon consensus, which dissimulates its imposed, engineered nature.

The development of the industrial capitalist organisation

which threatens the 'co-operation' with which Mayo is concerned, is linked to the deterioration of 'human capacity'. However this concern with the 'human' is set against the backdrop of a re-affirmation of the industrial system which so threatens it. Mayo is simply concerned with the more effective management of the contradictions, of the unintended consequences which it throws up. Again we see the nature of the contradiction which Mayo grapples with and the ideological nature of his attempt to 'solve' in the realm of ideas these practical contradictions. Mayo's 'humanism' is repressive in its simultaneous re-affirmation of already existing acceptance of pre-established relations of 'superiors' and 'subordination'. The manipulation of the variables of work design, rest periods, leadership styles and the symbolism of the 'social skills' of the manager are all very much related to the managerialist concern with the prediction and control of the human subject within the organisational setting. The measurement of the 'success' of the 'humanised' management recommended by Mayo is always in terms of statistical data on increases in output rates. This managerial objective is taken, as a self-validating proposition, to be a universal given by Mayo. This concern with job redesign and the development of a 'humanised' shop floor regime as repressive humanism based upon this pre-established notion of raised productivity as a universal given is expressed by Mayo when he writes, for example, that it is '...proper to give the worker control of their rest periods, thereby securing... an eager and spontaneous

loyalty' (Mayo 1949. p.60), an 'eagerness' and 'loyalty' which is linked explicitly and solely to the question of managerial prediction and control over human subjectivity in the interests of pursuing organisational goals.

Argyris (1957) emphasises the 'skill' of the 'human being as a whole' for 'self-awareness' and 'balanced growth'. This propensity is located within the ultimate ability to 'integrate himself with the environment'. Thus Argyris locates 'growth' and the 'human being as a whole' with this integrative capacity. This 'humanistic' concern with the human being and the capacity for 'growth' is however a repressive humanism in that by the integration with the 'environment' Argyris means the pre-established relations of power within the capitalist organisation. Argyris' concern with 'The Human Personality' is linked to a basic managerialist concern with 'morale', 'the organisation' and 'organisational behaviour'. For example, Argyris writes,

Total personality balance occurs when the parts are in balance (internally) and when the personality as a whole is in balance with the world..... Practically speaking, this means the balance....an employee exhibits in his personality..... (Argyris 1957. p.23)

Thus a 'humanistic' concern with the 'human personality' exhibits itself as a managerialist concern with the 'adjustment of employees'. The repressive humanisation of management theory is evidenced by Argyris in that his

ultimate concern is with the theoretical improvement of the facility to control the human subject as 'employee'.

Argyris' inquiry into human needs, relationships, motivation and action is knit to this basic concern, to the managerialist concern to 'predict and control'. Argyris writes 'The purpose of the previous chapter (the inquiry into Human Personality) ...is to lay the groundwork for analyzing some of the causes of organisational behaviour' (Argyris 1957. p. 54). Such an inquiry focuses upon the potential for 'individual and group adaptation', developing the understanding of human motivation and action so as to adapt (repressively control) it, that is to manage it. The 'humanism' of (neo)Human Relations theory can again be seen as a repressive humanism in that, far from advocating human growth, self-development and autonomy it purveys the logic of reducing the human subject to a function of the organisation, to the pre-established status of 'employee' or 'subordinate'.

Given his account of the 'Human Personality', the 'formal organisation', and the problematic nature of individual adaptation to management/organisational formalism, Argyris argues for the necessity of 'informal organisation'. He argues that this allows for the 'expression of human personality' and ensures 'effective adaption' to organisational requirements. Again we see that the 'humanistic' concern with 'expression' is firmly located within a managerialist agenda. Argyris writes for example, ...if there exists no informal organisation, the

employee would soon find himself full of pent-up tension. The human personality can absorb only a certain amount of tension. Past a point... the individual loses his human efficiency. (Argyris 1957. p.231).

The rhetoric is clear, the concern with 'human personality', with 'the individual' is only meaningful for Argyris in as much as it relates to the discussion of 'the employee' and 'human efficiency'. This is a repressive humanism in its concern with the human personality as a function of efficiency pre-established in terms of the requirements of the capitalist enterprise. Argyris' (1964) analysis of the possibility of integrating the individual and the organisation is not in the interests of the expansion of human autonomy. Rather it is concerned with ways in which the adaptation of the individual to the organisational requirements may be achieved. The requirements of the organisation are taken as given by Argyris and form the basis of his inquiry. He writes, 'Individual competence, commitment, self-responsibility, fully functioning individuals and active, viable, vital organisations will be the kinds of criteria that we will keep foremost...' (Argyris 1964. p.4). Thus Argyris demonstrates the pre-established conceptual reduction of the 'human individual' to the status of the 'functioning individual' defined a priori in terms of organisational needs. Argyris is not so much concerned with a humanistic

inquiry into the 'human personality' as with a managerialist analysis of 'competence'.

Likert (1961) equates a movement away from Tayloristic management and 'job-centred supervision' towards a 'employee-centred supervision' as 'humanistic'. This movement is expressed as a movement away from 'unreasonable pressure and implies a humanised treatment of the 'subordinate' through an increase in 'trust', 'confidence' and the tolerance of the 'use of their own ideas'. Likert demonstrates a repressive humanism in that he describes this 'humanisation' of management from within the pre-established system of relations between 'superior' and 'subordinate'. Likert emphasises the benefits of 'unselfishness', 'co-operation', a 'sympathetic attitude', 'democratic attitudes' and an 'interested attitude'. This is a repressive humanisation of management-worker relations in that all such changes of 'attitude' are encouraged as the consolidation of 'superior'/'subordinate' relations and the increase in organisational efficiency.

Concern with human attitude and feeling dissimulates the underlying concern with productivity and increased work performance. Likert writes for example,

**Contagious enthusiasm** about the importance of the work has a marked relationship to the success of an agency...and points to the importance of the managers attitude towards the goals of the organisation. A **conviction** that the mission or task has value adds to the likelihood of **high**

levels of performance (Likert 1961. p.11).

'Contagious enthusiasm' as a factor of 'humanised' management-worker interaction has importance only as far as 'high levels of performance' is concerned.

Likert equates a notion of the 'well being' of the 'subordinate' with the humanistic concern for the worker. This is a repressive humanism in that it is firmly set within both an assumption of the naturalness of 'superior'- 'subordinate' relations, and an assumption of the neutrality of the 'success' of the organisational interest in raised productivity. Both features provide evidence of the underlying repressiveness of such a 'humanism' in that such a position implies power relations and the increased exploitation of the 'human resource' given the capitalist organisation of work and resource distribution.

Likert recommends that the 'superior'- 'subordinate' relationship be one where the communication and consultation initiated by management allows the pre-established 'subordinate' to 'feel' consulted. Likert writes, 'The frequency of work-group meetings, as well as the attitudes and behaviour of superiors towards the ideas of subordinates, effects the extent to which employees feel that the supervisor is good at handling people'. (Likert 1961. p.27). This implies a 'humanisation' of communication within a repressive context of pre-established relations of power and subordination. This is recommended by Likert as a way of fostering 'group pride and loyalty' and so

increasing productivity of the capitalist enterprise. Likert argues that productivity gains will stem from allowing the 'subordinate' to communicate 'upwards'. This will allow '...subordinates to feel free to discuss these matters with their boss', and will purvey a sense of 'influence' to the pre-established 'subordinate'. Thus the 'humanisation' of communication is also evidenced by Likert to be repressive humanisation in that the positions of superiority and subordination are pre-defined and the emphasis is solely on purveying a 'feeling' of influence. Likert (1975) follows similar themes. His 'humanistic' concern with the 'employee' is couched within the desire to alleviate 'conflict'. But this 'new way of managing conflict' exhibits repressive humanisation features in that it is solely linked to the pre-defined managerial agenda of increasing productivity and allowing for the more 'smooth running' of the capitalist organisation. Likert's 'humanism' is repressive as it locates a discussion of the individual within pre-defined management-worker relations and reduces the individual to a discussion of performance. Herzberg (1959) asks 'what does the worker want from his job?' as part of his inquiry into 'job attitudes'. Herzberg exhibits a repressive humanisation of management theory. Firstly his inquiry into human meaning, motivation and attitude is located within a pre-determined managerialist concern with the prediction and control of human behaviour; he is concerned with increased managerial effectiveness in controlling the human subject; and with a general concern



with the organisation as the pre-determined ambit of a one dimensional universe of discourse and inquiry. Secondly, Herzberg's inquiry into human attitude and motivation as part of the development of a managerial strategy of control implies the simultaneous negation of human autonomy as it develops its own 'humanism'. The rhetoric of Herzberg's research strategy which proceeds through the notion that 'workers are asked...' already defines the individual as worker demonstrates a pre-established one dimensional 'closing of the universe of discourse'. Herzberg's overriding concern is with the 'relationship between job attitude and output or productivity (Herzberg 1959. p.8). Herzberg argues that the Human Relations approach to motivation and morale is about ensuring that 'the basic needs of the worker is to be treated with dignity and with an awareness of his unique personality' (Herzberg 1959. p.108). This demonstrates a repressive humanism in that the 'worker' is pre-defined as such, which precludes a sensitive treatment of their 'unique personality'. This is an expression of the practical contradictions of (neo)Human Relations management in particular, and the capitalist organisation in general. The 'dignity' with which the 'worker' is to be treated tends to be negated by this definition of the individual already as 'worker' which also articulates an already present assumption of power relations which require the repression of human autonomy for its reproduction. Such a formulation also implies that the 'treatment' which is to be 'dignified' is within the

purview of established management, which also tends to negate any notion of dignified treatment and sensitivity to 'uniqueness'.

Herzberg locates work (wage-labour) as a potential source of self-actualization and equates this notion of work with 'personal growth'. Again the pre-established relations of power and subordination negate the autonomy upon which self-determination, self-development and creativity, as functions of self-actualization might rest. Herzberg presents us with a bastardization of the notion of self-actualization, which is repressive in its 'humanism' due to its wage-labour orientation. Herzberg's (1968) inquiry into the human subject is located within the one dimension of the requirements of the organisation. He writes 'The essay will seek to define a human being in terms compatible with modern industry' (Herzberg 1968. p.12). This can be seen as a repressive humanism in that the concern with the human being develops in terms of a location within the prescribed theoretical boundaries of relevance to the needs of industry, and secondly expresses the a priori acceptance of the managerial/institutional power to 'define' the human subject.

Herzberg's theory develops in terms of a concern to imitate the human subject into the organisation through '....myths that are favourable to economic growth'. This is evidence of the attempt to provide ideological 'solutions' in the realm of ideas to the practical contradictions of capitalist organisation geared towards increased

productivity and accumulation. It provides evidence of theory tied to the managerialist definition of human 'needs' as equated with the one dimension of the industrial organisation. For example, Herzberg writes,

...business is the dominant institution. It is industry that has been defining the basic characteristics of the human....the prevailing myths that industry has served up, primarily to justify its own views regarding the nature of worker motivation and the nature of man deserve to be carefully examined (Herzberg 1968. p.32).

Herzberg is critical of the 'economic man' conceptions of human nature developed by such industrial 'myths'. However he is only critical of this in terms of its inadequacy for managerial effectiveness. His more 'humanistic' theory of 'human nature' and motivation based upon his hygiene-motivator factors is a repressive humanisation of management in that it attempts to 'improve' earlier definitions of human nature. Herzberg's concern with human motivation for example is geared towards a more complete managerialist theory of the human subject facilitating greater capacity for prediction and control of human behaviour.

McGregor (1960) recommends the managerial respect of 'human nature' as a way of making 'selective adaptations' so as to increase the effectiveness of management and organisation performance. The concern which McGregor shows for the

understanding of 'human nature' is closely associated with the managerial adaptation of the human subject in the interests of increased control. It thus exhibits the characteristics of a repressive humanisation of management theory. McGregor writes 'We can improve our ability to control only if we recognise that control consists in selective adaptation to human nature rather than in attempting to make human nature conform to our wishes' (McGregor 1960. p.11).

McGregor points to the 'social responsibility' of management in exerting an 'ethical code' in organisational relations as a response to the claims of the managerial manipulation of the subject. He likens this ethic of management to the ethics of the medical profession. However McGregor's theoretical developments are still knit to an underlying reproduction of capitalist relations of power and subordination. 'It is natural to expect management to be committed to the economic objectives of the industrial organisation' (McGregor 1960 p.13). In this way McGregor's notion of an 'ethical code' relates to the general ideological 'solution' to the contradictions of denying managerial 'manipulation' whilst requiring such (manipulative) management of human subjectivity in the interests of organisational efficiency and effective control. McGregor's 'solution' culminates in this repressive humanism. He writes 'Management have adopted generally a far more humanitarian set of values; it has successfully striven to give more equitable and more

generous treatment to **its employees**' (McGregor 1960. p.46). The 'giving', from a position of pre-established power, of an 'equitable treatment' to 'their employees' again is the linguistic evidence of the contradiction faced by McGregor which is ideologically 'solved' through the development of a repressive humanisation of management theory.

The development of a 'Theory Y' of management by McGregor involves an expression of this repressive humanisation of management in that it is underpinned by a technological rationality of managing the 'human resource'. Theory Y is consistently knit to the development of 'controllable conditions'; a 'self-direction and self-control in the services of....' the organisation; the development of 'commitment' and the seeking of 'responsibility under proper (that is managerially defined) conditions'; and the 'full expression of intellectual properties **within industrial life**'. McGregor's ultimate concern in the development of Theory Y management is the 'release' of human creativity within 'proper' or 'controllable' conditions. Theory Y is always discussed against the backdrop of the pre-established orthodoxy of managerial power and a capitalist organisation of society.

The release of human creativity within 'controllable' conditions '...indicates the possibility of human growth and development', culminating in,

The central principle which derives from Theory Y is that of **integration**: the creation of conditions such that the members of the

organisation can achieve their own goals **best** by directing their efforts towards the success of the enterprise (McGregor 1960. p. 49)

Again McGregor's theory demonstrates the ideological nature of (neo)Human Relations theory in its 'solution' to the contradictions of self-structure, organisational 'membership'-worker, individual goals-enterprise goal. McGregor posits the potential for their coincidence without discussing the political economy of resource distribution and the alienated nature of industrial capitalist work. 'The concept of integration and self-control carries the implication that the organisation will be more effective in achieving its economic objectives'. This demonstrates a repressive humanism in that such a self-control occurs within the 'economic objectives' of the enterprise, and thus within the pre-established economic organisation designed for the accumulation of surplus value and exploitation as well as pre-established power relations. To conflate the 'individual needs' and the 'organisations needs' reifies the organisation and negates a more fully developed humanism as it reduces the 'human' to that which is to be negotiated with and sanctioned by management.

## **Technological Rationality; 'Technical Progress' and the Rationalisation of Domination.**

Mayo's (1949) notion of progress is a 'technical progress' located within the concern with the instrumental/engineering rationality of social solutions to the contradictions of the 'progress' of the capitalist organisation. His theory exhibits a concern to technologically administer and engineer a 'spontaneous co-operation' through technical means determined through the scientific and controlled manipulation of the objective variables involved in the workplace. This 'administrative' approach evidences Mayo's instrumental approach to the individual and group membership geared toward control. In this way Mayo's technological rationality is seen as an example of the 'triumph of positive thinking' and is one dimensional in that such an instrumental rationality is located solely within managerial concerns as they apply to organisational imperatives. The fragmentation of communities and the loss of co-operation given the logic of industrialisation is taken as a technical issue for administrative treatment within the pre-established boundaries of that very logic. Mayo exhibits a technological rationality in his approach to the communications coming from management as something to be technically 'improved'.

In terms of material production and development, Mayo links science with technology and with an easy assumption of the 'progress' they offer as a common good. This ideologically

dissimulates the non-neutral, sectionally interested nature of much technology, especially as applied within the industrial context.

Mayo also discusses the 'failure' of the social sciences to '...communicate to the student a skill that is directly useful in human situations'. In this way he exhibits a positivistic/utilitarian concern with science and technology and the applicability of science for control. Mayo implies a positivistic linking of progress and order. Again therefore we see in the work of Mayo a demonstration of a one dimensional, 'positive thought' and the inherent technological rationality concerned with the prediction of control of human affairs. This is all geared to the conservative end of re-establishing 'co-operation' within industrial/organisational relations of power. For instance Mayo argues that individuals should be trained in appropriate 'social skills'. Such training would constitute (technical) progress for Mayo in as much as it would ensure the technical adaptation of the human subject to the needs of the industrial organisation. Mayo implies that the 'high administrators' should '...accept responsibility for training them (workers) in new (adaptive) social skills' (Mayo 1949. p.29).

Argyris (1957) refers to science and 'experts' in human relations as progress beyond the 'lay' notion of human relations. This implies a scientific inquiry into human relations which brings progress in terms of the 'expert' control of human relations. This is the hallmark of a



'technical progress', divorced from 'humanitarian progress'. Argyris writes, 'A primary motivation in writing this book (Argyris 1957) is to suggest that 'human relations' is becoming a scientifically rooted field...to understand **why** people behave in the way they do' (Argyris 1957. p.2). A science of 'understanding why' is implicitly linked to the development of a technology for the prediction and control of such human relations. This evidences a one dimensional/positivistic theoretical concern to develop the apparatus of administrative control. Argyris wants to bring 'research in human relations' together so as to provide a 'technical progress', a 'systematic' and 'practical' application geared towards more effective technological control over human affairs. Argyris thus exhibits a technological rationality geared towards the instrumentalisation of human relations, linked to this underlying managerialism and concern with administrative control.

Thus, Argyris (1957) discusses 'The Common Task of the Administrator and the Scientist'. He writes, The administrator and the scientist are basically interested in the same question, **why** do people behave in the way they do in organisations' (Argyris 1957. p.5). In this way Argyris exhibits an innate managerialism and an instrumental rationality, where 'understanding' is coterminous with control. The necessity of 'understanding' is given by the imperatives of the organisation. The concern with 'prediction and control' is intimately connected with the

concerns of the management of the said organisation. Science and technological rationality is implicitly linked with organisational productivity and effectiveness by Argyris. Such a technological rationality is thus related to the rationalisation of relations of power. As Argyris himself puts it, 'Once they (managers and scientists) understand, it is an easy matter to predict and control behaviour' (Argyris 1957. p.5). Thus all this concern with science is located within the pre-established one dimension of organisational efficiency.

The concern the scientise the 'diagnosis' of human conduct is linked by Argyris to a 'progress' through the development of a 'technical plan of (managerial) action' to initiate a change in human behaviour. This 'technical plan of (managerial) action' is located by Argyris as the managerial development of a situation whereby the individual develops '...a capacity to integrate himself with the (organisational) environment'. Again Argyris exhibits a one dimensional argument characterised by an internally self-referential narrative structure focusing on a theory of the management of human relations which only refers to managerialism itself for its theoretical grounding.

Argyris (1964) is concerned to develop a theory which integrates and adapts the individual to the organisation. In this respect the work of Argyris stands in relation to the underlying unity of the (neo)Human Relations perspective in its attempt to provide a technology for the

management of the subject. This is propelled by an underlying technological rationality approach geared to the development of the 'prediction and control' imperatives of management. Such a technological rationality is related to the attempt at the rationalisation of the subject, the rationalisation of relations of power and subordination within the pre-defined ambit of the organisation. In this way the work of Argyris (1964) is seen as one dimensional. Likert (1961) is concerned to increase the effectiveness in '...managing the human resources of the organisation'. He equates the movement away from 'cruder methods' of management towards the measurement of 'motivational forces, communication effectiveness' with 'progress'. This is evidence of the technological rational utility orientation within a one dimensional 'triumph of positive thought' and equates with the notion of 'technical progress' as distinct from 'humanitarian progress'. This distinction and the underlying instrumental attitude towards 'progress' is expressed by Likert when he writes, for example, 'It results in improved performance if the interest of the boss is viewed by the subordinates as genuine and not as an intrusion on privacy' (Likert 1961. p.12).

A technological rationality geared towards the rationalisation of power relations is evidenced by Likert in his discussion of the dynamics of the work group. Here Likert recommends that management should pay explicitly instrumental attention to these dynamics as a way of raising productivity. He writes, 'Superiors who have the

skill to build high peer-group loyalty evidently tend to have the leadership ability to create relatively high performance goals' (Likert 1961. p.32). He also writes 'better interpersonal relationships (are) developed by the foreman's effective leadership'. Likert clearly takes an instrumental/technological rationality approach to the management of human and interpersonal subjectivity, approaching it as a variable to be controlled in the interests of more effective control and raised productivity. Likert sees motivation, loyalty, skill, commitment and 'effective interaction' as 'intervening variables'. Here he demonstrates a pre-established conceptual orientation geared towards the instrumental reduction of human subjectivity to a manageable aspect of the productive effort. He writes, for example, 'To be effective and communicate as intended, a leader must always adapt his behaviour to take into account the expectations, values, and interpersonal skills of those with whom he is interacting' (Likert 1961. p.32). Thus we see Likert's technological rationality approach to human interaction and the instrumentalisation of strategies to make such organisationally located interaction more 'effective'. Likert implies a technology of human interaction.

Likert writes,

...research findings ...provide extensive evidence that productivity can be increased substantially and waste correspondingly lessened when the goals of the work group shift so as to

become more consistent with the objectives of the firm (Likert 1961. p.30).

Here Likert expresses the managerial concern with the rationalisation of the work group and the rationalisation of the subject and subjective attitude. His concern is to initiate a theory and practice of management geared towards the rationalisation of 'attitude' as a specific case of the rationalisation of power relations and the organisational system of relations between 'superiors' and 'subordinates'. He discusses the 'integration principle' in terms of how the managerial facilitation of the rationalisation of subjective attitude will come about.

Likert (1975) also demonstrates a technological rationality approach which tends towards one dimensional thought. His concern to 'manage conflict' is geared towards the development of more effective methods of controlling the 'employee' from within a conceptual universe of discourses 'closed' to become the pre-established ambit of managerial logic and imperatives. The 'humanism' of Likert's theories are consistently linked a priori to this instrumental, capitalist one dimension. His 'new ways of managing conflict' are geared a priori to the development of the rationalisation of power relations already inscribed onto his underlying logic. Thus Likert's rationalisation of relations of power relates to the reproduction of capitalist relations of domination and develops through an internally self-validating reference to the one dimension

of managerial logic.

Herzberg (1959) exhibits an orientation geared towards a technological rationality and a commitment to a 'technical progress' when he writes 'A demonstration of the relationship between the measures of attitude and resulting behaviour is of the first importance. Industry wants to know whether the worker's attitude towards his job makes any difference in the way he works or in his willingness to stick with it' (Herzberg 1959. p. 7). This shows how Herzberg's inquiry into 'job attitudes' stands in an intimate relation with the technical interest in getting workers to work. We have here evidence of a cryptopositivistic theoretical orientation which measures theory in terms of its utility and applicability to the needs of industry.

This technological/instrumental rationality and the 'technical' conception of progress to which it relates is built into Herzberg's 'humanistic' account of worker attitude. Such a technological/instrumental attitude defines his approach to the human subject. This is evidenced when Herzberg writes of '.....supervisory training directed towards improving the interpersonal relationship between supervisors and subordinates' (Herzberg 1959. p.48). We see here evidence of a concern with 'technical progress' in the 'improving' of the effectiveness in the pre-established systemic relations of power and subordination. Herzberg links this 'technical progress' explicitly to a 'new science of man' to 'improve

human relations'. The 'triumph of positive thinking' and its one dimensional nature is seen in the notion that 'improvement' is easily assumed to be something defined in terms of the already established institutional power relations. In this way Herzberg's claims for the application of the 'new science of man' and the corresponding attempt to measure, predict and control subjectivity contribute to the theoretical rationalisation of the human subject and relations of power and domination. Herzberg's (1959, 1968) concern with science and technology is intimately concerned with the 'improvement' of managerial effectiveness. Due to this Herzberg exhibits a technological rationality located within the one dimension of the logic of the capitalist organisation, which is geared towards the rationalisation of the human subject. Herzberg writes 'In this meshing of managers and behavioural scientists, the scientist becomes aware of their presumptions in promising to industry benefits that managers themselves could achieve infinitely better' (Herzberg 1968. p.viii). Herzberg presents industry as having taken a leading role '...in the search for solutions to the problems of man's psychological needs'. Here Herzberg dissimulates the capitalist nature of 'industry' and exhibits a technological rationality approach towards the instrumental manipulation of the human subject given this 'psychological' inquiry. Herzberg comes close to declaring the ideological, substantively biased nature of this when he writes, 'Essentially industry has demanded

that the behavioural scientists bulwark the image of rationality associated with the modern corporation by giving a scientific aura to the management force' (Herzberg 1968. p.ix). Practically and ideologically this implies the development of a managerial technology as a 'solution' in ideas (images) to practical contradictions. This culminates in '...dealing with the Geist of human behaviour in a manner consistent with industry's image of science and reason' (Herzberg 1968. p.x). Thus science and technology are associated with the need for a legitimacy of the managerial function through connecting it with Reason and the 'reasonable' as pre-defined by management itself. Herzberg's theory is substantively biased in that it displays an internal self-validation geared towards instrumental control.

Herzberg writes 'Since total adaptation depends on the gratification of two separate types of needs, a rough operational categorisation of adjustment can be made by examining the sources of a person's satisfaction' (Herzberg 1968. p.81). This demonstrates a technological rationality confined to the one dimension of reducing the human subject to a set of variable to be 'operationalised' in the pursuit of 'total adaptation'. McGregor (1960) discusses 'Management and Scientific Knowledge'. Here he refers to science and the application of scientific knowledge as the hallmark of 'professionalism' for applied ends. McGregor thus presents science and particularly technology, as neutral and value-free and argues that 'It is becoming



possible for the industrial manager to be a professional in this respect' (McGregor 1960. p.3). With this assumption of the neutrality of science and technology as applied to 'industrial management' McGregor dissimulates the power relations inherent in capitalistically organised industry. He also offers the view that technology and the rational application of technology, in his case the technologies designed to produce compliant subjectivity, is universally beneficial. The 'benefits of this technology are offered from a managerialist perspective which ideologically assumes a commonality of interests between management and workers. He writes 'He (the manager) can draw upon a reasonable and growing body of knowledge in the social sciences as an aid to achieving his managerial objectives' (McGregor 1960. p.3). Thus McGregor demonstrates a technological rationality towards the social science coloured by purely instrumental ends of increased managerial effectiveness. This is at odds with the presumed neutrality of technology and dissimulates the power related objectives underpinning the development of the managerial technologies of compliance geared towards the control of the subject. This dissimulates the concern to 'predict and control', and '...to organise human effort in the services of the economic objectives of the enterprise'. McGregor's concern is with the technologies of control and the use of the human subject as a component of accumulation. He links this 'prediction and control' of human effort to the 'progress' of 'higher forms of influence', and thus

demonstrates a 'technical progress' orientation. He links the social sciences specifically to their 'application' in the services of control.

McGregor's theory of management exemplifies the rationalisation of domination. It moves away from the notion that centralised authority and coercion is the only, or the most effective form of control. McGregor sees the value of his theory in the development of 'methods of influence'. He writes 'persuasion, in its many forms, represents another means of social control' (McGregor 1960 p.19). This is presented by McGregor as a more rational, more 'reasonable' form of control.

McGregor's interest in this rationalised control and power, as well as his more general managerialist technological rationality is expressed when he writes, 'The success of any form of social influence or control depends ultimately upon altering the ability of others to achieve their goals or satisfy their needs' (McGregor 1960. p.40).

McGregor defines the industrial enterprise as a 'microcosm within which some of the most basic of these social changes will be invented and tested and refined' (McGregor 1960. p.43). Here he clearly demonstrates a one dimensional thought, which universalises the industrial enterprise as 'society' and presents the 'microcosm' as a neutral arena where managerial technologies of 'influence' will be tested as being in the common good. This dissimulates the power relations, the historical contingency, and the managerial definition of the nature of the technology. This results in

ideological pronouncements and the rationalisation of relations of power and subordination.

### **The 'Therapeutic' Function of One Dimensional Managerial Thought.**

Mayo equates the 'extremist' with the neurotic, arguing that those with such 'extreme' views 'have no friends', 'have no capacity for conversation', no capacity for 'the ordinary in living' and 'regard the world as a hostile place'. Mayo therefore implies that through the adaptive integration of the human subject by management into the organisation, 'therapeutic' treatment for this 'neurosis' will be offered. This 'therapy' is evidence of one dimensional thought in that it proceeds in terms of pre-defined, conservative notions of 'normality', and offers the pre-established system of power relations involved in the capitalist organisation as 'cure'. Mayo's argument moves though an internally self-validating demarcation between the 'irrationality' of views which oppose his, and thus the 'reasonableness' of his own. Mayo's pronouncements are ideological here in that they attempt to colonise the language and meaning of the rational and the normal. In this way he normalises, naturalises and thus universalises what are historically contingent and sectionally interested organisational relations and procedures. By holding up co-operation and the implied consensus as 'cure' he dissimulates the power within organisational life. For example Mayo writes, 'Acquaintance with a certain number of

the most extreme cases is useful and indeed necessary if one is to be able to recognise without fail the **symptoms of social maladjustment**' (Mayo 1949. p.25). Mayo's 'therapy' offered from within one dimensional thought moves through the language of mental health/illness and adopts a psychiatric tone.

The 'counselling programme' central to the Hawthorne studies is evidence of the 'therapeutic' nature of the integrative stance developed by Mayo. Counselling is offered as the 'cure' of pathological behaviour and improved communication between the individual and the firm. This is also one dimensional in that it operates solely within the pre-established boundaries of management-worker relations and organisational requirements. It is one dimensional in that such counselling is offered as a 'safety valve' against 'irrational' conflict and is explicitly disconnected with action on the basis of worker complaints. This formulation equates Reason with political quietude, acquiescence and compliance. Conversely resistance, autonomy and alternative vision of socio-economic organisation are equated with irrationality.

Argyris (1957) argues for an analogy between management and the medical profession, in terms of the common concern to understand and 'cure disease'. '...if the work of the many research centres were brought together in a systematic manner, it could provide the basis for a better understanding and, consequently, a greater degree of practical help'. Therefore Argyris demonstrates the

rhetoric of 'therapy', as the resolution of the 'problems' faced by management. This rhetoric of 'therapy' resonates with the 'therapeutic' function of one dimensional thought identified by Marcuse. Argyris goes on to discuss the relationship between the 'scientific understanding' of human personality developed by (neo)Human Relations management theory and the facilitation of administrative 'prediction and control'. This, for Argyris is intimately linked to the ability to 'diagnose' human problems in organisations. Argyris pursues this medical analogy by discussing how such a 'diagnosis' of pathological organisational behaviour relates to a 'prognosis'. This becomes the designation of a management strategy designed as a 'treatment' , a 'technical plan of action...to solve the problem in the most effective way known'. Again we see evidence of the rhetoric of 'therapy' within a pre-defined discourse of organisational power relations. Argyris' definition of the 'healthy individual' is derived from the nature and imperatives of the organisational setting. The designation of the organisation and successful adaptation of the individual to the organisational definition of normality is held up as the arbitration of 'health' or 'illness'. The initiation into the one dimension of the organisational setting and its performance requirements is designated as the 'cure' of individual 'pathology' by Argyris.

Argyris tends to relate the 'formal organisation' as making the 'healthy' adaptation of the individual to the

organisation problematic. The implication being that alternative organisational designs and management strategies to formalism in organisations can produce more 'healthy' individuals. Again the one dimension of the organisation is offered as 'therapy', (neo)Human Relations management as 'cure'. The 'therapeutic' initiation into the one dimensional universe of discourse and action is located in managerialist informalism.

An example of this is evidenced when Argyris writes of the individual who,

.... may decide "to hell with the organisation", thereby clearing the way ....to fulfil his own interest. This mode of adaptation results in apathy, lack of interest, decreased involvement, and lessened loyalty towards the set of factors rejected. (Argyris 1957. p.78).

We see here, firstly the managerialist 'bottom line' for Argyris. The mode of adaptation which does not threaten the 'loyalty' to the 'set of factors' already established is what Argyris' theoretical discussion is ultimately concerned with. The 'therapeutic' nature of successful adaptation is defined by how well it fits with the pre-established organisational objectives. Secondly we see here evidence of the general focus on adaptation to the system/organisation, rather than the development of a healthy 'human personality'.

All 'negative' aspects of the failure to adapt successfully

are couched in terms of individual pathology of failure. Management is presented by Argyris as the 'solution' to conflict, 'failure' is defined in terms of the individual. We see this expressed as follows. 'An employee experiences frustration, failure, conflict and short time perspective....' (Argyris 1957. p. 78). These problems can equally be presented as managerial problems which the organisation experiences. Argyris' 'therapeutic' emphasis conceals that 'failures of adaptation' threatens the systems equilibrium and organisational productivity. The 'victim' is, as it were, 'blamed' for their own experiences of the system/organisation, re-integration into the very system that they have rejected is offered as 'cure'. Failure to accept this cure of demarcated as pathology. Argyris, in this 'therapeutic' rhetoric exhibits the hallmarks of an internally self-validating, one dimensional argument. It is therefore ideological. Argyris pre-defines the individual as 'employee' and any 'negative' individual response on the part of the 'employee' is then off loaded not as the response to their 'employeeeness', but as an irrational, unnecessary failure as an individual. The 'therapeutic' emphasis by Argyris is thus one dimensional in that the reductive definition of the 'human personality' to the status of 'employee' is also offered as the 'cure' to its own tendency towards conflict.

Argyris (1964) discusses the integration of the individual into the organisation through the language and concepts of one dimensional thought and the 'therapeutic' function of

management. He writes of the '...importance of work in being a **healthy person**', '...a certain amount of tension and frustration actually increases creativity...happiness can be akin to **psychological death**' Thus Argyris (1964) expresses a managerialism in terms of the 'cure' of such ills, as a one dimensional self-validation.

Argyris also discusses how management can involve training individuals to '...develop **realistic** levels of aspiration'. This demonstrates a 'therapeutic' rhetoric which takes a particular definition of 'realistic' for granted which emanates from the one dimension of the closed universe of politics which is the organisational framework. All this is expressed in terms of the development of managerial control of the human subject which will '...tend to **help** men to enhance his own growth and develop organisations that will tend to be viable and effective'. The 'therapeutic' function of Argyris' theory is the initiation of the human subject into the repressive power relations of the capitalist organisation.

Likert exhibits a concern with a 'therapeutic' function of management in terms of how management and 'leadership' can come to be about fostering 'favourable attitudes'. This becomes a one dimensional 'therapeutic' focus in that it revolves around the attempt to 'convert' the individual human subject. In terms of the function of 'leadership' and the impact on subjective attitudes, Likert discusses how management can foster a sense of 'well-being' within the individual 'subordinate'. This focus on 'well-being' is



one dimensional in its location within pre-established 'superior'-'subordinate' relations of power. 'Therapeutic' initiation into this sense of managerially defined 'well-being' consolidates the function of management in reproducing such relations.

Likert writes, 'Hostility, fear, distrust, and similar attitudes tend not only to reduce the flow and acceptance of relevant information, (ie. managerial orders) but also to evoke motives to distort communication'. Thus Likert implies that management's role involves the 'curing' of such 'pathologies', so as to re-establish 'normality'. This 'normality' involves the 'acceptance' of 'information' recognised as universally 'relevant'. This managerialism thus offers this 'cure' to 'hostility, fear etc' within the one dimension of managerial definitions of 'relevance'.

Job re-design and a 'pattern of work' is explicitly presented by Likert as a way in which management can 'help' workers to become more effective 'organisational members'. Likert conflates 'sensitive management', 'leadership skills', the initiation of 'favourable attitudes' and increased productivity as the 'cure' to 'negative attitudes' on the part of workers. Thus the integration into the organisational system which reproduces relations of power and 'subordination' is presented as 'therapy' for the individual. Likert (1975) develops his theory of 'new ways of managing conflict' through reference to the 'unnecessary' nature of management-worker conflict. In this way he tends to present such conflict as 'pathological'.

Given this Likert implies that the 'humanistic' managerial function should revolve around the 'curing' of such unnecessary' pathological behaviour. In this way Likert can be seen as exhibiting the features of a one dimensional 'therapy' as he advocates that the, already defined, 'employee' should be introduced to the consensual possibilities of the modern corporation. This implies that the 'cure' which management can offer to the 'employee' through 'new ways of managing conflict' involves initiating them into the 'rational'.

In terms of his central question, 'what do people want from their jobs?', Herzberg discusses the development of the managerial view of the human subject which '...accepts the seemingly variable nature of the job needs expressed by employees as evidence for the irrationality of employee motivation' (Herzberg 1959. p.109).

Herzberg expresses his view that worker motivation is characterised by 'capriciousness', is 'transient and unsystematic'. Given this, Herzberg goes on to discuss the way in which management can 'communicate' to workers in terms of 'benefit programmes, job security, safety, company leadership in the field and the free-enterprise economic system'. This would initiate a situation whereby management communication would thus 'help' the worker to develop more 'realistic' motivations. Herzberg writes,

The ostensible purpose of those programmes (of management communication) is to keep employees informed, but it is evident that an equal purpose

is to bring to the attention of employees the areas in which they **should** gain their satisfaction (Herzberg 1959. p.109).

Thus Herzberg demonstrates a notion of the 'therapeutic' function of management in rationalising the motivations of workers and 'curing' them of 'unreasonable' motivations. The definition of reason and unreason being a self-validating proposition defined within the one dimension of managerial interests and the 'free enterprise economic system'. The rhetoric of **re-initiation** conveys a managerialist notion of one dimensional thought and its 'therapeutic' function. The use of 're-initiate' implies the ordinary acceptance of the system of pre-defined power relations, and the pathology of resistance to this. 'Therapy' consists of the re-establishment of the 'normality' which is lost. It is this that Herzberg implies when he discusses the 'attempt to educate the worker'. Herzberg recommends a 'positive' rather than 'negative' approach to the morale of workers. With this he implies that management can offer a positive 'cure' to morale 'problems' so as '....mitigate bad hygienic conditions in order to avoid turnover, absenteeism, and individual malfunction' (Herzberg 1959. p.131). With this Herzberg articulates the expression of this 'positive attitude' towards the job as 'therapy' geared towards 'good adjustment'. He links 'negative attitudes' to the 'mentally ill', 'breakdown', and 'the neurotic'. Thus we can see that

Herzberg's management theory relates to the 'therapeutic' concern to initiate the human subject into a managerially defined notion of 'reasonable' behaviour which is located within the one dimension of organisational performance criteria. Herzberg writes, for example 'This implies that the one most significant thing to be done to **raise the mental health** of the majority of our citizens is to **increase potential for motivation in their work**' (Herzberg 1959. p.137).

Herzberg is concerned with what he calls 'motivational problems'. Such 'problems' are presented as pathologies, which are to be 'cured' by managerialist theories of control of the human subject and motivation. Such a 'therapy' is thus tied to the one dimension of a managerial logic. For Herzberg 'cure' is facilitated by 'effective persuasion' and 'myths' which are analogous to a 'counselling programme' geared towards producing a 'psychological unity'. Thus the 'therapeutic' conceptions of Herzberg are geared towards more effective managerial control of human behaviour. The motivation to work, within the pre-defined capitalist organisation, is presented by Herzberg as resulting in 'the psychological growth of the individual'. In this way Herzberg sets up an implicit link between organisational inefficiency and 'problem' behaviour as pathology, and organisational efficiency and work as 'psychological growth' and 'mentally healthy individuals'. Management's role is to offer 'therapeutic guidance to initiate the individual into this one dimension of

organisational 'normality. This 'therapy' relates solely to the one dimension of the pre-established 'needs of industry.

The 'prediction and control' within management is presented by McGregor as 'inadequate' and this 'inadequacy' is linked to 'social problems'. He goes on 'Many of the important social problems of our time reflect this inadequacy: juvenile delinquency, crime, the high traffic fatality rate, management-labour conflict, cold-war' (McGregor 1960. p.4). In this way the inadequacies of managerial control is related to 'social problems', the development of management is implied as the 'therapeutic' resolution of such problems.

In the context of 'methods of influence', McGregor discusses the 'forms of influence' involved in professional 'help'. This 'therapeutic' function moves through the offering of 'professional knowledge and skill'. Within the managerial context this implies the 'therapy' offered by management to workers to 'help' them to become 'better'. In this way McGregor exhibits a one dimensional thought as linked to 'new forms of control'. This develops in terms of 'helping' the individual to 'recognise their needs' manifested as the integration of the individual into the managerially defined notion of organisational 'normality'. McGregor's 'integration of goals' within Theory Y has this one dimensional 'therapeutic' flavour in its claim to prevent 'pathology', 'suffering' and general irrationality.

## One Dimensional Language: Syntax and Argumentative Structure.

Mayo's (1949) discussion of the 'engineering' of 'spontaneous co-operation' is a linguistic expression of the contradictory nature of industrial capitalist 'progress'. Mayo's pronouncements are linked to his attempt to 'mediate' such contradictions. That he offers 'solutions' solely at the level of meaning, is evidence of his ideological stance. His linguistic conflation of 'engineering', 'spontaneity' and 'co-operation' is related to this basic point. The linguistic conflation of a managerialist 'engineering' with a concern to therefore impose a 'co-operation' are mutually contradictory. The managerialist 'engineering' of 'spontaneity' are also contradictory. The managerialist flavour of this tends to negate the 'spontaneous' and the 'co-operative' as well as Mayo's more general 'humanism'. The reference to an 'engineered spontaneous co-operation' which is linguistically conflated with 'teamwork' thus tends to dissimilate the nature of relations of power and subordination which are themselves the structural basis from which the prospect of such an 'engineering' stems.

In the context of Mayo's 'therapeutic' pronouncements the syntax of 'social maladjustment' tends to convey the notion of the 'social' as benign, consensual and neutral, whilst the notion of 'maladjustment' conveys the 'failure of the individual. The 'failure' to integrate the self into the pre-defined 'social' is linguistically expressed in such a

way that 'maladjustment' is a ready-made pathology of the individual. This linguistically enshrines a particular political world-view concerning a consensual society in the verbal dress of a 'humanistic' concern with the well-being of such 'maladjusted' individuals.

When discussing the economic decisions of organisations, Mayo's syntax displays a substantive bias. His discussion is embodied in a different linguistic treatment of the individual and the firm which give an ideological rendition of the 'inevitability' of the logic of organisations and their decisions. Linguistically, individuals are presented as being responsible for their own fate, whilst the capitalist organisation has to act 'within economic contexts'. The language of the socially 'maladjusted' individual can be compared to the following syntax concerning the 'economic system'. Mayo writes, '...in many cases a company struggled for many years to retain as many of its employees as it could without facing economic disaster. But in the existing situation such attempts were doomed to failure (Mayo 1949. p.33). The language for the individual is one of personal responsibility, the language of the organisation is one of inevitability and technical necessity. In this way the activities of managers/administrators are presented as rational within the pre-established context of the (often irrational) economic system. This linguistically reifies the organisational system as technical necessity, as the natural bottom line which should be preserved from

'economic disaster', ie. the reduction of profitability. Linguistically the organisation and management are rationalised and universalised as the 'aberrant' individual is irrationalised.

The argument expressed by Argyris (1957) conflates 'why people behave in the way they do' with the management of workers within organisation. This expresses the syntactical conflation of humanity and human behaviour as simultaneous with their existence as workers/subordinates. The linguistic expression and argumentative structure moves through the conflation of the two is ideological in its consequent reduction of the former to the latter. This becomes the linguistic, ideological universalisation of the managerialist construction of Argyris' argument rooted within the specific set of power relations. 'Why people behave in the way they do...' becomes '....the use of social science to understand behaviour within organisations'. Here Argyris conflates the universal with the particular, the general interest with the sectional interest.

The linguistic expression of the science of human relations proceeds through the rhetoric of enabling 'practical help'. The 'practical', the practices of capitalist organisations is linguistically conflated with 'help', the facilitation of human progress. This linguistically conflates the 'therapeutic' enabling of the human subject with the 'practice' of the organisation. Thus Argyris exhibits the ideological 'mediation' of consciousness/the human with the



capitalist organisation of the material.

Argyris also exhibits conceptual/linguistic slippage moving from the discussion of 'human personality' into an easy conflation of this with 'the employee'. He also demonstrates this linguistic conflation in the equation of the 'personality equilibrium' with the conceptually pre-established primacy of the organisational environment.

Given inappropriate 'individual adaptation' to the organisational environment, Argyris argues that 'the employee may choose to remain in conflict'. Firstly, we have here the syntactical formulation which designates the individual as 'responsible' for conflict, which thereby expresses the ideological presentation of the organisational system as rational. Secondly this syntactical arrangement embodies the notion that the 'employee', as 'subordinate' within a system characterised by power relations can decide to end conflict. These two aspects of this linguistic formulation dissimulate the nature of the systemic environment within which the 'employee' is pre-defined by the management theorists who make these very pronouncements.

Argyris (1964) writes

Organisations are created to achieve objectives that can best be met collectively. This means that the sequences of activity necessary to achieve the objectives are too much for an individual and they must be cut into 'sequenced units' that are manageable by human beings

(Argyris 1964. p.35).

We have here an example of sanitised or plastic language. The language of 'achieving objectives' dissimulates the nature of those objectives of capitalist organisations in accumulating surplus value through exploitation. The notion that organisations meet objectives which must be 'met collectively' dissimulates the nature of class relations and the power and subordination this implies. The language of work 'cut into sequential units' sanitises the discussion of jobs which are deskilled and alienating. The organisational operation which is 'manageable by human beings' is a linguistic expression which dissimulates the pre-established 'superior'-'subordinate' relationship between management and workers. Such a linguistic rendition does not tally with other linguistic formulations offered by Argyris, such as the language of 'human resources' which evidences a managerialist agenda. In this way Argyris both linguistically universalises and dissimulates the nature of specifically capitalist organisations and the managerial function.

Likert (1961) expresses his theoretical constructs through the language and syntax of 'human resources' which is the linguistic formulation of the basic managerialist approach to the human subject as something reduced to the nature of resource. This syntactical expression thus demonstrates the inherently repressive nature of the 'humanistic' approach that (neo)Human Relations management theory adopts. The

argumentative structure of Likert's formulation proceeds through a concern with to '...organise the efforts of individuals to achieve desired objectives'. Here he linguistically sanitises the discussion of the management of workers, and the power relationships that this involves by using the language of the 'individual'. He also expresses himself through a language of the 'desired objective;', which presents the sectional interest in greater productivity and commercial profit as a universal end which is neutral. Likert's syntactical/argumentative structure is consistently expressed in terms of a presumptions of the universality of 'superiors' and 'subordinates'. Despite this language he sees no contradiction between these pre-defined functional relationships and claims that the 'superior' should consider the 'well-being' of 'subordinates'.

Likert recommends that 'supervisors indicate a real interest in the well-being of their employees' (Likert 1961. p.18). The syntactical structure of his argument consistently attaches the notion of ownership to the relationships between managers and workers, and to the organisational duties carried out. Thus he refers to 'their subordinates', 'their department', 'their jobs'. This is a syntactical embodiment which tends to reduce discourse to the one dimension of the organisational and the organisational definition of the human subject. Likert discusses the 'improvement of both attitude and productivity'. Here he linguistically conflates 'attitude'

with 'productivity' and defines both as factors of production. This belies an underlying managerialism in that such syntax proceeds through the assumptions of the naturalness of the modification of 'attitude' to the requirements of increased productivity.

Likert develops his argumentative structure by positing a ready made distinction which he himself introduces between 'Classical Management' and his 'newer theory of organisations and management'. In this way Likert exhibits an argumentative structure which implies his theory is progressive in its movement away from the assumptions of 'convention management'. This argumentative structure tends to both legitimate Likert's view as deserving of attention in their progressiveness and conceals the common managerialist assumptions within both approaches. The managerialist assumption are already present within Likert's Human Relations theory. His argumentative structure attempts to accrue more legitimacy through reference to its own agenda and through the use of 'internally self-validating analytical propositions' (Marcuse 1964), such as the assumptions of the normality of 'superior'- 'subordinate' relations as a priori established facts. The linguistic development of Likert's (1975) theories consistently move through the conflation of the individual 'employee' with 'conflict', and the conflation of 'management' with the 'resolution' of conflict. In this way Likert linguistically associates negative features with the individual and what he implies to be more positive

features with the organisation. He also linguistically links 'conflict' with the pathological, and consensus with the rational. In these ways the syntactical arrangements used by Likert consistently present a particular world-view stemming from a pre-defined managerialism.

The argumentative structure of Herzberg's (1959) theory also develops through a distinction between 'conventional' approaches and his 'New Approach'. Herzberg discusses what he calls the 'major failings of previous work in job attitudes' and the 'inadequate information' they are comprised of. From this Herzberg makes a self-referential claim for superiority given this 'newness'. This claim attempts at gaining increased legitimacy for Herzberg's approach as well as dissimulating the common managerialist assumptions within both 'conventional' management theory and Herzberg's approach.

In terms of Herzberg's syntactical formulations, we see evidence of one dimensional language and 'self-validating analytical propositions'. Herzberg discusses for example the notion of 'job satisfaction'. This is syntactical evidence of the existence of contradictory imperatives facing Herzberg in terms of the capitalistic organisation of work committed to deskilling of work being conflated with the potential for 'satisfaction' and the expression of human potential. Herzberg's linguistic expression provides evidence of the ideological nature of (neo)Human Relations attempt to mediate this contradiction and provide a 'solution' in the realm of ideas. Herzberg also discusses

the 'attitude of the worker towards his job'. As with Likert, Herzberg's syntax falsely locates the notion of 'the job' as something specific to the personality and ownership of the individual which dissimulates the nature of the industrial capitalist organisation of work. This has the effect of reifying the nature of the 'job' as something which the individual **has**, and therefore as something they should have a positive attitude towards. The syntactical structure of Herzberg's argument also involves reference to the 'participation of subordinates'. This tends towards the linguistic expression of the notion that 'subordinates' are able to participate in 'organisational membership' on an equal footing. This notion is already negated by the very definition of their 'subordinate' status. This is further evidence at the level of syntax of the contradictions which Herzberg is attempting to 'resolve' at the level of ideas. As such it is specific evidence of the ideological nature of Herzberg's position.

Herzberg (1968) exhibits a use of ideological linguistic formulations which conflates the 'human' and the 'organisational' into a unity which becomes the 'solution' in the realm of ideas to contradictions stemming from a capitalist organisation. For example, Herzberg conflates 'business' and 'human aspects, 'industry' and man's psychological needs' into this ideological unity. He conflates 'job satisfaction' with 'human satisfaction', and thus by implication the 'job' with the 'human'.

McGregor (1960) develops his theory of management by using

a narrative structure which involves a ready-made distinction between what he pronounces as 'new' and other theories of management as 'old'. He presents his theory as coming out a '...process of rejection and accommodation of previous theories'. This narrative structure, linked to a 'humanism' tends to dissimulate the underlying managerial interests which McGregor shares with 'older' management. This therefore tends to heighten the 'humanism' of his theory. McGregor famously moves from Theory X, as the repository of all that is 'inadequate' in management, to his favoured Theory Y as the repository of all that is 'insightful'.

The syntactical structure of McGregor's work consistently evidences the ideological nature of his presumptions. His discussion moves through the linguistic reduction of the human subject to the status of 'human resources' as something 'owned' by management. Organisational 'members' are conflated with 'altering' the ability of the subject. For example, he writes, 'Many managers would agree that the effectiveness of **their** organisation would be at least doubled if they discovered how to tap the unrealized potential of **their human resources**' (McGregor 1960. p.4). McGregor linguistically conflates the 'needs' of the individual and the management of such subjective factors through integration with the 'needs' of the organisation.

### Summary.

Having developed a 'discourse analysis' as part of the 'depth hermeneutic' method for the study of ideology, this critical interpretation of meaning, through applying the theoretical constructs from a Marcusean analysis shows that the 'leading authors/texts' of the (neo)Human Relations theoretical discourses exhibit ideological features. Above it has been empirically demonstrated through triangulated research, that the texts interpreted can be legitimately held to be representative of the (neo)Human Relations management theory as a whole. They consistently attempt to develop 'solutions' in the realm of ideas to the practical contradictions which face management given the contradictions of the capitalist organisation of society and the economy. General points concerning the ideological nature of this discourse as well as more detailed points show that what are held to be central ideas and propositions for both the theory and practice of contemporary management exhibits a 'humanism' which is characterised by the interest in reproducing already pre-defined relations of power and subordination in the interests of capitalistic organisational efficiency and managerial control.

Specifically we have seen how the ideological nature of such (neo)Human Relations discourse legitimates, reifies, dissimulates, dehistoricises and universalises what are historically contingent, economically motivated power relations. Central to the ideological nature of these



'mediations' in the realm of ideas is the claims for 'humanism' characteristic of this theory which conceals its power oriented nature. The specific application of the social analysis extrapolated from the work of Marcuse shows that (neo)Human Relation management theory clearly exhibits tendencies towards 'new forms of control'; a 'repressive humanisation'; a technological rationality; a repressive tolerance and a one dimensional claim to 'therapeutic' efficacy designed to re-establish power relations; a linguistic construction made up of 'self validating analytical propositions tending towards a one dimensional or 'plastic' language. This analysis therefore clearly shows two fundamental findings. Firstly the ideological nature of (neo)Human Relations management. Secondly the detailed, concrete and applied critical analysis of (neo)Human Relations management theory shows the continued relevance of the Marcusean legacy.

In the following chapter, I shall conclude the findings of the research project as a whole, but also discuss this continued relevance in terms of the potential for alternatives to the repressive humanisation of organisational relations and the possibility of more convivial organisational relations, more humanistic organisational cultures and the expansion of the sphere of individual autonomy.

## CHAPTER 10.

### CONCLUSION.

The discussion in chapter 1 tends to suggest that a 'conclusion' in the orthodox sense of declaring some definite end point held to be proven is somewhat inappropriate. The 'open' nature of a 'work in motion', the epistemological nervousness, the acceptance of the narrative status of this thesis and the rejection of a 'truth-centred' approach all militate against this. However, some points can be made by way of a concluding summary of the ideas and arguments presented here.

Despite the post-Modern and deconstructionist challenges briefly explored in chapter 1, I have held that Critical Theory contributes to the explanation of the social and cultural aspects of organisations which are still intelligible. Despite the epistemological problems associated with this attempt, centred as it is around the concept of ideology, I have attempted to construct a valid research strategy which shows the ideological nature of (neo)Human Relations management theory, as a contribution to a wider debate within critical organisations theory around the question of culture and subjectivity.

In chapter 2, I touched upon some of the salient aspects of this wider debate. I suggested that the take up of the work of Foucault, some aspects of (neo)Marxism, the shifts in Labour Process Theory towards a more sustained

consideration of the subject and some imports from social psychology have been significant features of this. However, this discussion also highlighted for me the significance of the failure of critical organisation theory to take up the work of Marcuse. I contended that the work of Marcuse held various insights which could usefully be applied to the critical understanding of organisational behaviour. I suggested that Foucauldian organisational analysis lacks a social psychological dimension as well as insufficiently deals with the specifically material context of organisations and their management. The application of the work of Marcuse contributes to a fuller development of the theory of the subject in that it offers a more sustained discussion of the impact that authority relations have upon culture and subjectivity. Marcuse's work adds sophistication to neo-Marxist analyses in that it brings culture, language, Reason and a psychological dimension under critical consideration. The take up of Habermasian themes within critical organisation theory is also added to by a Marcusean dimension in that it enables a clearer focus on the political features of organisational discourse over and above the purely academic concerns with the discourses within certain disciplines of research. In these ways I have suggested that the work of Marcuse could be usefully applied to the specific analysis of organisations. Central to this was the application of the concept of ideology. A clarification of how the concept of ideology was understood and used was offered in chapter 3. Central to this was the

linking of power, the presentation of certain ideas and the discursive organisation of such ideas to provide an illusory 'mediation' to the practical contradictions of the capitalist organisation of social and economic affairs. This combined a Critical Theory of culture and Reason with a discourse analysis. Specifically a research strategy devised around a 'depth hermeneutic' was held to be a fruitful way in which to proceed with the critical analysis of the concrete empirical discourses found in the leading authors/texts of the (neo)Human Relations management theory. Such an analysis involved a 'social analysis', a 'discourse analysis' and an 'interpretation of meaning'. The significant feature of a 'depth hermeneutic' is that it relates a specifically discursive level of enquiry to a wider political and societal level. The work of Marcuse to some extent has always been about this, and is thus commensurate with a 'depth hermeneutic'. Critical Theory offers the societal level of enquiry which is vital. Thus in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, a detailed account of the social analysis of Marcuse was developed. This involved an exposition of his social psychological dimension in which he radicalises the work of Freud; the discussion of 'new forms of control', which highlights the ways in which individuals are encouraged to become active in their own control; the specific discussion of culture and language as an aspect of these 'new forms of control'; and the way in which the development of a technological and instrumental rationality leads to a 'technical progress' militating

against a 'human progress' and culminates in a rationalisation of relations of domination.

These critical concepts were taken forward as the social theoretical backdrop for a specifically discursive account of (neo)Human Relations management discourse. Two aspects of the 'discourse analysis' component were demonstrated in chapter 8, firstly the historical emergence of such discourses within the 'human relations movement' which began to pay particular attention to the subjective and cultural aspects of organisations and management, from a purely technical and instrumental perspective. Secondly, chapter 8 demonstrated through an empirical analysis of the (neo)Human Relations discourse, the leading authors and texts and the central themes they identify. This enabled chapter 9 to demonstrate specific detailed evidence of the ideological nature of the (neo)Human Relations management discourse through a critical 'interpretation of meaning' in the light of the concepts brought forward from Marcuse's Critical Theory.

It is these findings which are central to the conclusive remarks made here. Chapter 9 clearly demonstrates two interconnected conclusions. Firstly that, despite rhetoric to the contrary, the managerial techniques found within (neo)Human Relations management can clearly be shown to be ideological in that they form a very clear example of the attempt to 'solve' in the realm of ideas (organisational culture and subjectivity) the practical problems associated with managing a capitalist organisation (ie. developing a

sense of loyalty and commitment within exploitative and deskilled conditions). Secondly, this analysis clearly shows the continued relevance of Critical Theory, and particularly the work of Marcuse for the continued development of a critical organisation theory. This continued relevance has implications for future research agendas within critical organisation theory.

As was highlighted in the Preface, Marcuse's thesis oscillates between the critique of the 'containment' of social change on the one hand. The critique developed throughout this thesis has been an applied example of this. The application of the work of Marcuse for a Critical Theory of organisations as developed here has been largely taken up with a negative critique of the ideological nature of orthodox organisations and in particular (neo)Human Relations management.

On the other hand, Marcuse recognises trends within society which resist such containment and attempt to break it. There is a more utopian element within the Marcusean corpus, which whilst being touched upon above has not been fully explored. Such a detailed exploration is beyond the scope of this thesis, due to constraints upon its length. However it would be an injustice to the richness of Marcuse's work not to say something about this aspect, however brief. I thus make the following points in this context, which also indicate future research possibilities for a Critical Theory of organisations which takes its cue from Marcuse.

Firstly of interest here is Marcuse's concern with 'the radicalisation of the concept of labour' (Marcuse 1966, 1973). 'Bourgeois economic theory' defines labour simply as an economic activity. This economic function takes precedence over social or emotional features. Given this conceptualisation, bourgeois economic theory is able to operationalise labour as a commodity, as an abstraction separated from time, place, function and meanings outside the economic dimension. Thus for Marcuse this conceptualisation of labour is ideological in that it universalises a particular, historically contingent definition of labour. As part of his Critical Theory, Marcuse (1966, 1973, 1979) argues that the distinction between work (wage-labour) and labour (free creative activity) is an important one. He argues for a redefinition through a 'fundamental philosophical discussion' of the concept of labour. Marcuse exhibits a sort of radical under-labourer notion here, whereby the philosophical clarification of the essence and meaning of labour can contribute to the political and organisational redefinition of labour. Marcuse's concern in developing this philosophical discussion is to shift the focus of discussion away from the technocratic concern with what work is in the given organisational conditions towards a discussion of what labour could become. This involves a discussion of how labour might be conceptualised differently and thus practised in and through different organisational structures and relations. Labour is

reconceptualised by Marcuse as the potential for free creative activity and a more 'human' interaction with nature. The re-organisation of the conditions of work, through the removal of surplus repression and the expansion of human autonomy and creativity would thus for Marcuse constitute 'humanitarian progress' over and above 'technical progress' (Marcuse 1964). For Marcuse this is related to the potential for pleasure, related to a 'playfulness' which transcends the historically specific conceptualisations found within the given organisation of work. This could form the basis for a 'philosophical' aspect of debate running alongside the more practical organisational experiments to redesign work conditions to expand the realm of autonomy.

Secondly, in relation to this Marcuse (1968a) argues for a 'new sensibility', the possibility of the free and more reasonable development of humanity, the more beautiful and freer enjoyment of life. The reductive use of culture, found in (neo)Human Relations management is evidence of the managerial instrumentalisation of culture. This is the reduction of the original notion of culture to an operationalised 'new form control' and evidence of the 'therapeutic' socialisation function of one dimensional thought (Marcuse 1964). The development of 'new sensibility' is linked by Marcuse to the re-awakening of an expanded notion of culture and the expansion of the realm of human pleasure and freedom. For Marcuse this 'new sensibility' is evidenced in the politics of new social



movements. In the '...rationality of the imagination' where '...the hatred of the young bursts into laughter and song, mixing the barricade and the dance-floor, love play and heroism...miniskirts against the apparatchiks, rock'n'roll against Soviet Realism' (Marcuse 1979. p.25). This 'expression on an enlarged scale' of group action as guided by this 'new sensibility' is a way of expressing some aspects of what the radically new organisational forms and cultures found in some elements of the co-op movement and the LETS scheme are doing (Dauncey 1988). It is a way of articulating radically different economic and political (power) relations, as well as the opposition to established organisational forms and relations. This often articulates something which we might call an aesthetic rationality, a re-awakened sense of human interaction which connects with a political commitment to human freedom and a group action geared towards putting these values into (organisational) practice. Further research on the relationship between alternative organisational structures and their cultural expressions, wider 'new politics' and this 'new sensibility' would be fruitful.

Thirdly, in relation to this Marcuse (1964, 1979) is concerned with the potential of human emancipation through a political praxis characterised by 'solidarity'. The absence of a notion of totality can give the politics of new forms of rebellion an 'abstract, academic, unreal character'. The development of the radical practices of alternative organisations is thus perhaps one area where

political praxis geared towards the concrete activities for human emancipation is being expressed. For Marcuse the search to identify the agents of radical change *a priori* is to some extent a meaningless activity as the radical social change and human emancipation is created by the act of radicalism in itself. The study of radicalised, politicised organisational activity is the identification of one potential for human emancipation set against these wider concerns, and could again inform future research.

Marcuse's theoretical discussions of the potential for human emancipation also relate to his discussion of the manipulation of human needs and the redistribution of 'existential' resources (Lodziak 1994). Marcuse's work has informed theoretical discussions of 'the manipulation of needs' (Marcuse 1964. See also Soper 1981, Offe 1984, Doyal and Gough 1991, Lodziak 1994). This suggests the general proposition that the management and control of the way in which individuals and groups fulfil their practical needs has as much bearing upon the shaping of individual action and the reproduction of capitalism as does ideology. It also suggests that the redistribution of certain 'existential resources' might culminate in an expanded sense of individual autonomy (Illich 1973, Gorz 1989, Lodziak 1994). By these resources I mean not just the wherewithal for the reproduction of physical life, but also resources necessary for the fulfilment of 'developed human needs' (Seve 1978). Future research into the implications for organisational relations and behaviour given this

resource dimension could be illuminating. It is clear that some redistribution of such resources is under way and may effect the future of organisations.

An 'important' resources is firstly Time. Gorz (1983, 1989) has argued that increasingly in advanced industrial capitalism, the amount of work to be done by humanity, given technological development is less than the amount of labour power in existence. That is, we have seen technological unemployment. Gorz therefore argues that technology offers the potential for the relative liberation of humanity from the struggle for survival (Marcuse 1964, 1966). Given this potential Gorz has argued for the 'abolition of work', and in conjunction with this possibility, the 'liberation of time' (Gorz 1985). Gorz has argued for this politics of time, for the expansion of a genuinely free time, as the central resource for the development of autonomy and authenticity by each active, free individual. For Gorz, freedom is the fundamental existential need and is facilitated at least in part by the practically possible expansion of free time. This is part of the resource bases for an active, rewarding, long-term and dynamic sense of self and self-creation. Some redistribution of work time, given both long-term unemployment in the midst of some working longer hours and attempts to shorten the working week has already been witnessed. Research with this time dimension could be illuminating as to the future of organisations. Secondly, Space. Critical theorists of space want to explore the

possibilities for understanding the spatial embeddedness of social (organisational) relations. These spatial configurations, as they are encountered in everyday life relate to questions of power, democracy and 'social justice'. Observations suggest that often resistive practices and oppositional cultural behaviour occurs in spaces 'left behind' by corporate capitalism. This space can become an essential resource for cultural development. The result can be the reorganization of space so that it becomes a political, material and symbolic resource for the development of autonomy and conviviality (Goodman and Goodman 1947, Lefebvre 1968, 1971, 1976, 1991, Harvey 1973, 1993, Zukin 1982, 1994, De Certeau 1984, Offe 1984, Whyte 1988, Davis 1990, Castells 1991, Smith 1993, 1994, Massey 1994). This spatial dimension could usefully inform the analysis of alternative organisational behaviour, both in terms of the spatial embeddedness of the organisation itself, and in terms of a politics of space within organisations.

Thirdly, 'convivial technology'. It has been argued (Illich 1973, 1978, Gorz 1983, 1989) that the facilitation of 'convivial technology' partially forms the resources basis for the autonomous expression of self-creative activity. This 'convivial technology' may be something as mundane as a community workshop where individuals are able to express their creative potential, and therefore their self-creative potential in the production process geared towards self-determined need and use rather than exchange. Such a

convivial technology, as a resources dimension for the development of autonomy could also involve the social facilitation of such things as safe and easily available transport, laundries, child-care facilities and food delivery services, which would have a dramatic effect on the everyday lives of many, especially women.

The logic behind 'convivial technology' is however being expanded into a more communitarian notion of the development of social relations, through LETS schemes and green community-based technologies (Dickson 1974, Dauncey 1988) in a wider sense. Radical design theorists (Papanek 1974, Schumacher 1978, Whiteley 1993) have developed arguments along similar lines for a radical design which facilitates the practical hardware of life in a way which is appropriate for the given objective, geographical, cultural and infrastructural conditions. This can contribute to the production of the necessities of life in a way whereby individuals can maintain a degree of control over such resources. The point for such radical design theorists is that it is practically possible, given the imaginative use of conceptual and practical resources to maintain certain aspects of material existence in a way which stands outside the heteronomously determined system of exchange relations, technological fetishism and 'false needs' (Marcuse 1964). The relationship between this 'convivial technology' and alternative forms/cultures of organisation which attempt to develop a 'new sensibility' would be an interesting one in its connections to the

alternative economic, political and ecological values which inform them.

Fourthly, at the level of social and political interaction, a resource dimension which is seen as important is that of 'political efficacy' (Pateman 1970) or 'new forms of democracy' (Held & Pollitt 1986). Autonomy and capacity for successful action is seen as having a resources dimension here in that radical democratic control is a resource for expanded, direct and meaningful control over decision making processes. Increased 'political efficacy' is the reality of the input and control which individuals have over decision which effect their lives within the political process. Such notions of radical democracy form a resource dimension for the development of autonomy in that they offer the arena whereby individuals do gain an expanded amount of control over their lives. Developments such as the radical facilitation of legal information, radically democratic co-operatives and Local Exchange Trading Schemes (LETS) can be seen as examples of the embryonic development of this resources dimension in that they are the beginnings of the facilitation of the power of the individual to extend the control over the realities of their material lives (Guttierrez and Whyte 1977, Rothschild-Whitt 1979, MacKintosh and Wainwright 1986, Rowbotham 1986, Dauncey 1988).

Future research into alternative organisational structures and cultures could usefully inquire into the experiments being made to redistribute such 'existential resources'.

The central proposition is that the resource dimensions discussed above, along with others as they develop, are the necessary foundation for the expansion of autonomy. This foundation of resources is needed to counteract the theoretical discussions of human subjectivity which proceed through the rhetoric of the culturally and materially advantaged minority. It can also inform a dialectical politics of objective and subjective issues for the social facilitation of the basis for the more humane way of life which is so evidently possible. It also contributes to the fuller development of a theory of the subject in organisations, in that it offers a materialist dimension to questions of identity and subjectivity. The organisational experiments of new social movements and 'new politics' (Habermas 1981b) are examples of this political and cultural trajectory which need to be more clearly understood and articulated.

Finally a further prospect for future research which contributes to the Critical Theory of organisation is one which takes its cue from the synthesis of Marxism and psychoanalysis offered by Marcuse. This would also deepen the theory of the subject called for from within existent critical organisation theory. This could include research into the psycho-sexual basis for (organisational) sublimation of libidinal energy into work compared with the practical potential for 're-eroticising' work (Marcuse 1973) given the potential for an expansion of autonomy. Further research into the notion of the organisation, its

symbolism and culture as an 'external super-ego' mechanism could also contribute to an understanding of both organisational behaviour and a wider inquiry into the 'acceptance' of ideology (Mann 1986). This research on the levels and types of 'acceptance' would usefully complement this particular study.

However, this study has been more focused upon the 'negative philosophy' of Critical Theory. It has been about demonstrating that ideological pronouncements have and are being made by the leading authors within management theory designed to provide in the realm of ideas a 'solution' to the contradictions faced by management when they attempt to deal with organisational culture and subjectivity. If we return to the quotations at the beginning of this thesis, it is clear that the future of organisations may oscillate between two hypotheses. Firstly that existing authority relation may be consolidated and the potential for (organisational) change 'contained'. This study has shown the discourse of (neo)Human Relations management to be about precisely this. However, it is equally clear that there are alternative organisational forms and cultures which may 'explode' this 'containment' and lead to very different organisations. The future of organisations and worker-management relations will be played out in practical developments, and this is the only real conclusion we can come to.



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