

# Prologue to a Theory of Revolutionary Intellectuals\*

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I.

The following remarks attempt to explore the role of the intellectuals in contemporary revolutionary transformations, and to apprehend their character and meaning. As a whole, the project has two versions of the argument, a weak and a strong one. The minimum project seeks to specify the historical mechanisms that contribute to the radicalization of Western intellectuals and induce them to play a role in the revolutions of the twentieth century. Grounded in the unchallengeable premise that the intellectuals have played a revolutionary role of *some* substance, this version of the argument does not commit itself to a judgment on how *important* their role has been. Considering that certain conventional accounts of revolutions commonly focus on their origins in the suffering of masses, even this weak version usefully focuses on the role of a privileged social stratum, an elite, that remains a repressed problematic of Marxist theory.<sup>1</sup> While both the weak and strong versions of the argument are concerned with identifying the socio-historical *mechanisms* that revolutionize intellectuals, the more ambitious version argues also that their revolutionary role has been an *indispensable* one.<sup>2</sup>

•Copyright © 1976 by Alvin W. Gouldner. All rights reserved. The author wishes to thank Dell Hymes and William Labov for many valuable suggestions that go well beyond their sociolinguistic erudition; and others at the British Sociological Conference in Canterbury on March 27, 1975, the Amsterdam Festival of the Social Sciences on April 10, the meetings of the Transnational Institute on March 8, and the University of Rome on May 2, 1975. None of these, of course, can be held responsible for any continuing defects in this work.

1. My position on the paradoxical role of intellectuals in a workers' movement is outlined in A.W. Gouldner, "Marxism and Social Theory," *Theory and Society*, I, 1, pp. 17-37. The repression of this problematic begins perhaps with Marx's critique of Wilhelm Weitling and Bakunin. This repressed problematic returns, with a mammoth resurfacing, in Maoism and in the Chinese Cultural Revolutions.

2. To attribute power of some degree to the revolution-making role of intellectuals does not imply that it is intellectuals, and they alone, who "make" revolutions. As Max Weber recognized: "Not ideas, but material and ideal *interests*, directly govern men's conduct." However, I focus on "interests" since the task of analysis should be to make visible *systematically obscured* consequential social processes. *Interests* are both consequential and obscured processes. They are systematically obscured by ideological commitments, while contributing to the production of these very ideologies. For a broader elaboration of this "doctrine of recovery," see my "Sociology and The Everyday Life," in L.A. Coser, ed., *The Idea of Social Structure: Papers in Honor of*

There are (at least) two basic types of "intellectuals:" a *technical* "intelligentsia" whose intellectual interests are fundamentally "technical;" and "intellectuals" whose interests are critical, hermeneutic, emancipatory, and often practical-political.<sup>3</sup> My ultimate aim is a social theory which encompasses *both* intelligentsia and intellectuals, and which articulates how, in their very different ways, *both* are revolutionary and contribute to revolution-in-permanence.<sup>4</sup> In this paper, I have little to say about technical intelligentsia and shall confine the analysis mainly to the role of intellectuals.

The final *caveat* concerns the notion of "permanent revolution." There are some who imagine this term to be patented by the Parvus-Trotsky group. The term, however, dates back to the Saint-Simonians,<sup>5</sup> with whom *all* Marxists have had an authentic, lineal connection.

## II.

Intellectuals began their modern historical career as effective revolutionary militants during the bourgeois revolution, when they spoke as "Jacobins" *in the name* of the "people" and the "nation." The emergence and development of Marxism itself is the social product of a network of young intellectuals, the Left Hegelians. Marxism arises in part as an outcome of the propertied middle class's Thermidorian halt to its own revolution. After that, revolutionary intellectuals could *no longer ally themselves with the propertied middle class* and had to move on in search of another "historical agent," an identity they later assigned to the proletariat.

*Robert K. Merton* (New York, 1975), and my "Dark Side of the Dialectic," *Sociological Inquiry*, forthcoming. For a full discussion of my theory of ideology and its relationship to "interests," see my *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology* (New York, 1976).

3. Although I am using Habermas' distinction between different kinds of "interests," to distinguish between different types of "men of knowledge," I do not stress the importance of "control" and the controlled experiment because, after all, biologists, evolutionists, and meteorologists are scientists-without-control. I would define a "technical interest" much more in terms of Thomas Kuhn's notion of "normal" paradigm-centered, hence boundary-respecting puzzle-solving. See J. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Boston, 1968); and J. Habermas, *Theory and Practice* (London, 1974). See also Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, 1970) and the discussion of this in I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge, 1970). For elaboration, see my discussion on these points below.

4. One common view is that the revolutionary potential is invested only in "intellectuals," but not in the *technical* intelligentsia. Without committing myself in the slightest to the crude thesis of a "managerial revolution," I do, however, also reject the equally vulgar, contrary thesis that sees the technical intelligentsia as mere social "agents," fully controlled by economic and political interests.

5. Within the Marxist tradition the idea of "permanent revolution" is grounded in the Enlightenment concept of an unending "progress": it is the *politicalization* of an unending progress. Thus it rejects progress as an automatic, gradualistic perfectionism, thereby entailing struggle rather than immanent unfolding, and discontinuities ("explosions") rather than only continuities. Both views can be found in Saint-Simon and the Saint-Simonians. What Marx and Trotsky did was to insert notions of the specific historical continuity of revolutions from bourgeois to proletarian, into Saint-Simonian and Enlightenment groundings. For some Saint-Simonian elements see *The Doctrine of Saint Simon: An Exposition, First Year, 1828-1829*, Georg C. Iggers, trans. (Boston, 1958), pp. 79, 81, 84.

Whatever its aspirations, however, nowhere in the world have intellectuals achieved "socialism," if this is understood as the *rule* of society by the proletariat. In some part, this is impossible simply because some of the countries in which successful revolutions occurred from 1917 onwards were preponderantly peasant in composition. Even after their revolutions, the proletariat does not have control over the means of production.<sup>6</sup> In every case of "socialism," what has in fact been achieved is the victory of a political coalition in which *a central role* is played by the intellectuals and intelligentsia, transformed by a fulltime involvement in revolutionary politics and resocialized by the vanguard party, by a life of opposition, and by a protective insulation within the vanguard group. Much of the twentieth century's class struggles—particularly those resulting in the capture of state power—have not been *between* the capitalist class and the *proletariat*. The latter is a real struggle, but not the crucial one for understanding modern revolutions. The struggle of peasants for land has been far more important, although nowhere has their struggle ever been successfully consummated as a social revolution in the modern period except in alliance with and, indeed, under the political and cultural tutelage of intellectuals.

Essential to the successful peasant-grounded social revolutions in the twentieth century, then, there has been another kind of class struggle: an internecine struggle *within* the elite produced by the emergence of bourgeois society or in contact with it. In this internecine struggle, one part of the elite has its grounding in property and commonly constitutes itself as a national bourgeoisie. The most fundamental opposition to them has most commonly come from another elite, from another part of the elite, a section of the intelligentsia whose privileges are grounded in their *education, knowledge, culture, and language*. What then develops, often with the intensity characteristic of civil war, is a struggle *within* the ruling group itself as the basis of subsequent revolution.<sup>7</sup>

However, despite this conflict between the national bourgeoisie and the intellectuals and intelligentsia, the two are connected: the latter commonly originate in classes with property privileges or are sponsored by those so

6. The following discussion converges with Sweezy's and Debray's concept of the "substitute proletariat." See P.A. Sweezy's statement in *Monthly Review*, December, 1970. Cf. also S. Mallet, "Bureaucracy and Technocracy in Socialist Countries," *Socialist Revolution*, May-June, 1970. In the framework of normal Marxism it is puzzling as to how a non-proletarian class can, without living a proletarian life, as Sweezy holds, develop a proletarian consciousness. The question therefore arises as to the social character and origins of those who become the substitute proletariat. Our contention is that an important grouping among the substitute proletariat are (sections of) *intellectuals*.

7. Crane Brinton, of course, has long since noted that "the old ruling class—or, rather, many individuals of the old ruling class—come to distrust themselves. . ." Furthermore, revolutions also manifest a "transfer of allegiance of the intellectuals," which, Brinton says, "is in some respects the most reliable of the symptoms. . ." These two processes are really one, an internal rupture in the solidarity of the ruling class. Cf. C. Brinton, "A Summary of Revolutions," in J.C. Davies, ed., *When Men Revolt and Why: A Reader in Political Violence and Revolution* (New York, 1971), pp. 318-319.

privileged. In other words, intellectuals are the *educated* counterpart of the propertied middle class. They usually are the studious brothers and sisters of those who make their careers through mercantile, industrial, or landed property. The intellectuals—including professionals, writers, technicians, clerks, journalists, lawyers, people of bookish culture—are a *cultural bourgeoisie* whose capital is *knowledge* and language acquired during their education.

When Goran Therborn stresses that Marxism was created by an intelligentsia of a very special character, a *non-Bohemian* intelligentsia, he may be read as saying that Marxism was created by an intellectual elite whose everyday life retained a *bourgeois* character.<sup>8</sup> Marxism was not generated by "drop-outs," communitarians, or drug-takers, but by intellectuals of bourgeois high culture and of ordinary bourgeois habits—when they could be afforded. As Eric Hobsbawm put it: "...revolutionary persons are today characteristically intellectuals (which does not mean that intellectuals are characteristically revolutionaries)."<sup>9</sup>

During the Russian revolution, "the leadership of the Bolsheviks consisted overwhelmingly of intellectuals, as did that of all other popular parties of opposition."<sup>10</sup> In the Russian Communist Party's first phase (lasting until Lenin's death in 1924), there is little question that the dominant role was played by the intelligentsia, by theorists of middle class origin, who were well travelled, who spent considerable time in Western Europe, who were more likely to have come from towns and cities, who were cosmopolitan in outlook, and who were highly intellectually productive." The intelligentsia who first dominated the Russian Communist Party wrote prolifically, despite their intense and harried lives. They believed, in effect, that so far as the revolution was concerned it was "publish *or* perish"—although subsequent history suggests that the rule really was, "publish *and* perish."

In the Third World much the same situation has prevailed. Franz Marek

8. G. Therborn, "The Working Class and the Birth of Marxism," *New Left Review*, May-June, 1973: That Marx remained moored in many conceptions of respectability, which some now define as bourgeois biases, may be seen in his relation to his daughters, his son-in-law, LaFargue, to Lassalle, to Helen DeMuth and their illegitimate child, and, alas, in Marx's attitudes toward entire peoples and ethnic groups, including the "Moors" and Jews. The rediscovery of these prejudicial views in Marx has deeply anguished sections of the ethnically committed radical movement in the United States. For an elaboration of this, see Carlos Moore, "Were Marx and Engels White Racists?" *The Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 1974-75, pp. 126-156, the replies to which largely beg the question and simply say, "Marx and Engels are dead."

9. E. Hobsbawm, *Revolutionaries* (London, 1973), p. 245.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 258.

11. Of a total of 25 members of the Politburo of the Russian Communist Party from 1919 to 1950-51, and whose education we know about, nine had a university education, two went to seminaries, six went to high schools or other higher schools, three to trade schools, and five to elementary school. Note, however, this sample even includes the Stalinist period, when intellectuals were scarcely in favor. See G. Schueller's analysis in H.D. Lasswell and D. Lerner, eds., *World Revolutionary Elites* (Cambridge, 1965); and W.E. Mosse, "Makers of the Soviet Union," *Slavonic and East European Review*, 1968, pp. 141-154.

has thus argued, "Spontaneous uprisings of the peasantry. . . show us where the power behind the national revolutions in the colonial countries really lies. It is the intellectual elite who show the peasants how to organize, and do the organizing."<sup>12</sup> Again, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party begins with Ch'en Tu-hsiu who taught at Peking University and who, together with that university's chief librarian, Li Ta-chao, began organizing socialist intellectuals at the University about a year after the Russian Revolution. As a student, Mao organized such groups in Changsha. With a very few exceptions, and despite China's poverty, from about 1921 to 1951, practically all of the Chinese Communist Party's leading members had a university education.<sup>13</sup>

The revolution in Vietnam unmistakably parallels that in China, in the important role assumed by intellectuals: "In traditional Vietnam the leadership of wars of resistance against foreign invaders and their Vietnamese elite collaborators was provided by Confucian scholars who had remained in their villages instead of accepting official posts as mandarins... in the second half of the nineteenth century.. .[I]n time-honored fashion scholars led the first sustained resistance to the French, the Van Than (Scholars' Resistance) and Can Vuong (Loyalty to the King) movements of 1885-97 .. . [T]he heroic words and deeds of that period were added to tales of earlier scholar-led uprisings."<sup>14</sup> Ho Chi Minh, who subsequently synthesized the national, the modernizing, and the social revolutionary aspects of the Vietnamese revolution, was born in central Vietnam. This had been a major center of Can Vuong activity, which, as Christine White notes, "produced a disproportionate number of Vietnamese revolutionary leaders." Most generally, it was the poor, or subsequently impoverished, scholars or their children who, in particular, came to play leading revolutionary roles.<sup>15</sup> As in China, many of

12. F. Marek, *Philosophy of World Revolution* (New York, 1969), p. 98.

13. In his autobiographical comments to Edgar Snow, Mao spoke of himself as "the scholar of his family." Chou En-lai conducted his studies in China, Japan, France and Germany. Chu te, sometimes deprecated as a mere military leader, began his studies at Yunnan Military Academy but also studied in Europe where he, together with Chou En-lai, founded the Berlin branch of the Chinese Communist Party. Liu Shao-chi went to Hunan Normal School and studied advanced economics in the USSR. Of the 29 Politburo members—up until 1965—whose education we know about, only two had no higher education, and only two had only a Chinese education. Twenty-five of the 29 had a higher education in some foreign country. Many studied in Soviet universities such as the University of Moscow, Sun Yat-set University, the Red Army Academy, the Lenin Institute, and others. Indeed, one of the first projects undertaken by Ch'en Tu-hsiu was to organize the School of Foreign Languages in Shanghai and to prepare promising young student radicals to study abroad. But even omitting their higher education in the USSR, some 38% of the early leaders of the Chinese Communist Party studied abroad in advanced capitalist countries. Study in France, in particular, played an important part for many, including Ch'en Tu-hsiu. Ho Chi Minh studied there as well.

14. P. White, "The Vietnamese Revolutionary Alliance: Intellectuals, Workers, and Peasants" in J.W. Lewis, ed., *Peasant Rebellion and Communist Revolution in Asia* (Stanford, 1974), p. 80.

15. This is clearly Pelzer's own point. It may be profitably compared with the class character of the left Hegelians: ". . . the Young Hegelians. . . were not simply a bourgeois intelligentsia. . . they were a *declassé* and radicalized section of the petty bourgeoisie." Therborn, *op.cit.*

the young revolutionary intellectuals received their education abroad, particularly in Japan and France.<sup>16</sup>

The above references to the origins of Marxism and to Third World revolutions exhibit the importance of the intelligentsia in initiating modern revolutions. It will immediately be apparent that intellectuals have also played a prominent role in the other movements and other parties: in conservative, middle class, nationalist, or even reactionary movements with which the revolutionary movement competes and against which it struggles. If intellectuals contribute to the initiation of *counter*-revolution, why make a special point of linking them to modern revolutions? First, it should be said that all political ideologies do *not* in fact have the same opening or attraction to intellectuals. For example, those Nazis who said, "when I hear the word culture, I reach for my gun," had a different relation to intellectuals than did revolutionary Marxists. Nazi intellectuals rarely made it to the top of the party apex and whether administrators or propagandists, there was a "negative correlation between education and party status among the Nazi elite."<sup>17</sup> The fact that intellectuals attach themselves to various parts of the political spectrum reinforces the view that they are a social stratum *shopping* for an historical agent and thus not irrevocably committed only to one class alliance. Thus it reinforces the thesis about the *relative autonomy* of the political role intellectuals may play. As any modern political force, they are a stratum with their own interests and cultural commitments, in pursuit of which they will experiment with different group alliances. At any rate, reference to the fact that intellectuals may be found on both, or all, sides of a political struggle only reinforces my contention that there is an internecine character to modern political struggles: it is not just a struggle between different classes.

To understand the nature of the contemporary revolutionary movements, several things are required. First, a clear understanding that we are talking about the *Third World*, not about Western Europe and North America.

16. Ho Chi Minh's father "sent him to the first high school in Vietnam to combine Vietnamese and Western education." Ho subsequently went to France, first joining the French Socialist Party, and then the French Communist Party, on its emergence in 1920. In 1924, Ho was one of Borodin's Comintern staff in Canton, and began forming the first Vietnamese Marxist cadres. In Canton, Ho taught a course on Revolution and mass organization, which was a training ground for the Indochinese Communist Party's early Politburo, Giap and others being among Ho's students. In various forms, then, public and party schools and schooling were a decisive influence in forging the Indochinese revolution.

17. Lasswell and Lerner, eds., *op.at.*, p. 463. Similarly, more of the leadership of the CCP went abroad to study than had leaders of the Kuomintang—which is not to say that these were the only differences in their leadership's social origins. From the very beginning, the Communist Party leadership had a relatively higher percentage of peasantry, and the Kuomintang a higher percentage of the sons of merchants. The latter's political effectiveness *and* legitimacy was undermined by their use of their political positions to pursue their private economic interests. Clearly, this discussion is situated in the "theory-praxis" problem in Marxism. Without doubt the discussion in the "Introduction" of J. Habermas' *Theory and Practice*, *op. cit.*, is one of the most concise of contemporary, critical accounts available. Cf. also the excellent discussion by N. Lobkowicz, *Theory and Practice* (South Bend, Indiana. 1967).

Secondly, these struggles are not merely *local* struggles; they are not explainable solely in terms of the unique cultural or special structural features of each locality. What has been happening is a world-scale interaction between Euro-American (and, lately, Japanese) technology and culture, and distant, weaker societies penetrated and disrupted at every level by these power centers. Contemporary revolutionary transformations throughout the world are conjunctures of social forces with different time-tables and of different *durées*. On one level, these revolutions are the product of an interaction between *class* tensions *locally* rooted in different parts of the world, and an intelligentsia that has a world-wide character. This intelligentsia is the bearer of a special grammar of rationality, of a special culture of critical discourse partly rooted in the relatively context-free language variants they use, the sharing of which enables them to communicate with and to learn from one another, despite differences in their local culture. To exaggerate: Marxism became the Latin of revolutionary intellectuals throughout the world (when Latin was still a vital, not a dead, language). Marxism transcended local differences and facilitated the communication and sharing of a world-wide experience. Whatever the subsequent reinterpretations, revisions, or adaptations of Marxism by the intelligentsia of the Third World, the social revolutions with which we are most concerned, have been unmistakably influenced by Marxism. Much of the ideological *opposition* to Western imperialism in the Third World has been Marxist or Marxist-influenced, and that very Marxism has been unmistakably a product of the West. It cannot be denied that in the Third World it has been a European model of rationality and discourse that was imposed by Western domination and the school system brought by the imperial powers. Indeed, they could impose no other.<sup>18</sup>

### III.

The foraging spread of colonialism, imperialism, commercialism, and industrialism; the new products for export to old societies and their consequent need for cash to pay for them; the new markets for these old societies' raw materials; the new tax systems to pay for new systems of administrative order, all this and much more rapidly deteriorates traditional religions, subverts folk arts, family systems, local economies, social structures, and ecologies. The old peasant societies begin to crumble, many dissolving into anarchic disorder, as they are opened to exploitation from the West. Much of these developments proceeded from an external stimulus but there were also profound changes internal to peasant societies. Among these, as Eric Wolf has related, was a great demographic upsurge of population, in

18. It should be strongly emphasized that in speaking of the significance of the "Western" Intelligentsia for the social revolutions of the Third World, I am not denigrating the greatness of their own ancient civilizations; I am *not* propounding a cultural imperialism vaunting the West. I am only attempting to give a correct assessment of the influence of European culture, both as a source of *exploitation* and of *resistance* to that exploitation.

some cases facilitated by the conquest of the largest epidemics through the use of Western technologies.<sup>19</sup> There was, too, the increased use of land for commodity production. As land comes under the sway of market forces, land use loses its responsiveness to the needs of the local peasantry working it: "Commercialization disrupted the hinterland; at the very same time it also lessened the ability of powerholders to perceive and predict changes in the rural area. The result was an ever widening gap between the rulers and the ruled." And as Barrington Moore showed (in Wolf's formulation), where "traditional feudal forms were utilized in Germany and Japan to prevent the formation of such a gap in power and communication during the crucial period of transition to a commercial and industrial order," the system did not break down or succumb to radical changes. But where there was no administrative system of military feudalism to bridge the growing gaps, there was "the formation of a counter elite that could challenge both a disruptive leadership based on the operation of the market and the impotent heirs of traditional power, while forging a new consensus through communication with the peasantry. Such a counter elite is most frequently made up of provincial elites relegated to the margins of commercial mobilization and political office; of officials or professionals who stand midway between the rural area and the center... and of intellectuals who have access to a system of symbols which can guide interaction between leadership and rural area."<sup>20</sup> It is my contention, however, that in the beginnings of such resistance, intellectuals are among the central leadership forces, and not just mediating elements.

In many Third World societies, there is little or no proletariat to ground resistance to the West and to serve as the "historical agent" of rational social change. The only groups in these societies capable of seeing what is happening to society as a whole, are—as they often were also in the *West*—sections of the elite and particularly, intellectuals—i.e., school teachers, journalists, clerks, lawyers, persons who had a close view of (and a larger perspective on) the invading economies and cultures, and were not "locals" confined by village perspectives or everyday business routines. Many, of course, became the invader's subalterns, their "native" agents for administrative systems of "indirect control." Some, however, oppose the invaders, resisting because they experience the outsiders as a foreign degradation and exploitation of their society, or because they can find no future for themselves

19. It is ironic that the West's development and spread of lifesaving technologies may, no less than its imperialist exploitation, contribute to ecological disruption and, thereby, to the grounding of revolution. Humanitarian medical technologies may be no less a *cause* of revolutions in peasant societies than imperialist exploitation, but nowhere nearly as much of a *justification*.

20. E.R. Wolf, "Peasant Rebellion and Revolution," in N. Miller and R. Aya, eds., *National Liberation* (New York, 1971), pp. 53-54. An important intervening variable: intellectuals' access to symbol systems is of course access to *political mobilization*. It is precisely their access to the *latter* that grounds the intellectuals' own political position, giving it a measure of autonomy. Symbolic control, then, is a vested *interest* yielding political opportunities for those having it, just as control over capital yields economic advantages to its owners.



in the foreigner's world. In order to meet their own manpower needs, the foreign invaders often set up public schools and, as Edward Shils, C. Wright Mills, and others suggest,<sup>21</sup> begin training a native intelligentsia whose size soon exceeds the career opportunities available to them. The invaders, then, bring their new intellectual culture; they create and school a new, Europeanized intelligentsia in it; and they leave an articulate group of them without any personal prospect except that which may be provided by revolution.

Nowhere do intellectuals seek power in their own name. Being a small group they can mobilize power only in *alliance* with *other* strata. They also create new political structures of their own, rational political organizations such as the "vanguard party." These vanguard structures create an independent organizational power base for sections of the intellectuals, and through which, in turn, they can assert themselves over, routinely mobilize, and develop alliances with other social strata—peasants and proletariat. In a way, the "vanguard" structure is a solution to the historical problem that the Jacobin leaders of the French Revolution—themselves predominantly intellectuals<sup>22</sup>—had never solved, namely, how can an intellectual elite retain influence over either urban masses or the agrarian countryside.

Third World intellectuals are not just pursuing their own vested elite interests. They commonly feel a genuine identification with larger groups and often, indeed, an outrage on behalf of a demeaned national identity. They often give authentic expression to national resistance to exploitation by aliens, and they are central to nationalist movements which often contribute to or converge with social-revolutionary developments. But precisely *whose* interests do such revolutionary intellectuals represent? One answer must stress the importance of different local conditions and the *diversity* of class interests which the revolutionary intelligentsia represent in the Third World. One must say: it depends on who there is to be represented, and this varies with conditions. Commonly, the peasantry, being the major fighting force of Third World revolutions, will be among those whose interests are represented, and whose struggle against feudal holders, money lenders, and landlords is supported. But there is a second answer. This says simply that *whomever* intellectuals represent and *however diverse* the latter may be, intellectuals also, and always, represent their *own* interests. More than that: intellectuals always represent the interests of other classes as they see, define and interpret them; and their interpretations are selectively mediated by

21. See E. Shils, "The Intellectual in the Political Development of the New States," *World Politics*, 1960, pp. 329-368. Cf. also C. Wright Mills, *Power, Politics, and People* (New York, 1965), pp. 413-414.

22. On this, see the good discussion by Lewis A. Coser, *Men of Ideas* (New York, 1970), pp. 146-147. According to Coser, the top leadership of the Jacobins was composed largely of intellectuals whose careers *had* manifested some upward mobility, but whose future ascendance was cut off by aristocratic preemptions; i.e., they were "blocked ascendants." The further study of the diverse career blockages is crucial to an understanding of the radicalization of intellectuals.

their *own* social character and special ambitions as an historically distinct social stratum.

Other groups in an underdeveloped society are often unaware of their society's larger needs, or are not free to act on their behalf. The native bourgeoisie is often small, passive, and dependent on the alien economy; its everyday life is also tied down by the routine chore of administering its own properties. Its political energies are confined by their business. Intellectuals, then, may have considerable autonomy in such a society. Their political initiatives are further strengthened by their ability to see the society as a *whole*, by their sheer theoretic training, by their cosmopolitanism, by their elite position, and by their socio-ecological marginality. Being slighted as intellectuals, of a demeaned nationality, and as a wronged elite whose once high expectations have been thwarted by outsiders, they are often pulled into revolutionary leadership. And they are capable of quickly drawing upon a larger, world-wide, political experience, in part, precisely because of their language skills. They are a more sociologically mature elite than the native bourgeoisie and they soon learn how to use their symbolic skills for political mobilization, once they learn to integrate European critical discourse with their local culture. That last is no small consideration. A European culture, a reflexive language variant and education, isolates intellectuals from the persons in their own local culture, unless they can translate back-and-forth between the two *cultures* and languages.

One consideration needs adding: it is not only that intellectuals *can* take the standpoint of the social "whole," by reason of their structural position or special culture; intellectuals often occupy social roles and have had educations that induce them to define themselves as "representatives" of the larger society or nation, or of the historical or native tradition of the group. Teachers and clerks are often educated to define themselves as having a responsibility to their group as a whole. However "false" such a consciousness may be, it is often real in its consequences, inducing some intellectuals to accept responsibility for and obligation to cultural symbols and social structures that *unite* the group as a whole. It is also in their character as traditional *elites*, as the "wronged" elites of invaded traditional societies, that they have been trained to take the standpoint of "their" people and to see the society as a whole. Historically effective elites are commonly trained, as well as positioned, to take the standpoint of the totality, even if seeing it only from the top down.

There is little doubt that some, and perhaps many, intellectuals become revolutionary or support revolutionary programs, in part because it is in their *material* interests to do so.<sup>23</sup> It is not just "material" interests however, that

23. One is reminded here of Franz Fanon's condemnation of colonial intellectuals as the "spoilt children of yesterday's colonialism and of today's national governments. . . [who] organize the loot of whatever national resources exist. Without pity, they use today's national distress as a means of getting on, through scheming and legal robbery, by import-export combines, limited liability companies, gambling on the stock exchange or unfair promotion." F. Fanon, *The*

govern intellectuals' conduct, but their interests *both material and ideal*; it is also their special vested interest in their education, knowledge, language and culture of critical discourse, and in these as such, and not only in the incomes or prestige they may produce.

IV.

Central to the historical process through which intellectuals come to play a leading role in the permanent revolution of the twentieth century are certain decisive historical episodes and structural developments. A history of the political evolution of modern intellectuals—which this is not—would have to consider the following developments:

1. A process of secularization in which some intellectuals are no longer "organic," trained by, living within, and subject to close supervision by a churchly organization and by which they had been separated from the everyday life of their society.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, secularization de-sacralizes authority-claims and facilitates the challenge to everyday or casual speech made by users of "careful speech" (to use William Labov's terms).<sup>25</sup> Secularization is also important because it is the infrastructure of the modern culture of reflexive discourse with its stress on *self*-groundedness—in Martin Heidegger's sense of the "mathematical project."<sup>26</sup>

2. The rise of diverse vernacular languages and the corresponding decline of Latin as the language of the intellectuals, especially as the language of their scholarly production, increasingly thins the membrane between the *everyday* life and the intellectuals—whether clerical or secular.

*Wretched of the Earth* (London, 1963), p. 39. Despite Fanon's well-known contempt for the timidity and corruption of the intelligentsia, he attributed to them an important role in the social revolutions of the Third World. As one critic of Fanon trenchantly observes, "... implicit in his analysis and his hopes that militants from the African towns will go to the countryside to organize, is the concept that it will be the intellectuals from the towns that will play this role of leadership. ... it is clear that he expects that, from amongst the main body of intellectuals, most of whom he depicts as hypocrites, there will emerge a number who will provide the leadership of the revolution. After all, for whom was Fanon writing? Certainly not for his mainly illiterate peasants and *lumpens*." J. Woddis, *New Theories of Revolution* (London, 1972), p. 397. Fanon's judgment of intellectuals is similar to C. Wright Mills'. Cf. E. Schneider, "The Sociology of C. Wright Mills," in G.W. Domhoff and H.B. Ballard, eds., *C. Wright Mills and the Power Elite* (Boston, 1968), p. 21.

24. Obviously the notion of an "organic" intelligentsia is indebted to Gramsci. Let me add that it is not at all my intention to suggest that modern intellectuals are the secular counterparts of clerics. E.A. Shils, however, stresses this continuity, viewing intellectuals as sort of priests *manquees* whose essential character is their concern with the sacred. Cf. E. Shils, *The Intellectuals and the Powers and Other Essays* (Chicago, 1972).

25. Initially, Labov used "careful speech" to mean careful pronunciation, and the notion of "casual speech" to refer to spontaneous speech, when "minimum attention is being paid to his speech" by the speaker. The emphasis was at first phonological. My reading of Labov, however, suggests that he attributes great importance to speech reflexivity more generally, and not only to careful pronunciation. Thus Labov stresses the *general* importance of self-monitored speech. See W. Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (Philadelphia, 1972), p. 208. This formulation brings Labov's views into clearer convergence with Basil Bernstein's distinction between a restricted and elaborated sociolinguistic variant on the basis of their different reflexivity. With this in mind, I use careful speech, critical or reflexive discourse as synonyms.

26. M. Heidegger, *What Is a Thing?* (Chicago, 1970), p. 97.

3. The breakdown of the feudal and old regime system of personalized *patronage* relations between specific members of the old hegemonic elite, and individual intellectuals or cultural producers.

4. A corresponding growth of an anonymous *market* for the products and services of intellectuals, which allows them to make an independent living, apart from close supervision and personalized controls by patrons. They may now more readily take personal initiatives in the public sphere, while also having a "private" life.

5. The decline of the extended, patriarchal family system and its replacement by the smaller, nuclear family. With declining paternal authority and growing maternal influence,<sup>27</sup> the autonomy strivings of children are now more difficult to repress; hostility and rebellion against paternal authority can become more overt. There is, correspondingly, greater difficulty experienced by the older generation in imposing its social values and political preferences, and in reproducing them in their children. This is not a "Freudian" but a *socio-structural* observation.

6. Following the French Revolution, there is in many parts of Europe, perhaps especially France and Germany, a profound reformation, development, and extension of the system of *public*, non-church controlled, (relatively more) *multi-class* education, at the lower levels as well as at the college, polytechnical, and university levels. On the one hand, higher education in the public school becomes the institutional basis for the *mass* production of the intelligentsia and intellectuals. On the other, the expansion of primary and secondary public schools greatly increases the livings and jobs available to intellectuals.

7. The public, more cross-class, educational system is now insulated from the family system and becomes an important setting for the development of distinct values among students, divergent from those of the students' families. The socialization of the young by their families is now mediated by a *semi-autonomous* group of teachers. While growing public education limits kin influence on education, however, it increases the influence of the state on education.

8. The public educational system also becomes a major *cosmopolitanizing* influence on its students, with their corresponding distancing from *localistic* interests and values.

9. The new public school system becomes a major setting for the intensive *linguistic* conversion of students from "casual" to "careful" reflexive speech or (in Basil Bernstein's terms) from "restricted" linguistic codes to "elaborated" linguistic codes,<sup>28</sup> to a culture of critical discourse in which claims and

27. Arthur Mitzman has stressed the importance of this in the emergence of the anti-bourgeois views of 19th century intellectuals. Cf. also my "Romanticism and Classicism," in A.W. Gouldner, *For Sociology* (New York, 1974). Kenneth Keniston's clinical materials on certain types of new leftists in the later 1960s seem to indicate a similar role for the mother. Basil Bernstein also holds that where social status depends on education, maternal influence grows.

28. See B. Bernstein, *Class, Codes and Control: Vol. I, "Theoretical Studies Towards a Sociology of Language"* (London, 1971); Vol. II, "Applied Studies Towards a Sociology of

assertions may *not* be justified by reference to the speaker's social status. This has the profound consequence of making all *authority-referring* claims potentially problematic and vulnerable. These school-inculcated "careful" modes of speech are, also (relatively) situation-free language variants. Their situation-freeness is further heightened by the "communications revolution" in general, and by the development of printing technology in particular.

10. With the spread of public schools, literacy spreads, and with this, humanistic intellectuals lose their exclusiveness and their market position may be impaired. Humanistic intellectuals experience a status disparity between their "high" culture, as they see it, and their lower deference, repute, income and social power. The social position of humanistic intellectuals, *particularly in a technocratic and industrial society*, becomes more marginal and alienated than that of the technical intelligentsia.

11. The production of intellectuals (and intelligentsia) with their careful speech styles, relatively context-free, elaborated linguistic variants, and their alienating culture of critical discourse, is also continually produced and reproduced by that very ancient structure of contentious social interaction called the "dialectic." Quite apart from *formal systems* of education, this social structure also produces and imprints intellectuals with a special grammar of reflexive discourse that, in various other ways, further estranges them from their *local* culture.<sup>29</sup>

12. Finally, a major episode in the emergence of the modern intelligentsia with a revolutionary potential is the transformation in form of the revolutionary *organization*. Revolution itself becomes a technology to be pursued with "instrumental rationality." The revolutionary organization evolves from a ritualistic and oath-bound secret society into the modern Communists who have nothing to hide,<sup>30</sup> it is exactly that emergence into a (de-ritualized) public life which is implied. Here, to be "public" entails the organization's rejection of "secret doctrines" known only to an elite in the organization—as, for instance, Bakunin's doctrine of an elite dictatorship of anarchists.

Language" (London, 1973); Vol. III, "Towards a Theory of Educational Transmission" (London, 1975). Bernstein's reformulations of his position, his creative response to important criticisms, are best exhibited in his "Social Class Language and Socialisation," in T. Seboek, ed., *Current Trends in Linguistics*, Vol. 12 (The Hague, 1974), pp. 1546-1552.

29. Plato, *Republic*, 437 DE. The dialectic frees *energies* from older cultural commitments and mobilizes them for new ones. The question here, then, is not simply that of the career of an "idea" but of the "libido." The alienating consequences of the dialectic were grasped with firm clarity by its first reflexive philosopher in the West, Socrates, who declared: "Do you not remark . . . how great is the evil the dialectic has introduced.... The students of the art are filled with lawlessness." In short, the dialectic like any elaborated speech variant, is also characterized—as the discourse of reflexive speech—by certain profound *failures and costs*. This, of course, is why Bernstein's distinction between elaborated and restricted linguistic codes cannot be understood as correlated with "good" and "bad" speech. Bernstein himself apparently now agrees. Cf. his article in the volume edited by Seboek, *op.cit.*

30. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Communist Manifesto*. Authorized English edition edited by Engels (Chicago, 1888), p. 58.

The *modern* "vanguard" structure is clearly encoded in Lenin's book *What Is to Be Done?* Here it is plainly held that the proletariat cannot by itself develop a *socialist* consciousness. It is also firmly stated there that modern socialism requires an elaborated linguistic variant, i.e., a "scientific theory" developed by the intellectuals.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, following Kautsky, Lenin believed that Marxism was threatened with intellectual dilution when suddenly exposed to a mass influx of workers. It was, therefore, the task of the new vanguard party to bring socialist theory and consciousness *to* the proletariat from the outside. The vanguard was to maintain a pyramidal structure, democratic centralism, which ensured that the party remained under the firm control of those in possession of "scientific" socialist theory, Marxism, and enabled them to imprint it on the others.

In effect, then, the vanguard party was the instrument of a radicalized intelligentsia. But it was not just a mechanism through which they could mobilize and exert influence over workers. The vanguard was, at the same time, an instrument for the protective insulation, for the political re-socialization and retraining, and for the self-transformation of intellectuals who were already "radicalized." The vanguard party, then, is not simply the instrument or "front group" of intellectuals. It is not just a simple extension of revolutionary intellectuals but is, rather, the organizational mediation of their political praxis.

The vanguard organization has and develops its own logic, and this comes in contradiction with the grammar of the intelligentsia. Intellectuals are centrally characterized by—indeed, have as their common ideology—a culture of careful discourse requiring that positions be defended by reasons given, rather than by invoking the status of the persons advancing them. Above all, the characteristic culture of intellectuals premises that human problems are grounded in an ignorance that is (at least partially) removable by critical, reflexive discourse. In short, the common culture of intellectuals places a central value on talk, particularly self-reflective discourse. But a vanguard

31. Later, in 1914, more than a decade after his *What Is to Be Done?* Lenin attacked Trotsky as singing "old liberal and liquidationist tunes" and for writing an article in which Trotsky, who often manifested contempt for intellectuals, had spoken of the vanguard structure as "an organization of the Marxist intelligentsia." Lenin then asked indignantly whether it was intellectuals who had led the strikes of 1895-96. But obviously, these strikes were fully known to Lenin when he wrote *What Is to Be Done?* in which a central role is assigned intellectuals, just a few years after they occurred. Recent arguments by Louis Menashe and Antonio Carlo, about Lenin's supposed change of heart concerning the vanguard, would be more convincing had Lenin moved to change the *organizational structure* on which his views remained engraved. By 1914 Lenin backs away from the Kautskian position of *What Is to Be Done?* but he never really *theoretizes* a coherent alternative. More importantly: the theory of the vanguard is fundamentally encoded not in a book, but in the *Bolshevik Party*, which Lenin never changed. See V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 343. See also *What Is to Be Done?*, p. 53 of the International Publishers edition. Cf. also K. Kautsky, "Akademiker und Proletarier," *Die Neue Zeit*, April 17, 1901. Cf. also the discussion by N. Krasso of Trotsky's position on intellectuals, in Nicolas Krasso, ed., *Trotsky: The Great Debate Renewed* (St. Louis, 1972), pp. 18ff., and the subsequent discussion there by Ernest Mandel.

structure is an instrument of social combat. Its military exigencies and dangerous position compel it to insist on disciplined obedience to decisions made by party authorities, in part simply because they are superiors. It requires that, at some point, discourse be suspended and action taken. The vanguard organization, then, particularly as coded by Lenin, tends to de-value discourse as an end-in-itself, and, indeed, to demote it, making it subordinate to political practice. Although it starts as the instrument of radicalized intellectuals, the vanguard party thus soon becomes a most recalcitrant instrument. In bringing the vanguard party into being, the intellectuals also bring into being the seeds of their own political disillusionment and displacement. Much of the history of the development of the Russian Communist party, for example, is a history in which the October revolution was made by urban-born cosmopolitan intellectuals but was later taken over by the rural-born.<sup>32</sup>

Given a tightly disciplined vanguard organization of a certain size, there need be no one distinctive set of societal conditions necessary for revolution; all that may be further needed is the instrumentally effective mobilization of such discontent as exists, and the exploitation of some calamitous historical episode. At the same time, it is precisely because of the great initiatives open to the vanguard organization that it need not be the agents of (the need and rationality) of the larger society, or of masses in it. The development of the vanguard thus *empowered* the revolution technologically at the cost of threatening its rationality. In the end, the vanguard organized by a rationalizing elite must demand loyalty to itself as a requisite of successful political combat; it thus becomes an agency of a particularism which, in turn, leads the intelligentsia that once supported it to desert it.

V.

In one way or another, all of these important episodes have contributed to the social character of the modern intelligentsia and, especially, to its

32. It is exactly that demographic transition that is part of the infrastructure of Stalinism. As a successful revolution is institutionalized, the technical intelligentsia tends to replace intellectuals among the leadership corps. One of the latent functions of the vanguard structure is, by habituating them to discipline and hierarchy, to resocialize intellectuals into (administrative and communication) intelligentsia, and accommodate them to bureaucratic styles. In other words, to "discipline" them. As Stalinism develops, the contradictions and tensions between the vanguard party and intellectuals intensify. One critique of Stalinism, from the left, generally implies that it has undermined the revolutionary elan of the vanguard organization. But that does not imply an end to the revolutionary role of intellectuals, as can be plainly seen from the Cuban Revolution. The success of Castro's group of militant, university-trained, military intelligentsia in overcoming the Old Regime in Cuba, and their ability to launch a revolutionary initiative, depended in part on their having been *outside* of the Stalinist "vanguard;" it depended on the fact that they had successfully maintained their autonomy from it and had outflanked it. While the Communist Party in Cuba ultimately inherited the revolution, there is little doubt that this revolution was at first led by a group of intellectuals outside of it. The Cuban Revolution plainly exhibits how a group of revolutionary intellectuals used the vanguard organization and seized upon Marxism itself for the realization of their own radicalized purposes. Rather than being the "tool" of the Communist Party and of Marxism, they made these their instruments.

potential alienation from its surrounding society and its potential radicalization. Since all of them cannot be dealt with, only one commonly neglected aspect will be examined here—specifically, the linguistic dimension.

The modern intelligentsia is the product of an historically unique system of *public* education;<sup>33</sup> of a *mass* education; a (relatively) multi-class education; an education *away* from the *home* and thus away from parental monitoring; of an education subject to the mediation of a section of the intelligentsia, teachers, whose role concept, status, culture of discourse and material interests dispose them to deny or repress class differences, for teachers are often lower in class than their students. It is an educational system in which the *residential* living pattern of a young cohort is also conducive to the development of egalitarian values, class differences submerged under common styles of dress and life. This egalitarianism is reinforced by, and in turn contributes to, a culture of critical discourse in which it is the *argument* that is heeded, *not* the speaker or his *position* in the larger society.

Modern Western, especially secondary and tertiary schools, may be looked upon in various ways. But however various and whatever else they do, they are also *language* schools: schools aiming to produce changes in language variants and discourse rules, to produce a speech conversion in their students. This culture of reflexive discourse is no longer automatically subordinated to the given system of authority and societal stratification. This relative status-autonomy is also reinforced by the value placed by school culture on *reading* and *writing*. Ultimately, then, the modern intelligentsia, and the modern public school system that mass-produces them, are both grounded in the *communications* revolution, and most especially in the revolution in printing technology. The relevant characteristic of the printed object is that it involves the mass production and spread of *writing*, which can be divorced from persons and situational cues. Writing tends, therefore, to be more fully explicated than spoken utterance; its meaning must be susceptible to a relatively situation-free interpretation which is conducive to the development of relatively elaborated language variants.

My own conception of both a *technical* intelligentsia and humanistic *intellectuals*, is specifiable in terms of the importance in their speech of elaborated, relatively situation-free linguistic codes. The view that I wish to advance here is that intellectuals can be conceptualized rigorously only in terms of the "language game" they play, in Wittgenstein's sense, and as a

33. If one inquires into the nature of the differences between intellectuals and others, the usual common sense impression—that this is, somehow, connected with their education and use of books—is not altogether wrong. Churchward is thus *near* the mark when he defines the "intelligentsia as consisting of persons with a tertiary education (whether employed or not). . . tertiary students, and persons lacking formal tertiary qualifications but who are professionally employed in jobs which normally require a tertiary qualification." L.G. Churchward, *The Soviet Intelligentsia* (London, 1973), p. 6. We hold, however, that tertiary schools are significant for some as mechanisms of conversion to the culture of reflexive discourse.



speech stratum. I shall say that a speech stratum is "one all of whose members share at least a single speech variety and the norms for its appropriate use."<sup>34</sup> As a distinct speech stratum, intellectuals tend to use, relatively more than others, a culture of relatively reflexive discourse, entailing, in Basil Bernstein's terms, more frequent use of an "elaborated" sociolinguistic variant and implying a greater value placed on the norms characterizing this speech modality. This elaborated sociolinguistic speech variant is now normally acquired in the reading, writing, and talking governed by modern public schools, particularly universities, or schools channeling students into them. It can also be acquired elsewhere, in other social situations that similarly seek to control and retrain speech, reading, and writing. Thus one of the things that the "vanguard organization" does is to educate workers to use relatively elaborated sociolinguistic variants. Intellectuals are a speech *stratum*, although not always a speech community, because their common speech variant has been derived relatively less from mutual face-to-face interaction with others who speak it and, relatively more, from *reading*. It is thus, that in sharing reference works, common language paradigms, and relatively situation-free, elaborated sociolinguistic variants, intellectuals who have never met acquire a pre-established sharing that facilitates their social interaction should they ever meet. This is connected with the fact that speech variants used by intellectuals are relatively standardized; that is, its lexicon and grammar are articulate, being set down in writings to which members of the speech stratum may refer or cite. They also have a reflexivity concerning it which takes the form of "historicity," an awareness of the origins and evolution of the principles articulatable.

The boundary-defining "speech act" of the *elaborated* speech variant, distinguishing it from the *restricted* variant, is the act of "justification," the arguments given in support of any given contention that is challenged. How one justifies challenged claims is decisive in distinguishing elaborated from restricted speech variants, the former relying less on the social status of the speaker in general and still less on his *ascribed* status, in particular. The careful styles of discourse and relative situation-freedom of the elaborated variants spoken by intelligentsia or intellectuals generate a greater degree of "cosmopolitanism" among them. One expression of this cosmopolitanism is that intellectuals commonly value persons and ideas *not* of their own *birth culture* or their own *age cohort*.<sup>35</sup> To be a modern intellectual, then, means to participate in a world-wide culture increasingly separable from specific local contexts. Those trained to a culture of a relatively reflexive discourse variant are capable of readier communication with others so trained, whether

34. J.A. Fishman, "The Sociology of Language," in T.A. Sebeck, ed., *op.cit.*, p. 1642.

35. This is exactly why the New Left's slogan, "trust no one over thirty," during the 1960s, excited more hostility and suspicion than the New Left anticipated. For the slogan was taken as a subliminal signal of the New Left's *anti-intellectualism*, being seen as a violation of the code hitherto conventional to intellectuals, which required that the *speech*, not the *speaker*, be attended to.

they are a technical or a humanistic intelligentsia, even though they have shared no common lived-history. They may be brought together, then, not by common histories or memories but by a common language and its grammar. Intellectuals, then, may be at home almost anywhere. Or they may be *homeless* anywhere, feeling an alienation from all particularistic, history-bound places, and feeling separated from an everyday life unintelligible except to those sharing the same tacit background assumptions.

Everyday life commonly operates with a stress on "indexicality," saying that everything depends on its surrounding, and on what has gone before. Intellectuals, however, prefer a voluntaristic rule, that words mean what they say they mean—one word, one meaning. Intellectuals thus commonly operate with a linguistic variant diverging from that of everyday life. They wish to be free to re-examine the standpoint of the common sense and of the everyday life. In the culture of critical discourse that characterizes intellectuals there is both elitism, which inevitably places limits on rationality, as well as a stress on *overcoming* the *traditional* limits on rationality normally found in everyday life and in its institutionalized system of stratification. Because of this ambiguity, it is extremely difficult to speak of intellectuals' special culture of discourse without falling into either an anti-intellectual populism hostile to elitism, or into the elitism of intellectuals who are contemptuous of everyday life, casual speech, and "ordinary" people. The real crux of the historical problem of intellectuals and intelligentsia cannot be grasped, however, unless both sides of this contradiction are fully and firmly understood. And this comes down to insisting that they are *both* elitists and the bearers of an emancipatory rationality: their rationality enables a critique of the institutionalized forms of domination, but it also contains the seeds of a *new* form of domination. Their new rationality entails an escape from the constraints of tradition but imposes new constraints on expressivity, imagination, play, and insists on control rather than openness as the key to truth, on a certain domination of nature, including the self, rather than on a surrender to it.

The intellectuals' culture of careful and critical discourse implies that it is now possible for anyone, however rich or powerful, to speak wrongly. It implies that whatever is *may* be wrong or may be made better. What exists is now subject to negation, to critique, and to judgment. A system of norms, a grammar, has thus been partially detached from the institutionalized system of class and power<sup>36</sup> and now claims authority and the right to sit in judgment, even over certain of the actions of the upper class and power-elites. (Where grammar still exists, writes Nietzsche, god is not yet dead.) Yet, in setting themselves up as judges of established systems of stratification, the speakers of the new grammar, the intellectuals, only undermine *traditional*

36. The tensions between a semi-autonomous system of prestige and the other two basic stratificational dimensions, class and power, are discussed systematically in A.W. Gouldner, *Enter Plato* (New York, 1965), pp. 314-319.

inequities, but they tacitly affirm a method which is itself the standard of a new inequality. To speak well is better than to speak poorly, they imply. To speak and live with reflexive self-examination is better than living an unexamined life, they affirm. Philosophy is better than art, they hold. Thus even as the traditional inequities are subverted, a new hierarchy of the knowing, the knowledgeable, the reflexive, and insightful is silently inaugurated. This is a central contradiction of emancipatory intellectuals—the new universal class in embryo—that brings a new darkness at noon.

A culture of reflexive discourse and the maturation of a situation-free speech variant legitimates the taking of a "purely" *theoretical* attitude toward something; it requires that the speaker be able to formulate—in Peter McHugh's terms<sup>37</sup>—what he is doing in some rule, thus heightening the split between theory and practice. Reflexive styles of discourse are those in which speakers are judged competent to the degree that they *know* and can *speak* its rules, rather than just *happening* to conform to them. It implies speakers capable of adopting and envaluing a theoretical attitude. It is perhaps now becoming clearer how situation-free language variants are implicated in some of the role styles that characterize intellectuals. Exalting theory over practice, discourse over action, intellectuals have long believed that those who know the rule, the theory by which they speak and act, are superior types because they lead an *examined* life. Such a theoretical attitude is sometimes concerned less with the *success* of a practice than that, successful or not, "praxis" should have submitted itself to a reasonable rule. And insofar as intellectuals are concerned not just with success, but with doing things in the "*right*" way and for the right reason, we may say that they are open to a certain *sectarianism*, if by that we understand placing priority on doctrinal conformity *per se*. Sectarianism is theoreticity ritualized.

## VI.

It seems, then, that *political* implications are inherent in a commitment to a culture of critical speech and to situation-free linguistic variants. We begin to glimpse how permanent revolution is grounded (in part) in the linguistic variants and culture of reflexive discourse characteristic of the intellectuals. A relatively situation-free linguistic variant fosters an alienation from *conventional* cultures and from conventional instrumentalities. This may take the form of a continuous technological rationalization, as by engineers, technicians, or experts. Here there is a kind of permanent revolution against the technology and culture in being, which operates within and tacitly *accepts* the master political and economic institutions. It is in this and other ways limited. On the other side, this discourse-and-language fostered alienation—in the case of intellectuals—is also conducive to a politically revolutionizing potential that *rejects* the conventional political and economic institutions. In

37. P. McHugh, "A Common-Sense Perception of Deviance," in H.P. Dreitzel, ed., *Recent Sociology*, No. 2 (London, 1970), pp. 165ff.

seeing theoreticity, reflexivity, sectarianism, elitism, and affect-repression as implicated in critical speech styles, we begin to explore some of the ambiguous sources of intellectuals' opening toward a radical *anti-status quo* politics. A focus on the culture of critical discourse and the linguistic dimension promises to provide a basis for a *unified* theory of the Western intelligentsia, technical and humanistic, and of their readiness to act against traditional cultures and established social structures.

The distanced and alienated positioning of "intellectuals," in relation to the culture of everyday life, applies also to their distancing from the *conventional* epistemological, methodological, and science-producing canons of scholarly communities. Alternately stated: intellectuals are those who are readier to engage in a critique of conventional knowledge and knowledge-generating institutions, including those paradigms that are the consensual ideals of scholarly communities, and of the elaborated variants which they speak. Scholars and scientists are intellectuals insofar as they adopt the standpoint of "critique" to the *paradigms* and elaborated speech variants of their respective domains of scholarship and science. In *that* special sense, intellectuals may adopt—as Nisbet emphasizes—an "adversary" relationship to their society in general and to knowledge paradigms in particular. Unlike Nisbet's claim, however, we see both dispositions grounded in their education-implanted culture of reflexive discourse, in their historical grammar of rationality, and thus as closely linked to and not divorced from their character as "men of knowledge." Therefore, Nisbet's claim that intellectuals have a hostility to knowledge *as such* must be rejected.<sup>38</sup>

38. R.A. Nisbet, "Review Symposium," *American Journal of Sociology*, November, 1973, pp. 712ff. Nisbet correctly notes that there are certain similarities and continuities among the Sophists of fifth century B.C. Athens, "the Greek rhetoricians in Rome after Rome's conquest of the world, the humanists of the Italian Renaissance, . . . the *philosophes* of the French 18th century, the denizens of Europe's coffee houses around 1848, and, far from least, the intellectuals of our day in New York, London, Paris, and other capitals. . . we have here a recurrent social type in history" (p. 715). I concur. Indeed, what I have done here is to establish the *grounding* of this continuity in terms of intellectuals' common sharing of an elaborated sociolinguistic variant and its culture of reflexive discourse. I part company with Nisbet, however, when he holds that the communality among these men was "their almost uniformly hostile and contemptuous attitude toward men of knowledge as such. . . the basic rootlessness of mind and conscience, the clear tendency to flout the establishment, to assume more often than not [an] adversary position toward the official and the conventional, and to proffer instant reason or intuition in place of either traditional authority or the kind of knowledge that goes into scholarship and science" (*ibid.*). This is all a bit breath-taking. How much does anyone really know about the ancient Sophists, on the basis of their own work and which is not derived mainly from their *enemies*, such as Socrates and Plato? How, for instance, would Nisbet like to have his scholarly contribution judged by Marcuse? This, in effect, was what happened to the Sophists, who were only wandering scholars before the time of fixed academies and were surely among the most learned men of *their* time. Indeed, in their tolerance of "rhetoric," certain Sophists affirmed a "value free" position not unlike that of normal academic sociology today. Even on Plato's suspect account, surely the sophist Protagoras was an immensely learned man. Quite apart from Voltaire's wit, surely he contributed to the development of the "new," modern historiography as much as any scholar of *his* period—at least, according to Cassirer. And can we really shunt aside the *philosophes* as men to be remembered only for their (very temperate) politics? May we reasonably claim that D'Alembert, D'Holbach, Diderot, and Montesquieu were intellectually trifling—to say nothing

Intellectuals do not reject scholarship as such but the "normalization" of enquiry—in Thomas Kuhn's sense of a "normal" science. Such normal science operates within a paradigm that the scholarly community takes as given and whose limits and boundaries it does not prolematize. The rejection of the in-paradigm puzzle-solving of normal science is precisely one of the factors involved in "revolutions," and other changes, in science and scholarship. This rejection entails a responsiveness to the historical crisis of a conventional scholarly tradition, rather than a contempt of scholarship as such. In effect, then, "intellectuals" are those whose intellectual work has the character of critical inquiry. This, in turn, implies that they focus on and are capable of moving across the boundaries of normal science with its normal division of labor. Paradoxically, then, critique is an instrument of synthesis. Intellectuals, then, are scholars who reject, make problematic, or critically focalize the boundaries hitherto implicit in normal scholarship and the scholarly paradigms on which the scholarly community had, till then, centered, and their elaborated speech variants. Searching out and transcending the conventional boundaries of "normal" scholarship, they are an irritant to conventional scholars, who condemn them as deviants. Rather than operating safely within the familiar boundaries of an established paradigm, intellectuals violate boundaries. They mingle once separate disciplines; they pass back and forth between ordinary and artificial languages; between the "common sense" and technical tradition. Such boundary transgressions sometimes generate scandalous intellectual incunabala; but, sometimes, they are the basis of powerful intellectual breakthroughs and of rich innovations.

To be a practitioner of "critique" means in part to employ a standpoint outside of a normal science and its established paradigms. To be a "normal scientist" is to be fascinated by "technical interests," which means, according to Kuhn, puzzle-solving work that operates (and fills up the empty symbolic space) *within* a paradigm. Normal scientists are thus essentially routine, puzzle-solving technicians. It is precisely because Kuhn's work has this implication, thus radically transvaluing the conventional prestige of science, that his work has aroused not merely reasonable criticism, but unscholarly displays of intemperate rhetoric.

The technician, the scholar-scientist with a "technical interest," accepts the dominant paradigm in his field; he operates within it, pursuing its implications, applying its general principles to new fields; but he does not focalize or criticize the boundaries of the paradigm itself. Normal science's mode of creativity is the creativity of finding new *applications* of accepted

**of the great German *Aufklärers*, including Kant? And while the scholars of the Renaissance commonly disdained the scholastic tradition of scholarship, this was often (in the view of scholars such as Herschen Baker), "an effort to return to an older purity.. .or to restudy and revise the apparatus for ascertaining truth," rather than rejecting the search. When Nisbet condemns Renaissance scholars for their "hostile and contemptuous attitude toward men of knowledge as such," he is condemning them for departing from a by-then wooden Thomism and Scholasticism!**

principles. Thus it is not that intellectuals are not scholars, but that they do not reduce scholarship to the pursuit of technical interests.

It is in these terms that we may, in part, distinguish intellectuals and intelligentsia: intelligentsia are technicians who revolutionize culture by exploring the inner space of an established paradigm, neatening it up, fine-tuning it continuously, extending its established principles to new fields, or finding new opportunities of extending practically useful controls over the environment. Intellectuals, however, are those who, within any cultural sphere, do not take normal science as given. It is not, then, that they reject knowledge as such, but only *normal* knowledge. In this perspective, intellectuals are thus not simply those *opposed* to the old intellectual paradigm but are those somehow more *open* to its cumulating crisis. An essential distinction, then, between intellectuals and intelligentsia is to be made in terms of their *boundary-behavior*.

The work of intelligentsia, their form of *production*, is one that takes certain grounds as already firmly established, as secured, as certain, as "positive." Indeed, their tacit test of the "goodness" of scientific-technical work is that it *confirms* the secured givenness of the world by establishing its *productivity*. The question here is "fruitfulness;" but the "tree" bearing the fruit is regarded as in being. The intelligentsia are thus harvesters, not planters, from the standpoint of intellectuals. Nietzsche creates a paradox when he tells us that "decadence" is the time of *harvesting*. A paradox, because "progress" and the "progressive," grounded as they are on that which they *inherit*, are thus a time of decadence, living off their inheritance as cultural *rentiers*. In this sense, enlightenment progress and decadence are inseparable, for here one pays attention to the foundations, to the inheritance, only after it ceases to be productive, and only *after* we are no longer able to live off of it. The "decadent" then are *consumers* of culture, harvesters, the heirs of someone else's productivity. They live off of and "manage" their inheritance of culture, managing it to produce a *yield*, but are not disposed to undertake a *renewal* of the foundations, of the cultural capital. They do not make its *reproduction* problematic.

Intelligentsia (as distinct from intellectuals), then, are those whose work is a dialectic of progress *and* decadence. They produce "progress" as the culmination and harvesting of "implications," building on foundations taken as given without systematically incorporating a notion of "renewal," without systematically recognizing that the foundation will not be eternally fruitful and is, instead, subject to the law of diminishing returns. Their work repertoire does not incorporate systematically the expectation of necessarily "declining yields," nor a set of skills to cope with the time of declining yields. *That*, they say, is a matter of "inspiration," which is just another way of expressing their *ambivalence* toward their grounding: they respect its generative powers, but, although it is their progenitor, they turn away from it to "move forward," and are forgetful of their obligation to do grounding-work. If decadence is thought of only as a "going-down," dying, or

decaying, then the paradox nuclear to the character of the intelligentsia is occluded. One must also be able to see as decadent certain kinds of going-up; certain culminations of activity and energy; certain forms of *progress*. Decadence is a form of *growth* which does not replenish its own foundations. This is the defining dilemma of intelligentsia. They are technical activists who divide up that which is treated as already "there." They are apportioners, the carvers of *internal* realms who, like invaders coming upon an already settled and fruitful land, conquer it, divide it up among themselves, live off of it, administer it, and maintain "order."

The intelligentsia, then, are an *Appolonian* type, who build *within* boundaries already created by others. Yet they are builders and preservers. As Appolonians they are very "sane" or, at least, *modest* persons. It is this sanity and modesty that is expressed in the sobriety and prudence of the "professionalism" claimed by a technical intelligentsia. To claim one is a "professional" is to make a modest claim. It is to acknowledge one's debt to a body of technology, knowledge, skill, and to the "community" in which this resides. *Professionalism is the communism of the modest*; it is to claim status by reason of *membership* in the community of the skilled or learned, to submit oneself to its discipline and judgment, and to place oneself under its protection. The professionalism of the intelligentsia tacitly acknowledges that it did not *make* the world, that it did not *create* the world, that it lives off a world it came upon, that it must respect the limits of the *community* of other professionals, and must accept their discipline. The sociological maintenance of that community constitutes a limit on their work and thought, as distinct from the "logical" or "cognitive" limits that may inhere in its intellectual traditions. The professional knows it is costly to offend the guild solidarity of his professional group. Fundamentally, then, intelligentsia are tacitly committed to the reproduction of their community of professionals and technicians, and to the maintenance of its tradition. As cognitive work, "technical" work and "technicians" are characterized by this Apollonian acceptance of limits, and the sentiment of "respect." Their standard of propriety points toward a paradigm of "competence" which is the skillful use of the battery of methods and assumptions presently given consensual validation by the professional community, and implies sheer conformity with community-validated method, apart from the success with which it is applied. It is not the "break-through" but the adept use, not the powerful innovation but skill at the marginal distinction, that marks a man as *competent*.

The situation is quite otherwise with intellectuals. Here, the virtue prized is "creativity," not productivity or competence. Unlike the "classical" idiom of a predictable professionalism, the more "romantic" idiom of creativity may see itself as grounded in unpredictable "genius" that breaks with tradition and the past. The fundamental structure productive of such creativity—the creativity of intellectuals—is a violated diglossic bi-linguality in which the multiple languages spoken are not only functionally differentiated but possess a firm hierarchical structuring. Diglossia implies a linguistic "division of

labor:" two or more languages which may, or may not, be accessible to one group of speakers, as, for example, where an elite speaks one language and a subordinated group another, but which are functionally interconnected in economic or political entities. Bilinguality implies the capacity of a speaker to *switch* from one to another language, each of which he may (or may not) define as specific to different functions. Thus a *violated* diglossia means that a language is *normally* recognized as having a special function, *but* that this traditional coordination of language and function is violated. This re-combination is achievable only with difficulty because the traditional linguistic specialization is still in force in the larger group and the new combination is defined as deviant. It is such *violated* bi-lingual diglossia that is a *necessary* (not *sufficient*) condition for that "incongruity of perspective" which may generate valuable novelties. In other words, violated bi-lingual diglossia is a necessary condition for that "creativity" which is status-awarding in the community of *intellectuals*. Stated otherwise, creativity entails the *violation* of a switching rule, and is thus a form of linguistic *deviance*. Here one uses a language to solve a problem for which it is not traditionally defined as proper, in the speaker's language community. By the nature of the case, then, such "creativity" must be inhibited and scarce. To state the conditions of this creativity, in terms we have used before, *it is born of a linguistic boundary transgression?\**

The structure conducive to creativity is one in which several languages are not only functionally differentiated, but firmly *hierarchical*. By this I mean that the speaker has a language around which his work normally pivots. While he has access to other languages, and a readiness to depart from conventional language usage, he does not treat all languages as equal or equally important to him. Given an ambiguity of hierarchy or an equality of languages, *within one speaker*, the result may be an ineffectual "eclecticism," seeing diverse sides of one problem but not *reintegrating* them into a single structure. Eclecticism is a form of diglossic multi-lingualism, in which different languages are used in connection with one problem, but there is no resolution concerning which language is to integrate the diverse aspects of the problem newly focalized by the several languages mobilized to deal with

39. A *sociological* conception of "genius" would see genius dramaturgically and account for the *production* of geniuses, as an aspect of the *dramaturgy* of violated bi-lingual diglossia. The *phenomenology* of genius is centered on the "black box effect." Which is to say: an "unusual" and valuable solution is presented to some problem of importance. The "genius" is one who *seemingly* works with the usual ingredients of an intellectual problem but who, unlike others, produces a radically different and workable solution. That is, his "input" is the same as others, but his "output" is creatively variant. Something had happened in the "black box" from which his variant solution emerged. What happened was: he violated the traditional switching rules, using a language not normally used to deal with that problem; hence the novelty of his solution. And hence the "black box effect." For since he broke the switching rules, using a language he was *not supposed to use*, he usually hides, represses, suppresses, glosses over his linguistic deviance. He hides (from himself or others) the fact that he was using an unconventional language to talk about some problem. It is this *concealment* of the boundary transgression that produces the black box dramaturgy characteristic of "genius."



them. Unless multiple languages are focused simultaneously on "one" problem there will not be the "incongruity of perspective" that may generate creativity. But unless these multiple languages are structured hierarchically, the resultant creativity is limited by the problems of eclecticism.

The root of the creativity that so concerns intellectuals, as distinct from intelligentsia, is, then, in the nature of a boundary transgression. Boundary transgressions can be essentially of two kinds. (1) Either the use of an "artificial" language that is not conventionally used in a given situation, so that there is an unconventional switching of artificial languages, or (2) an unconventional switching between artificial and *ordinary* languages. In the first type of switching, the switch is from one elaborated linguistic variant to another. In the second case, the switch is from an elaborated to a restricted linguistic variant (casual speech), or vice versa. The first type of switching, to elaborated from elaborated, is sometimes mediated by a prior switch to a restricted variant, so that one sometimes gets from one technical language to another by first switching to an ordinary language.<sup>40</sup> Insofar as intellectuals are definable in terms of their concern with creativity, and are thereby involved in boundary transgressions, they are differentiable from intelligentsia by their openness to *metaphor*. The condensation of metaphor is a form of linguistic switching that constitutes an *ad hoc* solution to the problem of eclecticism. It resolves unclear structuring and ambiguities, and overcomes qualms about improper switching behavior, by linking hitherto separated languages, and the realms of experience they generate. It does this by mobilizing *affect* from one speech situation, often the affect accessible only to casual speech, and by making it available to another, more *affectless*, technical speech, thereby making it more difficult to dismiss casually a new or incongruous perspective. But more than that, metaphor *imposes* the shift in perspective; the listener is plunged into the new perspective before he has had the time to reject it on the grounds of its illicitness, or even to consider whether it involves an appropriate switch. Metaphor achieves its liberating effects precisely by paralyzing theoreticity; by numbing reflexivity; by suspending a self-conscious concern for the rule and rule-groundedness. Which is why metaphor is anathema to normal speakers of elaborated linguistic variants, or, at least, technical languages; given William Labov's "hypercorrective" effect, it is *particularly* abhorrent to the newer, *less* established technical languages.

## VII.

Our thesis concerning the importance of the revolutionary role of intellectuals is continuous with a tradition of radical social criticism, a

40. In this connection it is interesting to note that Freudian therapy proceeds by *inhibiting* the use of selfconsciously *careful* speech, by inhibiting the use of technical languages, or elaborated linguistic variants, and by encouraging "gut" casual speech, to obviate the affect-inhibitions built into elaborated linguistic variants, and thus to bring feeling to awareness. The premise is that pathology involves blockages between reflexive and casual speech and, correspondingly, that therapy entails the creation of boundary permeability.

tradition in which the thesis was first formulated and simultaneously repressed. The theory is clearly manifested in Bakunin's formulation. As an anarchist, Bakunin was concerned not only with eliminating economic differences but all differences in power, including differences in education or knowledge. As he remarks: "It stands to reason that the one who knows more will dominate the one who knows less. And if there were, to begin with, only this difference in the upbringing and education between two classes, it would in itself produce in a comparatively short time all the other differences, and human society would. . . split up again into a mass of slaves and small number of masters, the first working for the latter as they now do in existing society."<sup>41</sup> Here, then, is one of the first clear formulations of the central importance of education as a mechanism for reproducing class differences. It embodies enlightenment premises about the power of reason, knowledge, and ideas, that were initially carried into socialism via "utopian socialism," perhaps especially in its Saint-Simonian version.<sup>42</sup>

In contradistinction to this, Marxism, which constituted itself in part by its polemic against other competing socialisms, especially "utopian socialism," emphasized the importance of property institutions and the mode of production as the grounding of *power* in society. Marxism expressly rejected as "idealistic" Utopian socialism's stress on knowledge and science as a source of power. This inevitably obscured the political role of intellectuals, tending to confine them to the "ideological" sphere, which, Marxism stresses, is "in the last instance" determined elsewhere, by the mode and forces of production. Marxism was grounded in the experience of the industrial (and French) revolution, in which the forces of production were first galvanized by a commercial mode of production employing the technical innovations of artisans. Installing this as its paradigm of the relation between knowledge and production, Marxism therefore did not stress the central place of technology and of the technical intelligentsia or scientists in developing it; it placed still less emphasis on those intellectuals who were guardians of the ideological superstructure.

Marxism, in short, had made its central theoretical commitments on the basis of the limited historical experience that had preceded: (1) modern technology's systematic cooptation of science; (2) the full explosion of the communication revolution; and (3) the mature development of the system of mass public education, especially higher education. It is precisely these subsequent developments that made more salient the growing role of the technical intelligentsia and of intellectuals, and which generate a growing dissonance for the nuclear Marxist model that had focused on *property-rooted* power, and had occluded the role of intellectuals and intelli-

41. M. Bakounine, *Ouvres* (Paris, 1911), Vol. 5, p. 135, cited in M. Nomad, *Aspects of Revolt* (New York, 1959), p. 106.

42. The most important *contemporary* expression of this combination of a radical egalitarianism, with the critique of educational institutions as a potential mechanism for reproducing class differences is, of course, Maoism and the Cultural Revolutions in China.

gentsia.<sup>43</sup> Marxism, as a doctrine of *proletarian* revolution, is constrained to avoid or repress formulations that focalize the paradoxical eminence of intellectuals in a workers' movement. Which means that Marxism can barely bring itself fully to acknowledge—let alone, understand—the central place of intellectuals in *constituting Marxism itself*.<sup>44</sup> Marxism is thereby profoundly and fundamentally limited in its capacity for *reflexivity*. The ultimate false consciousness of Marxism is exhibited in this: the historical role to which it "summoned" the proletariat was a summons made by an invisible summoner; i.e., by an invisible intelligentsia, an intelligentsia whose role in its own theory is not theoretized and whose social character is therefore not known systematically to itself.

The role of the intellectuals as revolutionaries is first judged critically by Marx's adversary, Bakunin, who thereby breaks with the enlightenment elitism of Utopian socialism—at least in his *public* doctrine! This thesis is later adumbrated by the Polish-born, Russian revolutionary, Wacław Machajski (1866-1926). Following his studies in exile, Machajski came in 1898 to the following conclusions: "1. That socialism, for all its 'proletarian' protestations, was the ideology of the rising new middle class of intellectuals, professionals, technicians and white collar workers, and not of the manual workers."<sup>45</sup> Rigorously speaking, however, it is not this formulation that makes Machajski different from Lenin, or, for that matter, from Kautsky. Machajski's further contention, that socialist parties in Western Europe "were

43. The response to this dissonance largely expresses itself in efforts to rework the infra-structure-superstructure relationship fundamental to the conceptual basis of Marxism. At bottom, this reworking sought (and still seeks) to find a way of assigning greater "autonomy" to the ideological superstructure without contradicting its imputed determination by the economic infra-structure, "in the last instance." The very way in which this problem is conceptualized, however, i.e., as a problem in the relationship between (infra- and super) *structures*, is an "objectivism" that commonly occludes rather than makes apparent the *actors* in the superstructure. It is as if one would like to acknowledge the importance of ideas and science without also affirming the importance of *men and women* of ideas and of science, and of the action of intellectuals and intelligentsia. In large part, this is the key to decoding Althusser's version of "structuralism" in which the structure of the scientific "problematic" "speaks" the scientist—i.e., shapes or "structures" him.

44. This problem is discussed at length in "Two Marxisms," in A.W. Gouldner, *For Sociology*, *op.cit.*

45. Nomad, *op.cit.*, p. 99. The American scholar most influenced by Machajski was H.D. Lasswell. See Lasswell, *op.cit.*, p. 28. Lasswell has also spoken of the "Permanent Revolution of the Modernizing Intellectuals," *ibid.*, p. 80. Lasswell's theory, however, lacks a *mechanism* for this revolution. He cannot account for the alienation of intellectuals and intelligentsia from the *status quo* of advanced industrial societies. At the same time, however, Lasswell is clearly not committed to Machajski's economic determinism. But this only intensifies the problem of the mechanism. His implication seems to be that intellectuals and intelligentsia become functionally more important in advanced societies and, *therefore*, acquire power. But that, of course, omits any consideration of their *revolutionary* role and fails to account for their alienation. Indeed, it would seem to preclude such alienation. Like Machajski, Lasswell often profoundly overestimates the autonomy of intellectuals and intelligentsia. His most basic problem, however, is that he lacks a theory of these strata. See also, M. Nomad, *Rebels and Renegades* (New York, 1932). Nomad cites Machajski's original Polish publications. Selections from Machajski can also be found in English translation in V.F. Calverton, *The Making of Society* (New York, 1937).

in fact law-abiding progressive parties advocating political and social reforms, but no longer revolutionary organizations. . ." is also compatible with Leninism. This would be borne in on Lenin especially when most social democratic parties in West Europe voted the war budgets of their respective governments during World War I. Machajski further contended that this would also be the direction taken by *socialist* parties in Russia, as soon as they were legalized, a conclusion again essentially consistent with Lenin's own dour judgment on them.

Machajski and Lenin diverge, however, at the following point: Machajski believed that "this evolution towards respectability, and away from anti-capitalist revolution, was due to the fact that the policies of these socialist parties were determined not by their working class rank-and-file following, but by the interests of the new middle class of intellectual workers (including self-educated ex-workers) who were ready to make peace with capitalism, provided the latter. . . offered them an opportunity of lucrative employment either in the labor movement or in various cultural, economic and political institutions." Lenin would agree that this is in fact the normal impulse of most "bourgeois" intellectuals, and perhaps even of most "socialist" intellectuals; but Lenin would not agree that this was true of *Bolshevik* intellectuals who had placed themselves under the discipline of the vanguard party. This disagreement, however, does not entail different estimates of the accomodative dispositions of intellectuals. Indeed, Lenin's whole concept of the vanguard party may be understood as a polemical response to that very disposition. We must premise this to understand why Lenin makes a special point of insisting, in the critical debate against Martov, that "even" intellectuals should be subject to the discipline of party units. The central code of the vanguard structure implies that the organization requires intellectuals, but that it also *distrusts* them and seeks mechanisms to control them. It is in this conjunction, the need for and distrust of intellectuals, that is one main source of the authoritarian (democratic centralist) structure of the "vanguard" organization. A second major source of that structural form is distrust of the theoretical competence of the *workers* themselves.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the Leninist code of the vanguard structure is grounded tacitly in a sociological diagnosis of intellectuals that is not far different from Machajski's.

The point at which Lenin and Machajski diverge most, at the level of manifest doctrine, is the latter's express contention that "this new middle class of intellectual workers was a rising privileged stratum, fighting for a place in the sun against the old privileged classes, the landed owners and capitalists.

46. Given such distrust of the imprinted proletariat, *and* of imprinting theorists or intellectuals, who then can be trusted to be custodian of the revolution? This is the "mother's milk" of Stalinist paranoia, which subsequently has no trouble at all in finding countless, *thoroughly realistic* justifications for seeing enemies on all sides. What pushes political realism about external enemies over the edge into political paranoia is precisely a suspicion of those on whom reliance *must* be placed — the (realistic) fear of the historical "untrustworthiness" of workers and of intellectuals.

Higher education was their specific 'capital'—the source of their actual or potential higher incomes. Political democracy was the first, and government ownership of industries the next step to their domination. To achieve these objects they needed the support of the manual workers.... The socialism to which the socialist parties really aspired was a hierarchical system under which...the private capitalists having yielded place to office-holders, managers and engineers, whose salaries would be much higher than the wages paid for manual labor, and who henceforth would constitute the new and only ruling class..."<sup>47</sup> Machajski's work, then, prophesies the rise of a "new class:" "the workers will not have their 'workers government' even after the capitalists have disappeared. As long as the working class is condemned to ignorance, the intelligentsia will rule through the workers' deputies."<sup>48</sup>

The doctrine most consistent with this prediction was Trotsky's views on the bureaucratic deformation of the Soviet state—although Trotsky was at pains to deny Machajski's thesis that the bureaucracy was a new, exploiting economic "class." Trotsky's diagnosis of the Soviet system—far more sociologically realistic than most of his political adversaries—was greatly handicapped by its lack of a systematic theory of the intelligentsia and of intellectuals. Committed to the classical Marxist view that sees power grounded primarily in *property*, and powerlessness in propertylessness, Trotsky's theory fails to note the actual groundings of this new elite's power in the *symbol* systems and culture it controls; it underestimates the extent to which the possession of culture and elaborated language variants are sources of differential social privilege.

As Basil Bernstein remarks, "It is not only capital, in the strict economic sense, which is subject to appropriation, manipulation and exploitation, but also cultural capital in the form of symbolic systems through which man can

47. *Nomad, Aspects of Revolt, op.cit., p. 100.*

48. *Ibid., p. 115.* Despite my extensive references to it here, it should be noted at once that the Machajski thesis concerning the intellectuals is profoundly limited. First, Machajski's view of intellectuals underestimates their capacity for radicalization and militancy, in part because it chunks together the more accommodative intelligentsia with the more critical intellectuals, thus underestimating the *contradictory* consequences that modern public education has for the existing system of social stratification. Secondly, Machajski's thesis overestimates the political autonomy of intellectuals because, in seeing them only as an exploitative elite "using" the proletariat and peasantry, it ignores the fact that such intellectuals *need* these other classes, even if only for their own political ambitions; to win and hold other classes to an alliance they must be open to their historical needs and possibilities. This openness to the historical requirements of *other* classes limits both the rationality and, also, the elitism of the intellectuals and intelligentsia. A third problem with the Machajski thesis is its crude economic determinism that systematically underestimates the force of intellectuals' *ideal* interests and one-sidedly dwells upon their venal, material interests. This is a petty-bourgeois element which premises that "money is the root of all evil" and that the worst people are those who betray their ideals. It was a pre-Freudian and pre-Nazi conception of evil. Machajski never really weighed the possibility that intellectuals are "dangerous" not so much when they are corrupt as when they become obsessed with purity. He never weighed the possibility that the worst people may be those who would never consider settling for less than their highest ideals.

extend and change the boundaries of his own experience."<sup>49</sup> Among the central institutions for the reproduction of class systems and class privileges are what Bernstein calls the institutions of visible and "invisible" *education*, precisely because they teach coding and de-coding processes, and the codes to be used. I would stress that the effects of such education are *contradictory*, only *partly reproducing* class privileged but, *also*, creating tensions and strains that *undermine* it—grounding a *critique* of *traditional* class privileges, while also becoming the cultural grounding of a *new* elite. Such a perspective would appear to be particularly fruitful with regard to an understanding of seemingly paradoxical developments in the Soviet Union. Here what is needed is a theory that focuses on the social character of intellectuals and intelligentsia as involved in the domination of Soviet society *and* in the *resistance* to that domination. Such a theory would indicate how power and influence inhere in differential access to culture and language; clarify the special value *and* special *costs* of intellectuals' speech variants; and be sensitive to the *ambiguous* character of these strata as being both emancipatory and elitist. It would focus on how education, "visible" and "invisible," reproduces a system of elite control while also leading to a critique of it. Such a theory can fill certain traditional Marxist lacunae and show how Marxism itself is, in part, a theory of "*invisible* pedagogy," in that the role of the intelligentsia, as the educator of the "historical agent," is systematically repressed. To that extent, a *hierarchical* relationship between the teaching-intellectuals and the taught-proletarian (or other) historical agent, is both reproduced *and* made latent by Marxism, thereby limiting the rationality and reflexivity of all groups involved.

My own standpoint is not at all a "conspiracy" theory. Intellectuals do not speak on behalf of equality in order to manipulate the proletariat, or other "historical agents," as allies in the intellectuals' drive for power. This is not so for several reasons: First, because intellectuals do not retain power long after the revolution succeeds. They usually lose to the *intelligentsia* of political and industrial managers—to the technologists of communication, administration and violence—who inherit the revolution. Secondly, intellectuals do not define their own role and their relationship to the under-classes in a manipulative manner. Revolutionary intellectuals do not see themselves as manipulating other classes *in order to* come to power, but largely feel themselves to be the selfless agents of a kind of historical justice and rationality. Such power as they achieve is not intended by them to produce personal advantages for themselves, although it does. And third, it is neither possible for them to win power, nor to rule once power is won, without an

49. In T.A. Seboek, *op.cit.*, p. 1547. Ferruccio Rossi-Landi similarly holds that a ruling class is "the class which possesses control over the emission and circulation of the verbal and non-verbal messages which are constitutive of a given community." A ruling class rules, says Rossi-Landi, partly by its control over the communication media, but also by determining the codes used to send messages and the mechanisms used to de-code them. *Ibid.*, p. 1972. Institutions that imprint coding and de-coding processes are, in this view, reproductive of class dominance.

active alliance with, or the political neutrality of, some larger class; intellectuals cannot accomplish this with any stability without also attending to that other class's interests. Being more fundamentally accommodative than intellectuals, the post-revolution *intelligentsia* are more likely to be those who see the compromises and alliances that need to be made, and are more likely to make them with fewer qualms.

#### VIII.

In large measure, the difficult question is less, who comes to power through modern revolutions—we clearly know *who* does *not*—but another question, an evaluative question: how are those who come to power, how are the intelligentsia and intellectuals as among the new ruling classes, to be *judged*? In what terms and by what standards? I would say that they should be judged by their contribution to a more rational mode of *production*—which is not simply one that produces more and more of some good—and by their contribution to a more rational *understanding* of the social world.

Insofar as intellectuals and intelligentsia hold or participate in power, they must be seen for the ambiguous force they are—enhancing productivity greatly, often with the unintended effect of undermining the larger natural and social environment, and enhancing an understanding of the social world, often with the unanticipated effect of subjecting persons to control, as if they were objects. The paradox of the intellectuals and intelligentsia is that they are an elitist *and* an emancipatory stratum, resisting and subverting all social limits except those providing the political and social requirements of their own status. To have asserted, as Marxism did, that the proletariat was the decisive class for the emancipation of the modern world, has been wrong as a matter of historical fact: The class that has provided the major fighting force for the revolutions of the twentieth century has been the peasantry at least as much as—indeed, usually more than—the proletariat. In the historical succession of European class societies, the dominated under-class has *never* succeeded to power. To that degree, it would seem true that Marxism is the false consciousness of a section of the cultural bourgeoisie, the intellectuals and intelligentsia, in that it is characteristically "ideological," in Marx's sense: it hides reality by an *inversion* of it, an inversion which is used in turn to mask their own role. For it is not the proletariat who came to power under "socialism," but, first, privileged intellectuals, and, then, privileged intelligentsia.

In principle, intellectuals and intelligentsia live by a culture of discourse in which there is nothing which, at least at *some* time, they are unwilling to talk about or make problematic. Indeed, they are even willing to talk about the value of talk itself and its possible inferiority to silence or to practice. But the normal supposition of intellectuals is that talk has considerable value. This envaluing of talk by intellectuals commonly presses them to distinguish in various ways between good talk and lesser kinds, while at the same time

insisting that all arguments have a right to be heard, considered, and answered with arguments. Commonly, then, intellectuals have been slow to kill; they have commonly felt a certain incompatibility between killing and talking, seeing each as an *alternative* to one another. Killing ends the dialogue, and the threat of violence makes it valueless. For who believes the consensus that comes out of the barrel of a gun? Thus, when the killing time comes, intellectuals are commonly at a disadvantage, for their preferred weapons are words. For that reason, my thesis about the importance of intellectuals in revolutions is not some absolute, but, rather, depends in part upon the role of violence in the politics of the situation. As violence limits talk, so too does it generate limits on the leadership of radical intellectuals. The role of intellectuals in a revolutionary movement is therefore necessarily greater *prior* to the time that the movement succeeds in capturing state power and, correspondingly, it diminishes after state power is captured and, with it, the means of violence which it now makes available to the revolution triumphant. But even in revolutionary movements still out of power, there are historically great differences in their rules concerning the use of violence. I have argued elsewhere<sup>50</sup> that the community of Marxist and socialist revolutionaries has tended increasingly to expand the importance of violence as an agency of historical change. Here, again, historically sensitive qualifications need to be asserted: the more revolutionary movements affirm the value and importance of violence, the more limited the leadership role available to intellectuals.<sup>51</sup> To that extent, there is in the modern revolutions of the Third World a latent contradiction between the intellectuals and the peasantry who have constituted the mass base of these revolutions, precisely because peasants have constituted the main fighting cadres. For the peasant, the army may be a way *out* of village misery and a way *up* in the larger social world. To the extent, then, that the peasantry come to identify the army as their own instrumentality, and indeed, as their community, to that extent there is a growing likelihood of a strain between peasantry and intellectuals. It may be that this contradiction is part of the infra-structure of the Cultural Revolutions in China.

Nevertheless, intellectuals can kill; indeed, no little part of modern "terrorism" is done by middle class intellectuals. But commonly, intellectuals require justification in terms of high values before they can kill willingly; they need to see themselves as the hammer of historical justice, as the impersonal instrument of higher rationality, or they need to work themselves up into a berserk rage, before they can threaten violence, terrorize, and kill. All of these states of consciousness are dissonant with the culture of reflexive

50. See A.W. Gouldner, "The Metaphoricality of Marxism and the Context-Freing Grammar of Socialism," *Theory and Society*, Winter, 1974, pp. 391ff.

51. Let me stress that, in counterposing talking and violence, I am making no judgment on the truth of the conventional claim that violence is inherently irrational or non-rational or injurious to rationality. I happen *not* to believe that, but this is entirely another matter, too complicated by far for discussion here.



discourse to which intellectuals are normally committed. To that extent, then, intellectuals are or would be a relatively unique ruling class, perhaps more loathe to kill than any ever was. Their more Orwellian instrument is the manipulation of an invisible pedagogy. While bad enough, this still leaves persons alive, still capable of resisting, changing, and of fighting another day.

There is another way in which intellectuals and intelligentsia differ as a possible ruling elite, and this involves the special grounding of their privilege in culture and language. Certain *cultural* goods have the unique character of not being limited in supply, in the same way that "economic" goods are. This means that one need not play a zero sum game in allocating cultural goods: One person's or group's ability to "possess" culture, or to speak an advantageous linguistic variant, does not *per force* constitute a "possession" of it that excludes others' enjoyment and use of the same culture and language. Intellectuals thus differ from other classes in that they seek, in some part, to foster the diffusion of cultural goods they believe of worth and on which their own elite privileges rest. This is another basic contradiction of the intellectuals. Their relationship to other social classes is more like the relationship between teachers and students than capitalist and proletariat. Which is not to say that this relationship of tutelage is devoid of tensions, but that these *need not* be laden with necessary and great conflict. It is a contradiction, but not an antagonistic contradiction.

What is needed are social mechanisms and a theoretical understanding that can ensure that this tutelage does not stretch out any longer than it must; that those in control of culture do not impair the autonomy of others as the price of tutelage; that the relationship of dominance be out in the open, visible to public inspection and criticism, rather than hidden as an "invisible pedagogy" beyond discussion. Critical theory aims at transforming society into self-governing persons who value and who have a large variety of speech variants; who understand each variant as suitable for different purposes and for different but, quite possibly, equal kinds of lives; and who work toward a free community of multiple language speakers who have neither the need nor the power to impose themselves or their culture on others. It would be an essential function of a proper critical theory of intellectuals and intelligentsia—revolutionary or otherwise—to make this invisible pedagogy a more visible one, thereby inhibiting the manipulation of the proletariat. An object of such a critical theory would be to de-mystify the role of intellectuals and intelligentsia, while giving no encouragement to anti-intellectualism.

In exalted moments, reflective theorists, unreflectively bent on solving the problem of "the one and the many" in their own image, think to confer a boon on mankind by raising it to their own lofty level. So they set forth projects which sometimes seem to imply that the emancipation of society means that *all* will be helped to become *intellectuals or intelligentsia*, or to speak more "rationally," as if there were no higher estate they could think of conferring on humanity. But this *noblesse oblige* should be suspect, for it

implies the perpetuation of a noblesse who will continue to "oblige." It implies also that the "good" is a uni-dimensional, solely *cognitive* good, one already in the possession of intellectuals; it implies an overestimation of mind, of words, of consciousness, of theory—an overestimation of all the things in which intellectuals are already competent—and it implies that they are immodestly setting forth their own lives as the standard for all others. This betrays the continuing presence of something that is the very opposite of the liberation supposedly being offered: the disguised will of some intellectuals to *dominate*, to impose their own values and their own form of life on others. However, this is not to say that the standpoint offered here declares all languages and codes equal, and this for two reasons: One is that one speech variant may be *better* than another in a particular situation, while in a different situation, this superiority may not hold, which is why elaborated linguistic codes are not simply "better" than restricted variants. Yet, any view that affirms an absolute equality of languages is simply a dogmatic linguistic liberalism. This dogmatic liberalism is to be rejected simply for its dogmatism; its liberality ought not to suffice to win adherence, and *evidence* of this equality or inequality should be demanded.

The expectation ought to be: each linguistic variant solves certain problems *and* exacts certain costs in certain specifiable situations; the therapy for such costs may take the direction, not of switching to *one* linguistic variant or code presumably superior in all situations. The idea of one therapy that is successful for all pathologies is known by the ancient and dishonorable name of "panacea." Rather, the strategy should be to work toward enlarging and diversifying linguistic repertoires; strengthening the capacity for switching from one to another; and for assaying their usefulness in different situations. This is, of course, quite a different strategy than the supposition that one variant, say, an "elaborated" linguistic variant, will solve the problems of all men at all times and places. If one needs to condense our strategy sloganistically, it would *not* be that "All men should become intellectuals." It would be, rather, that "All men should become *upper* class," precisely in their having available a larger speech repertoire.<sup>52</sup> The larger the speech repertoire available to all men, the greater the likelihood that all men will become brothers.

52. Cf. J.A. Fishman: ". . . in relatively open societies the middle and upper middle classes have larger repertoires in language and social behaviour than do the lower classes." In Seboek, *op.cit.*, p. 1686.