

"Objectivity in the Social Sciences", in R. J. Seeger and R. S. Cohen, editors, Philosophical Foundations of Science, Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, vol. 11, 1974, pp. 305-16

JUDITH BUBER AGASSI

## **OBJECTIVITY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES**

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

In the present paper I shall attempt to deal with objectivity in the social sciences, particularly in sociology, on which I shall concentrate, because I am frankly disturbed by a trend current on the American scene. The trend may be characterized by its causing bitter division amongst social scientists and upheaval in their gatherings. What disturbs me about this trend is not so much the upheaval, as the ready tendency to despair of the basic precondition for objective social science, namely the assumption of the unity of mankind - both intellectual and moral. The radicalist social scientists who belong to this trend claim that the long established goal of objectivity in social sciences is a chimera and a subterfuge which has served the powers that be for too long already ((1)). In the name of instant peace and liberation they imply that rational discourse between social scientists of different persuasions - the Establishment and the Revolution - is no longer possible. Sociologists of the women's liberation movement and black militant sociologists broadcast the idea that nothing can take the place of first-hand experience: only women can understand women's

problems ((2)) and only blacks can understand blacks. All whites, including sociologists, are racists, at least subconsciously ((3)). All those who do not join the Movement belong to the Establishment, at least subconsciously ((4)) True, the group, which advocates the jettisoning of

the aspiration for objectivity is marginal. Yet I am concerned because exactly the most dangerous aspect of their activity, their attack on objectivity, is rather condoned and tolerated by most social scientists who see their good intentions and moralistic preoccupations and social conscience, and only complain about their bizarre and unseemly conduct, especially of the young ones among them. In my opinion the bizarre and unseemly, though offensive to the sensibility of one's colleagues and not very conducive to the scientific enterprise, is much less significant than the irrationalism they advocate, which may put an end to the enterprise altogether.

In the present paper I shall present the following points:

(1) There are obstacles to objectivity common to all sciences; we attempt to overcome them as best we can. The obstacles special to the social sciences are caused by the special involvement of the investigator with his topic of study, which relates to both his interests and his emotional make-up.

(2) Methods to overcome these obstacles on the way to objectivity in the social sciences were suggested in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Marxist tradition had only a marginal following here until recently. The major American sociological schools prevalent in the forties, fifties, and early sixties, were the Warner school ((5)) and the functional analysts ((6)). Both aimed at the elimination of the individual investigator's bias, but caused the establishment of a massive bias in favour of the status quo. Already in the fifties, C. Wright Mills used semi-Marxist ideas to ridicule functionalism ((7)) and a group of sociologists debunked the sacred cow of the middle class by the series of studies of suburbia ((8)).

(3) In the mid-sixties Marxism became fashionable in sociological circles; instead of the emphasis on social equilibrium came the emphasis on change-inducing social conflict. Marx himself considered mankind as divided into hostile camps - the class-camps - yet he claimed that objectivity is possible (due to his basic law of social evolution), and he decidedly considered the possibility of individual intellectuals of the wrong class-camp to see the objective truth.<sup>9</sup> These aspects of the Marxist tradition are being jettisoned by considerable numbers of the present generation of left-wing social scientists. Indeed, the ideal of scientific rationality has become much dimmer in this group. The forces of irrationalism dispense with such items as a rigorous economic analysis of the existing system, they are vague about who are the potential revolutionary social groups; they are influenced by anarchistic irrationalism, by the Guevara's emotionalism, and by Mao's primitive collectivism. Those of us who still hope for rational discussion may well put this new phenomenon on the agenda as an urgent item for study within the community of social science.

## 2. SPECIAL OBSTACLES TO OBJECTIVITY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

It is my contention that though complete objectivity in science is an impossibility, aiming at it, or attaining as much of it as reasonably possible, is a necessary condition for the conduct of all scientific inquiry. Why should we consider objectivity so important that we should pursue it even when admitting it to be inaccessible? In my opinion, viewing inquiry as subjective, or as an entirely individual matter, would be the exclusion of all criticism; and this would be the exclusion of rational debate; and this would be the denial of the thesis of the intellectual or

rational unity of mankind. It thus opens the door to irrationalism and elitism, whether social or racial.

The general obstacles to scientific objectivity in any field concern the fact that every human is heir to some intellectual preferences and standpoints. The individual is also heir to a social and cultural tradition as a result of his being a member of a specific group of national, religious, and ethnic characteristics. I do not wish to dwell on man's limitations qua man, since this is the topic of much philosophic disquisition. Rather, I wish now to move from the obstacles to all human attempts at objectivity, to the obstacles specific to the social sciences. These are, we are told, the values of the individual researchers, values meaning here preferences and judgments in the very field of human endeavour which is the topic or the subject-matter under investigation. For example, a social anthropologist may easily tend to evaluate and judge the practices and mores of people belonging to alien cultures in terms of his own. This is the well-known danger of ethnocentricity, so-called. There is no inherent difference between ethnic and class centrality. The investigator's individual experience may result in either negative or positive dispositions towards all sorts of groupings of people. He may identify with a group of people, which seem to him to resemble his own group or, on the contrary, especially free of his own people's shortcomings to which he is most sensitive. The literature is more emphatic on the first kind of prejudice - due to observed similarity - but the opposite kind of prejudice - due to rebellion against one's own group - has already been noticed by Bacon in 1620 and is very prevalent amongst intellectuals: those who pin their hopes on the downtrodden as a counterfoil to characteristics of their own class and thus tend to misrepresent them quite grossly.

The prejudices resulting from politico-ideological convictions are, of course, commonplace; they occur in the natural sciences too, but are less serious there. Here we have both authorities demanding certain preconceptions, and scientists who represent these authorities either voluntarily or out of terror, especially in monolithic cultures. Even in pluralist societies, however, politico-ideological convictions play a significant role in distorting social realities. It is a commonplace that personal economic self-interest or the economic interest of the scientist's group may bias his judgment.

It is not possible to overcome these obstacles once and for all. Yet it is of the greatest importance that each individual investigator should make the effort to become aware, as much as he reasonably can, of those of his value judgments that are relevant to his studies. This is no easy task, even when, as I recommend, we let sleeping subconscious motivations lie. Every individual possesses layers and patchworks of values, acquired from different social milieus and during different phases of his development; they may easily be inconsistent and ambivalent and ambiguous. All that is required of the investigator is not psychoanalytical self-knowledge, but plain honesty and the readiness to be conscious of whatever knowledge of himself which is readily accessible. One has to be willing to subject one's preferences, expectations, hopes, and pet aversions, to some measure of rational examination: one may try to be clear as to what these are; one may try to pin oneself down; and one may then try to find out about possible consequences of one's preferences. This may be done with the aid of history or of social analysis, or criticisms by one's peers. For my part, worse than any pet aversions, or pet sympathies is the incredible ease with which intellectual fashions spread in the world of the social sciences. The fashion spread may be not

a particularly dangerous bias, but it shows that entire groups of social scientists lack this basic requirement of critical awareness, without which there is no attempt at objectivity at all. This soon leads to a severe disillusionment, and the disillusionment destroys the fashion, but it does not create self-critical awareness, at least not necessarily; and so one fashion can lead to another and so on without much improvement.

I want to make it quite clear that I do not mean to say that the individual investigator should be an aseptic or neutral or disinterested party or that he should lack social concern or avoid social activity. Only that he try to be conscious and critical of his interests and preferences; which includes his being conscious of those moral options he takes which he does not subject to rational examination. In my opinion he will do better to declare openly both those preferences of his, which he assumes to have survived rational examination and those, which he frankly took as moral or aesthetic decisions not subject to such examination. Of course, this will make it easier for your student or reader to detect your bias and distortion in case you are not particularly cautious to avoid them; which, of course, is the better option. All this is fairly much in accord with the spirit of Max Weber's value-free sociology (10)). To which we come soon. Let me conclude, however, that it is quite advisable for anyone to study those problems which do carry moral import, according to one's own judgment of what is of moral import, but on the condition that one's criteria remain open to modification - especially as the result of such a study.

### 3. TRADITIONAL AMERICAN ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF VALUE

The most important writers on our topic, Marx and Weber had little or no influence in the early stages of development of American sociology. The earliest American attempt to grapple with the problem originated in psychology and claimed psychology to be the totality of social science ((11)). This school, behaviorism, tried to exclude from its research anything that is not observable objectively, i.e. people's conscience and awareness, feelings and values. While the behaviorists clearly avoided getting involved in the problems of the values of their objects of research, they also made the explanation of social phenomena impossible.

The American sociologists were very concerned with attempts to render sociology scientific by eliminating personal bias and partiality. Two attempts followed the classical Chicago school's attempt, the social stratificationists of the Warner school and the functional analysts of the Talcott Parsons school. Both offered criteria for objectivity, and both criteria introduced strong systematic biases in favor of the status quo, presumably unintentionally.

The Chicago school ((12)) undertook in the twenties and thirties the study of communities, neighborhoods, and deviant social groups. They followed largely the rules of classical social anthropology of Malinowski, by viewing these microcosmic systems as Malinowski would view a primitive micro-cosmos - as social wholes. They accepted the value system of any whole when assessing any part or aspect of that whole - well in accord with classical functionalism. In particular they avoided all value ranking and upheld the principle of equality of all social systems, which leads to moral relativism.

This attitude led to the neglect into the enquiry into the social and economic conditions which often had caused the peculiar degraded living-patterns of the groups under study.

The Warner school of social class ((13)) or stratification attempted to find an objective scale of measuring the social standing of any member of any American community. Warner was convinced that his method was utterly objective since it enabled any person, even a total layman, to determine the fairly exact social standing of a given subject as accurately as any set of lengthy interviews and participant observation could have. And from the determination of a person's position on the Warner scale a lot of predictions about him could be made - about his consumption patterns, his social associations, and even his taste in interior decoration. The claim that all American communities are divided into the same five or six discrete classes, on which all these predictions were based, was, of course, completely unfounded. It introduced, which is more important, a strong bias for the acceptance of fairly static and rigid social stratification as the standard, natural, normal, American condition. Many of Warner's less sophisticated followers in fields like education, welfare, and marketing, understood his middle-class, especially his upper middle-class (Class 3), to be the norm to whose values children in schools were supposed to be socialized, etc.

In most sociology departments across the country functional analysis was accepted in the fifties and up to the mid-sixties as the only possible way of doing scientific sociology. Parsons dealt with the entire American I society as if it were one social system, i.e. a whole, and all its parts, all the social phenomena within the system, were claimed to be objectively explicable within the system by showing the function, i.e. positive role, which they play within the system in the system's working to maintain balance and stability. All this was well in accord with Durkheim's general ideas as presented over half a century earlier. The conservative aspect of this philosophy is too obvious to require separate statement ((14)).

Admittedly, in its later phases it found adherents who attempted – along with even Parsons himself - to allow for social conflict as an expression of instability and the cause of social change (in classical functionalism the function of conflict is to preserve stability) ((15)). But this compromise is not enough to remedy the bias, and is not consistent with the basic tenets of functionalism.

During the reign of functional analysis one major critic of it was heard - C. Wright Mills ((16)). He pointed out the conservative bias of functionalism and ridiculed it as barely more than pompous jargon. C. Wright Mills himself attempted a social analysis of American society along economic-interest class lines. He certainly was not too successful in avoiding letting his personal bias (an extremely pessimistic view of the public as passive and contempt for the then Eisenhower administration for its subservience to big business) distort his image of American society and government. He was a convinced liberal socialist who often used Marxist methods of analysis, but also utilized the insights of later sociologists of elite phenomena. He was greatly concerned with objectivity, for which he had a most peculiar recipe: ((17)) first, relate your personal troubles to public issues, thus avoiding both personal bias and the bias of your own group (endorsing problems which are fashionable in your scientific community is such a bias); second, see your problem from all possible viewpoints; thirdly, verify your conclusions. Of course, it is the correlation of private troubles with public issues, which catches the eye. It is a very dubious method of avoiding bias: it is all too easy and often rather cheap to blow-up one's private frustrations into social protest, and it is even easy enough to view the fashionable target of criticism as the source of one's private troubles; to call this objectivity is at best dubious.

A group of Mills' disciples 18 mounted in the early sixties a critical attack on conventional American sociology and especially challenged the functional analysis school's use of Max Weber's value-free sociology as a cover for hard-hearted defence of the status-quo - raising a generation of amoral social technicians ((19)). They declared themselves advocates of the basic aim of scientific objectivity; they demanded the open and honest declaration of the researcher-teacher's values which motivated his choice of problems for research to his students and readers - (this I heartily endorse); they tagged on to this a somewhat dubious value-judgment of their own: values that involve the sociologist in social action are more valuable than other values ((20)).

I have no time to discuss the studies in the fifties of suburban life, which followed no single strict system of thought but which had one common theme and common result contrary to both the Warner and the functionalist schools: the American middle class which had previously been respected by the American sociologists and whose values were upheld by many as the norm for American society, this class was shown up as unattractive, ridiculous, even pathetic - and culturally unsophisticated. This, naturally, opened the way to the recent all-out attack on the so-called middle-class and its values by the new radicals. There is little doubt that this literature is of some value in spite of its having since been debunked as the 'myth of suburbia'. The myth is somewhat childish in making the suburb the scapegoat for a number of different and partial processes of social change; but it did raise controversy and it did bring about some more analytic studies of socio-economic changes in America.

#### 4. CONTEMPORARY REBELLION

In the mid-sixties, between 1965 and 1967 to be precise, the movements against the war in Viet-Nam on the one hand and for black power on the other formed a discernible new left ideology. This is a body of sharply negative and critical views of American society. American government was declared no longer a functioning democracy but an instrument of C. Wright Mills' military-industrial complex and according to the more extreme spokesmen of the movement, a fascist government ruling a progressively 'rotten' society. The hope for successful social reform, using the existing party-political and governmental institutions, was declared a dangerous illusion; all those still supporting these institutions were lumped together as 'the Establishment' and branded as the enemy. Confrontations with the Establishment became the major tactic and the slogans of revolution became the norm.

The new radical movement was largely based in the campuses of liberal arts colleges and major universities. The departments of sociology and of political science were most seriously affected it seems, in that a good number of faculty who had adopted this philosophy, attempted to radicalize their discipline. The novelty is not in the introduction of a new viewpoint, of a left-wing viewpoint, or even of an extremist viewpoint into social science; the novelty is that rational discourse, the possibility to debate social issues somewhat objectively among social scientists, which was previously assumed to exist also by most Marxists ((21)), is now fully denied by many radicals. Name-calling is nothing new, but the new attitude is one which divides all sociologists and social philosophies into the camps of the Children of Light and Children of Darkness, thus encouraging name-calling as the only means of communication available ((22)). From now on it seems no longer necessary to spend time in pedantic studies, in social and economic, minute and careful analyses of

society or of the revolutionary forces. These activities, which Marx had considered absolutely essential, are now dismissed as a part of 'bourgeois crap'. What is needed, we hear, is the gathering of the immediate ammunition for the battle. There is no time for analysis, there is no need for analysis; in this period the only way to know social reality is by active participation in the struggle. Every intellectual activity, then, must have immediate relevance to the struggle, with the accent on immediacy.

Admittedly, the revolt against established conventional American sociology is understandable; admittedly it contains also some valid and useful criticism. Yet the revolt turned out to be chiefly a revolt against any aspiration for objectivity. It became, immediately, a revolt against any intellectual systematic Endeavour ((23)). The most dangerous element of such a move is the jettisoning of the idea of the rational unity of mankind, as well as the idea of the moral unity of mankind ((24)). In the eyes of the radicals, not only general humanity is now divided decisively along the lines of the barricades of the revolution, or the stand on Viet-Nam, or along race- and sex-lines; social scientists are now also supposed to be irrevocably divided along the same lines ((25)). The social problems of oppressed groups can no longer be studied by all honest scholars, but only by scholars of their own group ((26)). Both the intellectual tradition and learning from history are gravely neglected. We have neo-Marxists ignorant of *The Communist Manifesto* ((27)) and anarchists ignorant of Bakunin ((28)) and a revolutionary movement that deem it superfluous to examine the great revolutions of the immediate past and their outcomes ((29)).

The danger of this phenomenon is bad enough; worse is the fact that liberal sociologists of the left, akin to C. Wright Mills, are indulgent to this new danger. Irrationalism in the home base of rational attitudes

towards social problems takes roots very quickly. My intention is not to offer as yet another sociological analysis of the phenomenon - I have not found a satisfactory one. Rather I wish to challenge all those who still cherish the idea of social science to talk to the young rebels, and to invite them to rational debates on whatever they feel concerned about. I also wish to propose that we challenge the older rebels systematically and publicly on this issue of objectivity, rationality, and the unity of mankind.

## NOTES

See, for example, Irwin Sperber, 'The Road to Objective Serfdom: a Comment on Oliver's 'Scientism and Sociology'', *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* (1969), pp. 111-121: "The champions of objective ideology are just as acquiescent to the prevailing social and economic pressures 'off the job' as when they are 'on the job'. The segregation of these roles is useful for the academician who will not in any case take a strong stand as a private citizen and who strives for the bonus of disguising such a noncommittal position as scientifically respectable. It also justifies the opportunistic indulgence of doing the trivial, facile, publishable research irrelevant to the crises of one's own society" (p. 118). See also Marvin Surkin, 'Sense and Nonsense in Politics', *P.S.* **II**, No.4 (1969) 573-581: "My purpose in this paper is to show that the rigorous adherence to social science methodology adopted from the natural sciences and its claims to objectivity and value neutrality function as a guise for what is in fact becoming an increasingly ideological, non-objective role for social science knowledge in the service of the dominant institutions in American society" purpose in this paper is to show that the rigorous adherence to social science methodology (p. 573).

Marylin Goldberg, 'On the Exploitation of Women', *Liberation*, quoted in Edward Grossman, 'In Pursuit of the American Woman', *Harper's*, February 1970, p. 56. At the 1969 Convention of the American Sociological Association (San Francisco, September 1-4) there appeared on the list of the generally reasonable and useful demands of the Women's Caucus the claim for the teaching of women's sociology by women sociologists to women students in all sociology departments.

The tendency of black political leaders, black social scientists and also some white radical social scientists to insinuate that any analysis of some aspect of the life of American Negroes which they reject, is the result of the thinking of a *white* social scientist who necessarily does not understand *blacks*, has no feeling for them, is a 'subtle racist' - and worst of all, belongs to the category of 'White Liberals'. This tendency came first to the fore in the controversy around D. P. Moynihan's Report on the Negro Family in 1965. A more recent and more violent example is the controversy about Black Culture in the *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 1967-1968; Douglas Davidson, 'Black Culture and Liberal Sociology', pp. 164-175, and his 'The Dilemma of the White Liberal: a Rejoinder to Kaplan', *op. cit.*, pp. 181-183.

At the 1969 Convention of the American Sociological Association (San Francisco, September 1-4) the spokesman of the Radical Caucus denounced the executive committee of the association as 'lackeys of the Establishment'; (the committee had not accepted the radicals' demand to come out with a resolution for immediate, unilateral withdrawal from Viet-Nam, but had appointed a committee on the problem of the political involvement of the association and had decided to poll the membership). Thereafter the spokesman of the Black Caucus denounced the association in its entirety as 'racist'.

See W. Lloyd Warner, *Social Class in America*, 1949; Harper Torch, New York, 1960; the bibliography at the end includes the major titles of his school. See also next note.

See Talcott Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Theory*, revised edition, Free Press, Glencoe, 1959, for a bibliography of Parsons to 1949. See also Robert K. Merton *et al.*, *Sociology Today, Problems and Prospects*, in 2 volumes, New York 1959; Harper Torch, New York, 1964.

C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford Univ. Press, 1959; paper, Grove Press, New York, 1961, Chapter 2, Grand Theory, pp. 25-49.

Surveys of the literature on suburbia are, for example, Dennis H. Wrong, 'Suburbs and Myths of Suburbia', in *Readings in Introductory Sociology* (ed. by Dennis H. Wrong and Henry L. Gracey), MacMillan, New York, 1967, pp. 358-364, and Maurice R. Stein, *The Eclipse of Community*, Princeton 1960; Harper Torch, New York, 1964, Chapter 9, pp. 199-226.

Harold J. Laski, *On The Communist Manifesto*, 'An Introduction Together with the Original Text and Prefaces by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels', Foreword For the American Edition by T. B. Bottomore, Pantheon Books, Random House, New York, 1967, pp. 145, 146: "Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of the old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands, just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the

level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole."

Max Weber, 'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy', in *Max Weber on the Methodology of the Social Sciences* (ed. by E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch), Free Press, Glencoe, 1949, and 'Science as a Vocation', in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (ed. By H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills), Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 1946. See also Hans Albert, 'Theorie, Verstehen und Geschichte', *Journal for General Philosophy of Science* 1 (1970) 1-23, especially Section V, for a more detailed treatment of Weber along the same lines.

R. M. McIver, *Society, Its Structure and Changes*, Long & Smith, New York, 1931, pp. 529-530: "Incompetent to deal with the subjectivity of experience the behaviorists would discard it altogether. Seeking to get rid of subjective terms they get rid of the social fact, since it is fact only as created by and known to experience."

For a survey of the Chicago school see M. R. Stein, *The Eclipse of Community*, *op. cit.*, Chapter 1, pp. 13-46; for a comment on a more modern variant of it, the neo-Chicagoans concerned chiefly with deviant sub-cultures, see Alvin W. Gouldner, 'Anti-Minotaur: the Myth of a Value-Free Sociology', in *Sociology on Trial* (ed. by Maurice Stein and Arthur Vidich), Prentice Hall, Englewood-Cliffs, 1963, pp. 35-52, especially pp. 46, 47.

W. H. Warner, *Social Class in America*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

See, however, E. Gellner's thoughtful 'Time and Theory in Social Anthropology', *Mind* 67 (1958) 182-202. See also C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, *op. cit.*, p. 42. See also Daniel Foss, 'The

World View of Talcott Parsons' in *Sociology on Trial* (ed. by Stein and Vidich), *op. cit.*, pp. 96-126.

Robert K. Merton, 'Manifest and Latent Functions' in his *Social Theory and Social Structure*, Glencoe, Free Press, 1949, pp. 21-81.

C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, *op. cit.*, p. 226 (last page).

*Op. cit.*, p. 125ff.

Alvin W. Gouldner, *op. cit.*, p. 52: "To do otherwise is to usher in an era of spiritless technicians.... If we today concern ourselves exclusively with the technical proficiency of our students and reject all responsibility for their moral sense, or their lack of it, then we may some day be compelled to accept responsibility for having trained a generation willing to serve in a future Auschwitz."

Gouldner, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

Daniel Foss, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

See note 9.

See, for example, Irwin Sperber, *op. cit.*, p. 113. New left sociologists and political scientists denounced with special vehemence the pluralistic models or theories of the U.S. economy, society, and government. The new left social science literature abounds in abusive terms like 'imperialist', 'fascist', 'oppressive', 'exploitative', 'racist', 'genocidal', 'colonizing', etc., not to mention mild terms such as 'decadent', 'one-dimensional', 'alienating', or 'manipulative' which claim to be an exhaustive characterization of 'The System' or 'The Establishment'.

The major philosophical and methodological foundations of the new left attitudes, which deny the possibility of objectivity and of communication

with opponents are the following. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, London 1962; *Sense and Nonsense*, Evanston 1964; *Humanism and Terror*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1969. Ernest Becker, *Revolution in Psychiatry: The New Understanding of Man*, Free Press, New York, 1964; *The Structure of Evil: An Essay on the Unification of the Science of Man*, Braziller, New York, 1968.

The only understandable contention in the whole of this literature is that objectivity belongs to the domain of the natural sciences, not to the human sciences - which is as old as German Romanticism.

What the movement has taken from Marx is chiefly the idea of the unity of theory and praxis. It means for them, however, that proper thinking is only possible after one is committed, in the existentialist's sense, to *the* Revolution.

Marvin Surkin, *op. cit.*, p. 578.

*Ibid*, p. 579.

Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1969, p. 8.

According to a newspaper report on Mark Rudd's visit to Boston University immediately after the Columbia revolt, this young revolutionary leader was then leafing through a copy of the Communist Manifesto which somebody had given to him, and which he then was seeing for the first time.

For instance the authors of the magazine *Anarchy*.

Thus for instance all the authors represented in *The New Left Reader* (ed. by Carl Oglesby), Grove Press, New York, 1969, still advocate the 'abolition of capitalism' as a matter of course; their attitudes toward the Soviet government vary from mild humorous (?) remarks on dogmatism

(Fidel Castro) to severe criticism for being 'politically irresponsible' (C. Wright Mills). But none even attempts a rational analysis of what went wrong with the Soviet revolution, the first revolution which successfully 'abolished capitalism'.