

POST-*.ISM & THE THIRD WORLD: A theoretical reassessment & fragments from Brazil and India

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1 INTRODUCTION

As we move towards the 21st century, one single consensus seems to exist in social sciences: the acceptance of our time as a period of intense restructuring of the economic, political and cultural orders, from local to international levels. This global restructuring is being recognized to have more impact upon social theory - and more recently, upon planning and development studies - than expected not long ago.

Our purpose in this paper is to explore the debates about modernity and development in the context of crisis and the current global restructuring. Our central question asks how these debates inform and relate to discussions and issues of political praxis in *third world* societies³. In reviewing a limited portion of the extensive recent literature on the debate modernity/postmodernity, we felt (at a gut pre-rational level) that these discussions are important to, and intersect with, those attempts at emancipation in third world societies, especially those who for so long have hated and yet seek *development*.

Development has become a privileged window from which to analyze the implications of the Western project of modernity for third world peoples since it conveys one of the central promises of that

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3 We use *third world* in lowercase format as an attempt to de-contextualize the term from its original concept of political non-alignment and from its variations in ideological and politico-economic practices towards underdevelopment. For us, quite simply, *third world* means those cultural groups, regionally, racially or sexually defined, who were excluded as subjects (thus, objectified or colonized) from the Western bourgeois project of modernity.

project, i.e., the promise of emancipation. Therefore, the hot question for students of development issues in third world societies (and the potential disruption of the first/second world dichotomy only updates the question) remains: What is development? More specifically, in the space-time context: What is development in third world societies coming to be nowadays?

Our definition of the third world as *cultural groups* implies an understanding of the term which can not be restricted to spatial and/or political economic aspects. Spatially, it is necessarily encompassing, meaning regions defined as continents, countries, macro/micro-regions, metropolitan sectors, etc. Politico-economically, it encompasses populations in the East and West, North and South, which have a history of oppression, exploitation and powerlessness. However, we believe the cultural emphasis demands and immediately introduces the basic historical-geographic (time and space) dimension in which those cultural groups are embedded. Therefore, we feel that this definition is particularly appropriate for the times in which we live.

So, what of the times we live in?

It seems that many of the modern concepts encompassing broad theoretical bodies which have informed coherent strategies have grown old and become inadequate to deal with contemporary social processes. Apparently, gone are the days when *Ford.ism* ruled unchallenged the industrial world, *Industrial.ism* appeared as the only valid path to the future, *Developmental.ism* was seen as the unquestionable road to overcome *Colonial.ism*, and *Modern.ism* was just a natural outcome. From a radical critical perspective, *Structural.ism* no more provides all the necessary explanations to the various expressions of *Capital.ism*, and *National.ism* has been weakened as the main political paradigm, as *Social.ism* does not seem to be the inevitable end of the road. Nowadays, all these *isms*⁴ seem to have been shaken in their bases and challenged in their legitimacy, as else all grand narratives.

Are we in a time of *post-*.isms*⁵?

4 From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary:

ism - a distinctive doctrine, practice or school (often used contemptuously);
-ism - suffix expressing action (hooliganism), state (pauperism), doctrine (Freudianism), characteristic (heroism) etc.

5 We recognize here the hegemony of PC-DOS language among the computerized languages.

If so, what does that mean for the third world?

Whatever answers are given to these questions, restructuring manifestations in the *other* world - the third, we are calling it - have often been neglected in the current debates. We attempt to address some of these questions, making a preliminary effort to understand the contemporary crisis in its relationships with post-modernism and development studies in the past decades. Modernization and developmental efforts in two third world countries⁶, Brazil and India, illustrate responses and recurrent attempts at emancipation, incomplete projects of modernity. We briefly explore some of the possibilities of those projects of modernity in a *post-*.ism era*.

2 A NECESSARY DISCUSSION ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY CRISIS

2.1 About the concept of crisis

Economic, political and ideological expressions of the *general crisis of capitalism* have been stressed throughout the century, and more emphatically since the 1960's when the post-war boom began to show signs of exhaustion. A lot has been written about different aspects of the contemporary crisis, adding to the debates on overproduction and underconsumption as major threats for capitalist reproduction: the crisis of the capitalist State (O'Connor, 1973; Poulantzas, 1977); the accumulation crisis (Mandel, 1975,1980; O'Connor, 1984); and the current approaches of particular critical aspects or stages of the process of capitalist (re)production: Fordism, the Welfare State, the international monetary system, etc.

The various efforts to qualify the current capitalist crises have directly or indirectly dealt with the crisis of the State.⁷ However, expressions of the current crisis are also linked to deeper questionings lying at the heart of both state capitalism and state socialism as

6 We define *third world countries* as those nation-states in which there is a predominance of *third world cultural groups*.

7 O'Connor (1973) stresses the modern capitalist State's functions of maintaining and creating the conditions for *accumulation*, and its effort to maintain and create the conditions of social harmony and cooperation, through *legitimization*. The tendency of growth of government social expenses to fulfill the legitimization function, as opposed to social capital (investment and consumption) to fulfill the accumulation function, has led to the rather consensual 'fiscal crisis of the State.'

experienced in contemporary days. That is, to the questioning of Western (or European) ontological and epistemological roots themselves, leading to discussions of a legitimation crisis (Habermas, 1975), and beyond that, of a crisis of representation (Foucault, 1973).

In fact, the concept of crisis seems too broad to be used without qualifications. In its Greek roots the idea of *krisis* refers to decision making, to the turning point, but also to the critique, to the reconstruction of the liaisons of the parts with totality, with the whole. In Chinese, the idea of crisis is represented (quite straight forwardly) by the juxtaposition of two ideograms meaning *risk* and *opportunity*. In every sense, the idea of crisis presupposes a negation of a linear process, implying instead a dialectical dynamic to find resolution in new contradictory unities. One of the major expressions of this dialectical movement is the interaction between subject(ive) and object(ive) causes, or else, between the internal and external dimensions of the crisis.

Habermas draws from classical aesthetics to state that "...from Aristotle to Hegel, crisis signifies the turning point of a fateful process that, despite all objectivity, does not simply impose itself from outside and does not remain external to the identity of the persons caught up in it". In fact, the state of crisis is only to be reverted if participants are strengthened by "shattering the mythical power of fate through the formation of new identities." (1975:2)

In Western medicine, the term has been used since Hippocrates to mean the state of a disease where death or recovery are possible outcomes. It refers to an external objectivity, internally grounded, but where consciousness plays no part. What is at stake is "...whether the organism's self-healing powers are sufficient for recovery" (Ibid, 1; also see O'Connor, 1987).

In economics, the idea of crisis dates back to the seventeenth century to refer to market disequilibria. In the nineteenth century the term conotated the idea of a *pathological* manifestation upon a healthy organism, encompassing general and *sectoral crises* (crises in specific economic sectors). Crisis was taken to be caused by *objective* and *external* factors: natural catastrophes, wars, financial speculation, political manipulation, in short, the *excesses* of men or nature acting upon society (see O'Connor, 1987).

In twentieth century neo-classical economics, crisis has also been seen as a pathology, a contingencial moment of disequilibrium in an otherwise harmonic system. From this perspective, *natural* equilibrium is restored as soon as the *ill cause* - usually external, although with internal repercussions - is eliminated. This approach,

prevalent in bourgeois social sciences in general, follows a positive conception of history based on aprioristic and absolute normative ideas of truth in science and in society itself. In this context, most analyses of crisis locate its roots in specific instances of society, and given the dominance of the economic instance within the capitalist mode of production, the economic approach tends to be the logical outcome. Other approaches either become isolated appendices of an encompassing economic system or else are fragmented in self-contained analyses.

The idea that best expresses the economist bias in the context of bourgeois social theory is *economic growth*, bringing efficiency and productivity to the center of *modern* theories of society. The Marxian concept of development of the forces of production is the counterpart to the ideology of economic growth, and has also led to substantive levels of economist determinism.

However, in Marxism, the teleological perspective of societal evolution produced an economist bias radically opposed to the bourgeois conception. Defining crisis as *intrinsic* to capitalism and generated by internal contradictions that would inevitably lead capitalism to a dead end, the so-called orthodox Marxists discarded possibilities of transformation not directly dictated by the development of the forces of production. The acceptance of the economic infrastructure as the dominant instance and the view of socio-political and cultural-ideological aspects as mechanically subordinated to the economic infrastructure eventually led to the trap known as *economic determinism*. Worse, perhaps, it produced a mechanistic and *objective* perspective which reduced class struggle to an appendix of a marxist economic theory. Such a conception, dominant in a Marxism taken over by Stalinism (in spite of Lenin's refutations of the Second International and of Gramsci's attacks on vulgar economicism), reified the idea of a *permanent crisis* as a failproof of the inevitable imminent end of capitalism.⁸

Poulantzas argues that this mechanistic trap of economicism and evolutionism was taken to such an extreme that monopoly

8 This conception departs from the rather consensual *structural contradictions of capitalist accumulation*, therefore assuming the *internal* character of capitalist crises. Crises are thus engendered within the development of capitalism itself, and intensified in its imperialist-monopoly stage. As the organic composition of capital tends to increase, given the relation between constant capital and variable capital, the consequence is a tendency of the rate of profit to fall, establishing a state of *permanent crisis* in capitalism, that would eventually lead to its self-dissolution - the dead end.

capitalism came to be seen solely as a manifestation of the *general crisis of capitalism*. Such a generalization would mean that capitalist reproduction throughout the monopoly stage was made of crises, thus "dissolving the very specificity of the concept of crisis for, in this sense, we can also say that capitalism has always been in crisis." (Poulantzas, 1977: 6).⁹

Current critiques have emphasized both politics and culture as forces that confront the economic logic of capitalism redefining directions, limits and forms of reproduction. The extension of these critiques into the realm of crises has produced new interpretations, some of which we briefly review in order to highlight aspects which affect more closely the unfoldings of crisis as related to modernism and developmentalism in third-world countries.

2.2 Beyond economics: culture and crisis

Many have been the attempts to go beyond economics to interpret contemporary crisis in the world. Jameson (1984), looking from a rather broad neo-marxist perspective, has defined post-modernism as a *new cultural logic*, proper to contemporary *late capitalism* (following Mandel, 1975). Daniel Bell, on the other side, from a traditional bourgeois standpoint, after having characterized contemporary society as 'post-industrial', looks at the critical problematic of capitalism, particularly in the USA, as the result of a 'disjunction of realms'. For Bell, the three realms of western capitalism - technical-economic, political and cultural - have had autonomous developments based, respectively, on 'axial principles' of efficiency, equality and self-realization. The 'cultural contradictions of capitalism' derive from an *adversary culture* developed through *modernism*, which he argues, is an autonomous force that undermines the technical-economic realm and threatens the continued existence of the system (Bell, 1978).¹⁰

9 The crisis of imperialism and monopoly capitalism, as expressed in the Third World, became central in 1970's debates given the dependencista claims of the impossibility of self-sustained growth (based on national bourgeoisies) and of the narrow limits of *dependent capitalist growth*, i.e., the acceptance of the dependent nature of third world economies as inserted within the international division of labor).

10 MacIntyre (1984) and Von Laue (1987) are authors who also try to see the roots of contemporary crises within what could be called the *disjunction of realms*, either as a development within Western history itself (MacIntyre) or as a consequence of the Western dominance in contemporary world (Von Laue).

James O'Connor, however, also from a Marxist approach and focusing on the USA, sees Anglo-American *individualism* as a self-contradictory process expressed in the constitution of the proletariat and of its political struggles within the accumulation processes themselves. For him, individualism has become a central element - *the social cement* - of contemporary crisis "[outliving] its usefulness as a source of economic and social integration". In *consumer capitalism*, it became instead *economically very expensive* and socially and psychologically costly. His emphasis on Marx's theory of capitalist accumulation as "...accumulation of capitalist wealth, on the one side, and capitalist wage labor, on the other..." (1984:24) is an attempt to reunite the economic, socio-political and cultural-ideological instances of capitalist development and stress the specificity of contemporary capitalist conflicts: "More important, the distinction between cultural/ideological, economic, and political processes tended to collapse with the development of *full capitalism*" leading instead to "...limits to accumulation determined by cultural-ideological conditions of economic and social reproduction." (1984: 6).

Individualism is manifested in the "struggles for *more* and for the *self*" and in the transformation of traditional worker struggles based on "individual means to defend local collective ends" to modern class struggle using "more universal collective means to advance individual ends." (Ibid: 8) For O'Connor, accumulation crisis is internally constructed in the mediation of the contradiction of accumulation of wealth, on one side, and of the reproduction of *demanding* and *costly* dispossessed workers, on the other side, building barriers to the accumulation process itself.¹¹

As for capitalism, all the various efforts to qualify the current crises have directly or indirectly dealt with the crisis of the State.¹² If the accumulation crisis puts the modern capitalist State in the center of the stage, given its function of creating the conditions in which profitable capital accumulation is possible, legitimation crisis involves the State in its effort to create the conditions of social harmony and cooperation. In fact the State, a creature that has long

11 In his latest book, O'Connor reviews interpretations of economic and social crises and adds to the debate the psychological dimension of *personality crisis*. He attempts to bring into the contemporary problematic the critical restructuring of "day-to-day lived experiences of real *social* individuals". (1987: 11)

12 See Poulantzas (1977) for several studies on the crisis of the State. For our concerns, works by Buci-Glaucksman, Hirsch, Delilez, Castells and Dulong are the most interesting ones.

transcended its original bourgeois forms, is at the basis of the current transformations affecting modern societies. Mandel has given us perhaps the most encompassing theoretical framework to analyze the State in *late* capitalism, overcoming the gross separation between base and superstructure and setting the theoretical basis for many of the attempts to bring culture and politics to the center of the debate.

Jurgen Habermas merges bourgeois system theory and neo-Marxism in an attempt to operationalize Marx's concept of crisis: "My aim is rather [than debate Marx's overtone in his social-scientific concept of crisis] to introduce systematically a social-scientifically useful concept of crisis." (1975: 2) He sets limits to the concept of crisis by saying: "...only when members of a society experience structural alterations as critical for continued existence and feel their social identity threatened can we speak of crises. (...) Crisis states assume the form of a disintegration of social institutions." (Ibid.:3)

Habermas goes outside Marxism in his attempt to restore the concept of totality and the universality of the Enlightenment project, an effort that he has maintained all through his work.¹³ His interpretation of crisis as manifested in a crisis of rationality leads him to reestablish connections between the economic instance and other dimensions of totality. He moves into the political, social and cultural realms by seeing crisis in social systems as critical disturbances at the *system* level occurring only and when social integration fails at the level of *life-worlds*, i.e., of the normative structures given by goals, values and institutions within society itself.¹⁴

It is important to notice that Habermas's search for rationality lies beyond the limits of European rationalism. Although he is emphasizing (*self*)*reflection* in Marx's and Freud's terms, Habermas

13 Jay (1984) identifies three other non-marxist influences in Habermas, besides system theory: psychological learning theory, the linguistics trend within Anglo-American philosophy and the Weberian/Parsonian sociological tradition of modernization.

14 Habermas identifies four crisis tendencies which are specific to the advanced capitalist system: an economic crisis (as the State acts either *naturally* or as a monopoly capitalist agent); a rationality crisis (at the level of outputs regarding diverse interests); a legitimization crisis (at the level of inputs regarding internal demands) and a motivation crisis (deriving from erosion at the life-world level) (1975: 45-50). O'Connor (1973), sees two expressions of crisis: accumulation crisis, if the State cannot produce social capital in order to "maintain or create the conditions in which profitable accumulation is possible"; and legitimization crisis, if the State cannot maintain or create the conditions, through social expenses, for social harmony.

also locates "the ultimate source of a dialectical holism ... in the pre-scientific, pre-reflective experiences of what Husserl and Schutz had called the *Lebenswelt* (life-world):

'But insights of this sort [about the coherence of theory with total societal process pointing towards experience] stem, in the last instance, from the fund of pre-scientifically accumulated experience which has not yet excluded, as merely subjective elements, the basic resonance of a life-historically centered social environment, that is, the education acquired by the total human subject. This prior experience of society as totality shapes the outline of the theory in which it articulates itself and through whose constructions it is checked anew against experiences.'"
(Jay [quoting Habermas], 1984:472)

The connection between social integration, given by the life-world, and system integration, expressed by the system itself is the problem to be equationed. For Habermas, however, the life-world takes precedence, given its existence before system alienation is built, and persisting after and within that. Therefore, Habermas grounds both the ontological and epistemological foundations of Western culture on everyday economic core. The implications of such a theoretical position for contemporary debate are many, with particular unfoldings in the third world.¹⁵

The variety of expressions of the current crisis have led to a deeper level of questions, i.e., the questioning of European culture's ontological and epistemological roots. Central principles of the Western culture as developed from Europe's eighteenth century Enlightenment, such as scientific and technological rationality, the political organization in nation states and the idea of progress itself, are being questioned. This questioning lies at the heart of both state capitalism and state socialism as experienced in our days.

2.3 Representation and crisis

Over the past two decades several changes (ruptures) in economics, politics and culture have transformed the way we think,

¹⁵ Jameson explores Habermas's position in his *cultural logic of late capitalism* and in his discussion about the importance of collective groups in the Third World (Jameson, 1984; Murphy, 1987).

act and understand the world around us. In response, are witnessing broad changes in the production and constitution of knowledge. More, the blurring and restructuring of fields and discursive practices that constitute knowledge and a broad based reassessment of the dominant paradigms in the human sciences. This *intellectual* crisis represents the most serious challenge to the epistemological and historiographical premises of the *sciences* since their emergence in the nineteenth century (Johnson & Taylor, 1986:10). This condition has also been understood as a *crisis of representation* (Geertz, 1988; Said, 1989).

There appears to be general consensus that the crisis of representation arises from uncertainty about the adequate means of describing social reality. The problematic can be seen at the epistemological and ontological levels. The epistemological problem lies in the *description* or *representation* of social reality. "To represent someone or even something has now become an endeavor as complex and as problematic as an asymptote, with consequences for certainty and decideability as fraught with difficulties as can be imagined" (Said, 1989:206). At the ontological level, the idea of a *social reality* itself becomes problematized.¹⁶

One of the impacts of these changes in the University, is the "loosening of the hold over fragmented scholarly communities of either specific totalizing visions of a general paradigmatic style of organizing research." Thus the crisis tends to "make problematic what were taken for granted as facts or certainties on which the validity of paradigms rested. (...) The most interesting theoretical debates in a number of fields have shifted to the level of method, to problems of epistemology, interpretation, and discursive forms of representation themselves" (Marcus & Fischer, 1986:9).

The origins of the crisis of representation can be dated to European Enlightenment. Foucault (1973) argues that the meanings of Man, observation and society (the core components of representation) were in transformation between the classical age (before the French Revolution) and modern times (the 1830s). He argues that there was a time when the world, its order and human beings existed, but *Man* did not - the *Age of Representations*. In contrast, the era of Man - *Modernity* - began when representations ceased to provide a reliable grid for the knowledge of things. The development of modern sciences changed the relationship between man and knowledge. Ra-

16 The problematization of *social reality* itself is most obvious in the post-modern framework, to which we will turn later.

binow (1989) argues, after Foucault, that modernity was not distinguished by the attempt to study man objectively - such projects had already a long history - nor by the attempt to achieve clear and distinct knowledge through analyses of the subject. Rather, the development of modern sciences had made man both object and subject: "Man appears as an object of knowledge and as a subject that knows" (Foucault, 1973:319). Thus with the erosion of the classical consensus, certain things such as words, commodities and other signs no longer comprised a *transparent medium through which Being shone* (Said, 1989). Thus Marx's *unmasking* had not only to "contend with consciousness of linguistic forms and conventions, but also with pressures of such transpersonal, transhuman, and transcultural forces such as class, the unconsciousness, gender, race, and structure" (Said, 1989:206).

If the transition from the classical age to the modern period is marked by a *crisis of representation* in the fields of knowledge, is the contemporary transition (rupture) from the modern era to the next (post-modern) also punctuated with the present crisis of representation? If so, what are the new discursive practices?

As noted earlier, we live in a new period marked by changes in representational practice (Marcus & Fischer, 1986; Johnson & Taylor, 1988). Realistic epistemology conceived of representation "as the reproduction, for subjectivity, of an objectivity which lies outside of it. (...) [This objectivity] projects a mirror theory of knowledge, and art [culture, we could add], whose fundamental evaluative categories are those of adequacy, accuracy, and Truth itself" (Jameson, 1984b:viii). However, in the present moment representation ceases to be a reproduction of an objectivity lying outside of it, nor is Truth itself the fundamental legitimizer. This is what Lyotard (1984) has called the new non- or post-referential *epistemology* for which the justification of scientific work is not to produce an adequate model or replication of some outside reality, but rather to produce more work, to generate *new ideas* again and again, an intellectual recycling in order to *make them new*.

In the post-referential *epistemology*, political and discursive practice no longer rests on a critique of the real, rather it rests on the political interpretation of the image. This is particularly reflected in the works of Debord (1967), Said (1983), and Baudrillard (1981, 1986, 1988).

Situationist Guy Debord was one of earliest practitioners of post-referential practice. To Debord (1967) the *spectacle* was capi-

tal-accumulated until it became an image.¹⁷ Debord noticed the increasing accumulation of spectacles - entertainment, traffic, skyscrapers, newscasts, art tours,...etc. As capital accumulation proceeded, *everything that was directly lived was moved away into a representation.*

Debord's work posits two lessons in within the realm of post-referential practice: on subjectivity and on intervention.¹⁸ Debord argued that one would not want to intervene or respond to spectacle, because the spectacle dramatized an inner spectacle of participation and choice - a dramatization of an ideology of freedom. Thus the spectacle created a consumer democracy of false desires and choices.

Thus on the terms of its particular hegemony, the spectacle naturally produced spectators, not actors. The individual or spectator was *mechanized* as the spectacle seized "subjective emotions and experiences, changed those once evanescent phenomena into objective, replicable commodities, placed them on the market, set their prices, and sold them back to those who had, once, brought emotions and experiences out of themselves - to people who, as prisoners of the spectacle, could now find such things only on the market." (Marcus, 1989:101).¹⁹

For Debord, the only true intervention would be the spectator that jumped up from the audience and insisted that everyone play by his/her rules. If this situation were to occur, then a real choice would be presented, a choice containing all the intangibles of "epistemology, aesthetics, politics, and social life." (Marcus, 1989:100)

Jameson conveniently sums up the epistemological and theoretical contributions of Baudrillard (also Debord's, to a lesser degree) under two headers: "the peculiar new status of the image, the *material* or what might better be called the *literal* signifier, a materiality or literality from which the older sensory richness of the medium

17 For Debord, modern capitalism had by the 1950s expanded far beyond the mere production of obvious necessities and luxuries; having satisfied the needs of the body, capitalism as spectacle turned to the desires of the soul (Marcus, 1989:101).

18 These are especially important when examining the relationship between subjects, objects and projects of development.

19 This idea of the commodification of emotions and experiences is similar to what Mandel (1975) has called *the mechanization of the superstructure*, and somewhat similar to Deleuze's and Baudrillard's *culture of the simulacrum*. Examples of these *special* commodities are the suit that wore status and the LP that plays identity.

has been abstracted" and the "emergence ... of an aesthetic of textuality or what is often described as schizophrenic time [and the end of] ...all depth, especially of historicity itself, with the subsequent appearance of pastiche and nostalgia art, and including the supersession of the accompanying models of depth-interpenetration in philosophy." (1984:195).

The post-referential epistemology has been used by both the Right and the Left. This is what Said has called Reaganism (1983:135). In the Age of Ronald Reagan, the politics of interpretation (versus the politics of objective reality) became the dominant form of discursive and political practice. Said argues that it is precisely this type of politics that must be enacted in resistance, and as such this type of politics becomes rooted within a theory of culture.

3 MODERNITY: CRISIS OR EXHAUSTION?

Modernity is again in the spotlight. Perhaps it is not as fashionable to be modern as it was in the turn of the century, but it is certainly *in*, in some circles, to be post-modern.

The debate on post-modernity has been very intense. Habermas and Lyotard have represented the central oppositional perspectives within the debate, rather dichotomic in their critical rebuttal of each other. We will not try to resolve this debate in this paper (Thank God!) nor even summarize it. But we will actually try to stress some of its aspects that pertain more closely to the Third World's insertion in it, once that has not been frequently discussed or clearly in the literature.

3.1 Modernity and postmodernity: incomplete and autonomous projects

The most widely accepted definition of *modern* is perhaps Max Weber's emphasis on the process of secularization of society starting with the Enlightenment: the separation from religion of what became three distinct and rather autonomous realms: art, moral and knowledge, freeing aesthetic, ethic and epistheme from its close ties with the sacred and theological. The correspondence of ideas to facts, which established the basis for the duality rationalism/empiricism, opened the doors for a new society in which everything could be doubted and questioned - and

therefore, transformed - and in which social cohesion came to have stronger bases in the future than in the past.

The term modern can be traced back to the 5th. century to distinguish the Christian present from the Roman pagan past; it re-appears in the 12th century with the Aristotelian revival and later again with Descartes and Bacon (Habermas, 1983). However, it assumes a quite different character in the midst of the nineteenth century as it draws from the ideals of the French Enlightenment, eventually becoming *L'Esprit Nouveaux* that characterized the golden years of bourgeois cultural revolution in Europe. It is from this period on that a *classical modernity*²⁰ becomes recognizable as a cultural and aesthetic movement within artistic manifestation.

This *classical modernity* is the modernity Berman (1988) describes when emphasizing the particular sense of an everyday life embedded in intense transformations and constant negations and restructurings. This is also the modernity this century has lived with and which has encompassed the logic of industrial capitalism and dominant bourgeois culture (in spite of Bell). This teleological vision found its best expression in the idea of *progress*, a metaparadigm at the basis of the last hundred-year's attempts at emancipation.

Baudelaire is often cited as having best exemplified, in his chronicles, the flavor and spirit of modernity, doing "...more than anyone in the nineteenth century to make the men and women of his century aware of themselves as moderns." (Berman, 1988:132). Foucault calls the attention to the fact that "...modernity for Baudelaire is not simply a form of relationship to the present; it is also "a mode of relationship that has to be established with oneself." (1984:41) Such an attitude is what leads to the constitution of an autonomous project, of a self-elaboration process that implies the attitude of self-invention, reflecting what Foucault sees as a *point of departure* that connects us to the Enlightenment: the understanding of *modernity as an attitude* (instead of an epoch) whose constant reactivation constitutes the philosophical *ethos* of permanent critique of our historical era.

This attitude of modernity is presented by Foucault as a voluntary choice, a way of thinking, feeling, acting and behaving that

20 Habermas links the idea of *modern* to the idea of *classic* by dismissing the stylish character which might have in other times be tied to the notion of modernity: "...that which is modern preserves a secret tie to the classical. (...) a modern work becomes a classic because it has once been authentically modern. (...) The relation between *modern* and *classical* has definitely lost a fixed historical reference." (1983: 4).

defines both a sense of belonging and a task, that is, "...an attitude that makes it possible to grasp the *heroic* aspect of the present moment... the will to *heroize* the present." (Ibid:40) In this context, there is no being *for* or *against* Enlightenment (or Modernity). Instead, one must inquire about the "contemporary limits of the necessary, i.e., toward what is no longer indispensable for the constitution of ourselves as autonomous subjects." (Ibid:43)

However, Foucault argues *positively* that we have moved from a problematic of recognizing the *necessary limits* of our practice within rationality to that of looking for *possible transgressions* from the universal, the necessary *order of things*.²¹ Foucault insists on a criticism which is not transcendental or metaphysical, but *genealogical in design and archaeological in method*, and necessarily experimental: "...a historico-practical test of the limits that we may go beyond." (Ibid:46) To summarize Foucault's position in his own words:

"The critical ontology of ourselves has to be considered not, certainly, as a theory, a doctrine, nor even as a permanent body of knowledge that is accumulating; it has to be conceived as an attitude, an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them."
(1984:50)

The debate about the legacy of the Enlightenment and the condition of modernity is now pointing towards a possible *rupture* with that kind of modernity we mentioned before, leading to post-modern/modernity. Nothing entirely new, post-modern advocates would tend to agree; nothing long dead being revived nor a renaissance of values in themselves - no *neo-anything*. *Post-everything*, instead; success(ion). Western's Enlightenment has (been) succeeded and the industrial civilization has gained global dimension. The idea of progress, however, has died and the Enlightenment's project of emancipation is exhausted. What comes next - after modern.ism, progress.ism, development.ism, industrial.ism, ford.ism, colonial.ism, capital.ism, etc? In late capitalism's *computerized* superstructure, is there a *post *.* attitude*?

21 Endless would be the contemporary examples of such a philosophical position. It includes from biologists searching for the contingencial dimension of life (such as Monod's *Chance and Necessity*) to statisticians paying special attention to *deviations from the normal distribution*, instead of merely dismissing them.

Habermas's position in this debate has been marked by a critical attitude toward post-, anti- or pre-modernism. He insists - and his most frontal opponent has been Lyotard²² - on trying to save the project of modernity, *to keep the baby from being thrown out with the bathwater*, he says. For him, the project of modernity is an incomplete project, and its artistic expression is not the project itself: "In sum, the project of modernity has not yet been fulfilled. And the reception of art is only one of at least three of its aspects. The project aims at a differentiated relinking of modern culture with an everyday praxis that still depends on vital heritages, but would be impoverished through mere traditionalism." (Habermas, 1983: 13).²³

In fact, Habermas's efforts go beyond the mere defense of Enlightenment values and modernism as a project to be saved from destruction. Habermas aims at "reconciling the decayed parts of modernity" (Jay, 1984:503) through a further commitment to the redefinition of rationality. To do this, as we have seen, he moves beyond Marx (and Freud), whose *unmasking* projects he claims to be trying to *ground in a more comprehensive theory* (Rorty, 1985). But he also sets the grounds for his *rationality* beyond the discourse of Western rationalism and beyond its teleological practice, at the system level. Habermas sets his roots in life-world itself, in day-to-day life, in a similar attitude to what Foucault called the attitude of a permanent critique.²⁴

Therefore, at this level, the opposition between Habermas and Lyotard [and Foucault] does not appear as confrontational. It is only when the legitimation of the grand discourses stemming from the European Enlightenment is put in doubt that this opposition is clearly manifested.

Habermas's combat with *relativism and decisionism* as *context-dependent* standpoints aims at preserving universalistic standards and normative procedure differentials. He says one can not speak of *the pathology of modernity* or of *the deformed realization of reason in history*, without presupposing a normative standard for judging what is pathological and deformed. He relies on an *aesthetic of the beautiful*, says Lyotard, hoping that art might help explore

22 See particularly *The Postmodern Condition*, 1986.

23 The other two dimensions are "...objective science and universal morality and law...", to be developed, as art, according to their inner logic. (Habermas, 1983: 9)

24 Habermas, however, categorizes Foucault (and Derrida) as a *young conservative*. He calls conservatives, of various types, all those authors who have dismissed modernity as a valid project for contemporary times, an attitude that he fears will create alliances between *anti-modernists* and *pre-modernists* (Habermas, 1983).

living situations (historically analyzable within a life-world context, we could add). Lyotard, instead, claims to pursue and exalt the *sublime*, Kant's "strong and equivocal emotion: [it carries within it] both pleasure and pain." (Lyotard, 1984: 77)

For Lyotard, "the postmodern would be that which, in the modern, puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself." (Ibid: 81) Postmodern works can not be judged from *aprioristic* rules and categories onto those are what the work is actually looking for. Instead, the rules are to be formulated in the process of construction itself. "*Post modern* would have to be understood according to the paradox of the future (*post*) anterior (*modo*)." (Ibid.)

It seems that Lyotard is following close Foucault's path and *pushing the limits*: "...our business [is] not to supply reality but to invent allusions to the conceivable which cannot be presented." (Ibid.) And do not expect that totality that only Hegel's transcendental illusion can offer, at the high price of *terror*. Instead, Lyotard incites *a war on totality* and the activation of *differences*.

"Can we still, in our time, provide a rational justification for universal normative standards? Or are we faced with relativism, decisionism, or emotivism which hold that ultimate norms are arbitrary and beyond rational warrantability?" These are questions asked by Richard Bernstein, who adds that an affirmative answer to the first one and a negative to the second are conditions for the very possibility of a critical social theory with the practical intent of emancipation. (Bernstein, 1985:4)

For Lyotard, however, the postmodern condition arises exactly from the exhaustion of the ideals of universal progress and human emancipation. He proclaims the end of any science that legitimates itself with reference to a meta discourse, any science grounded on philosophies.²⁵ The post-modern condition, instead, implies "incredulity towards metanarratives." A *radical* attitude towards Enlightenment's epistemology and ontology leading to a rupture with modernism, a *radical* modernity at the roots of post-modernism itself. "A work can become modern only if it is first postmodern. Postmodernism thus understood is not modernism at its end but in the nascent state, and this state is constant." (Lyotard, 1984:79).

The opposition between Lyotard (and Foucault) and Habermas is clear when examining their attitudes toward the project of

²⁵ See Rorty (1985) for an analysis of Lyotard's and Habermas's approaches to the *ends* of science in contemporary world.

Enlightenment and Modernism are confronted. While the former(s) are ready to attack the bourgeois construction that has illuminated our *modern* era, the latter insists on that project, taking it to be incomplete and in crisis, but not exhausted. Habermas supports the project of modernity "...albeit with a strong dose of skepticism over aims, a lot of anguishing over the relation between means and ends, and a certain pessimism as to the possibility of realizing such a project under contemporary economic and political conditions." (Harvey, 1989: 13) In his pro-modernist position, Habermas reaffirms "the supreme value of the modern and repudiation of the theory, as well as the practice, of postmodernism. For Habermas, however, the vice of postmodernism consists centrally in its politically reactionary function, as the attempt everywhere to discredit a modernist impulse Habermas himself associates with bourgeois Enlightenment and with the latter's still universalizing and utopian spirit. ...[His vision of history] seeks to maintain the promise of *liberalism* and the essentially Utopian content of the first, universalizing bourgeois ideology (equality, civil rights, humanitarianism, free speech, and open media) over against the failure of those ideals to be realized in the development of capital itself." (Jameson, 1988: 107)

3.2 Modernity and the other: linking first and third worlds

What is the relationship between the crisis/exhaustion of modernity in the *core* and the changes in the third world?

For Lyotard, the post-modern condition came about because modernity exhausted itself in the Europe and the West. This is postulated as exhaustion that resulted from developments within itself, i.e., developments within the First World alone. Habermas makes no explicit reference to a spatial dimension of the crisis. Is it a Western crisis or is it a global crisis?

Two views can be found in the limited literature on the subject. The first view stresses the role of the Other and third world experiences (Said, 1989; Jameson, 1984); the second view stresses the role of global capitalism, and the synchronic nature of the contemporary crisis (Jameson, 1984, 1986; Mandel, 1975).

Said, in taking debate with Lyotard, has emphasized the role of *the Other* in the process of the de-legitimation of the meta-narratives, and the consequent crisis of modernism:

"They [meta-narratives] lost their legitimation in large measure as a result of the crisis of modernism, which foundered on or was frozen in contemplative irony for various reasons, one of which was the disturbing appearance in Europe of various Others,... Europe and the West, in short, were being asked to take the Other seriously."
(Said, 1989: 222)

Not only did the Other play an important role in the crisis of modernism, but it was crucial in the formation of modernism in Europe. Said argues that "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as sort of surrogate and even underground self" (1989:3). Thus as European modernism crystallized, it became unable to deal with the plurality resulting from a world which had become an *extended reality*. As a result, the Other was produced and managed as an external reality.

Jameson (1984a) in his examination of the intellectual currents during the 1960s has shown how several experiences in the third world influenced and served to de-legitimize, the dominant political-cultural models. Jameson argues that during the sixties new *subjects of history* emerged. These subjects were of non-class types and were both internal and external to the colonial world: women, blacks, students, third world peoples. These new *collective identities* also emerged within the context of new socio-political categories: the colonized, the marginalized, gender. For Jameson, specific historical events created the conditions for the emergence of these new groups and identities. He argues that these conditions were the combination of decolonization and independence movements in the third world²⁶ and of several institutional factors within the United States that had previously excluded certain groups from the political process²⁷ and access to state power.

The emergence of collective identities is closely related to the changing politics of Otherness during the Sixties, for Jameson. This changing politics was premised on Sartrean existentialism and

26 These include the independence of Ghana (1957), the independence of France's sub-Saharan colonies following the Gaullist referendum of 1959, the Algerian Revolution (1957-1962), Maoism in China, and the Cuban Revolution (1959).

27 Jameson mentions the dominance of a specific form of anti-political practice emerging in America with the merger of the AFL with the CIO in 1955, McCarthyism and the consequent expulsion of the Communists from the labor movement, creating a condition that played against blacks, women and minorities in general and privileged the white male.

structuralism and on his conception of the *Look*,²⁸ which was appropriated and inverted by Fanon within the context of a political-cultural struggle between the Colonizer and Colonized. In Fanon's (1961) work, the Look is "rewritten as the act of redemptive violence of Slave against Master, the moment when, in fear and the anxiety of death, the hierarchical positions of Self and Other, Center and Margin, are forcibly reversed, and when the subservient consciousness of the Colonized achieves collective identity and self-affirmation in the face of colonizers in abject fight" (Jameson, 1984:188).

Although Fanon's work has often been seen, in the *core*, as an irresponsible call to violence, as have the works of Mao Zedong, Malcolm X, and most currently Spike Lee, these works represent a significant contribution to a theory of cultural-politics as the *collective reeducation* of the oppressed (and *unrevolutionary working*) classes.²⁹ His work is as important to the understanding of strategies aimed at breaking the habits of subalternity and obedience which have become internalized as a kind of second nature in all the exploited groups and collectives in human history, as the works of Gramsci, and the once official works of Mao.

4 MODERNITY AND DEVELOPMENT: POST-*.ISMS IN THE THIRD WORLD?

4.1 Modernity and development: vicissitudes of two concepts

The project of modernity, with its immanent drive for emancipation based on the encompassing idea of progress, relied on the strengthening of the inner forces to fulfill the potentialities of

28 The *Look* was developed by Sartre in his rewrite of Hegel's Master/Slave chapter. He conceptualizes the Look as the most concrete mode in which one relates to other subjects and struggles with them, in which each one vainly attempts, by looking at the other, to turn the table and transform the baleful alienating gaze of the Other into an object for one's equally alienation gaze.

29 It is interesting to mention the work of Paulo Freire, directly aimed at the *pedagogy of the oppressed*, constituting in some ways a Latin American counterpart to Fanon's work. However, Freire's work was from the start presented in a more *operational* form, given that their theoretical background stems from a broad practice within the Brazilian context of illiteracy and oppression. Freire's theories (and practices) have been adopted, as well as banned and persecuted, in several countries since the 1960's.

society. Nevertheless, that once pluralistic project eventually crystallized through the demands of capital and under particular forces which came to play in the Anglo-American society, particularly in the USA. *The bourgeois utopia was achieved in America*, as Baudrillard (1986) puts it, and that created a *model* of unprecedented hegemony within the progressive bourgeois utopian dream. A rather consensual assumption behind the path to modernization was the acceptance of industrialization as the central feature of economic development. More specifically, American Fordist industrialization became the dominant paradigm with undeniable results in productivity (short term efficiency) and social reproduction (long term efficacy).

Gramsci had attempted to understand the socio-economic and cultural implications of Fordism, its relations with *Americanism* and issues such as *demographic rationalization*, gender, city/ countryside relationships, psychoanalysis, Rotary clubs, Masonry and other expressions of what he already recognized to be a historical epoch in formation.³⁰

In the first decades of this century, the path to modernity was defined by a set of practices contained within the duality Americanism/Fordism. Fordism came to be seen not only as inevitable (and vulgar Marxist interpretations also stressed this inevitability on the basis of *the necessary development of the productive forces*), but also highly desirable as the technical-economic solution for *backwardness*. Its hegemony in international capitalism became undeniable and not even the socialist countries could afford to move away from such an encompassing paradigm. The polarization deriving from the Cold War did little to broaden the range of options and possibilities that seemed to exist all through the nineteenth century, until the 1920's. After W.W.II the options were reduced to two basic models built around modern industrialism - State Capitalism and State Socialism. Only Mao's China and Gandhi's India presented clear alternatives to those paradigms.

Beginning in the Depression years and continuing in the post-war period of American hegemony (including its international

30 However, only now, with the French Regulationists, we have been able to grasp more clearly the implications of a social formation, in its institutional and social orders, its cultural and ideological patterns necessary to the development of a successful *regime of accumulation*. The concepts of regime of accumulation and mode of regulation, developed from Gramsci by the Regulationists, have proven quite helpful when inquiring about the several national manifestations of the Fordism: the Welfare State, the planning apparatus, the Unionization and the reinforcement of the repressive apparatus, among others.

control over economic and political institutions), the idea of development gained space in the Western and (post)colonial world. Accordingly, "certain material and social conditions came to be seen as a problem, initiating a new domain of thought and experience, namely, *development*. To *develop* became, as a result of this discourse, a fundamental problem for the countries of the Third World." (Escobar, 1987).

Development became an idea as powerful as the idea of progress had been since the mid-nineteenth century. Furtado (1978) discusses the ideologies of *progress* and *development*. While the ideology of progress became the cement for the consciousness of interdependency between groups and classes with opposing interests within given societies, the ideology of development was used as the cement for international solidarity in the process of *diffusion of industrial civilization*. The ideology of progress involved:

"...the laws of accumulation - with their implicit theory of a class which bears a societal project in which the contradictions of the present are overcome - command the evolution of social forms. (...) [On the other hand] ... the idea of development as an international performance is dissociated from the social structures and built on a pact between external and internal dominant groups interested in accelerating accumulation. Therefore, it has a narrow economicist content. (...) Social conflicts, far from being the source of political creativity, are perceived as forms of wasting social energy."
(p.74-79)³¹

Following Furtado's insight, we can add to the understanding of the differences between progress and development. Progress meant transformation from within, *de-envelopment* of internal forces blocked in their manifestations, or enveloped by external constraints. The ideology of development arose, instead, as an instrument of domination, meaning a transformation from without and determined by external political, cultural and economic models. In the post-war days, the de-envelopment of the *subject* that was implicit in the ideology of progress since the nineteenth century, became the de-envelopment of the *object*, where both the State and external interests and paradigms played the most forceful role. In such a context, the ideology of development became almost an inversion of the idea of progress, although retaining, in a narrower sense, some of

31 Translated from Portuguese by Monte-Mór.

its major features, such as economic growth. In fact, development eventually came to mean the removal (the de-envelopment?) of internal constraints, i.e., of autochthonous projects and attributes such as cultural traditions, mythologies, and other *irrational* and *archaic* forms of pre-capitalist social organization which were seen to impede the conditions necessary for development to occur.

In an effort to partially avoid this mis-interpretation and the economicist bias embedded in the macro-economics that evolved from Keynesianism, Latin American *structuralists and dependencistas* insisted on the difference between growth and development³². For those authors, development meant structural changes (*cambios*) within the *model of development*, i.e., forms and structure of production, patterns of consumption, and social access to both the conditions of production and benesses of economic transformations. In the Third World, it meant income distribution, agrarian and urban reforms, and radical *cambios* in the social division of labor. Those structural transformations were to be achieved through state policies that privileged problems of equity, labor structure, and internal markets, emphasizing labor intensive industrialization, capital and wage goods production and agricultural technological modernization. Economic growth, instead, meant to adopt a *model of development* which privileged the logic of capitalist accumulation in itself, not necessarily thinking of social transformation and emancipation; those were assumed to be the *natural* outcome of economic growth.

For decades, however, modernization has been frequently associated with the idea of a necessary expansion of capitalism. This conception is nevertheless being redefined. Soja calls modernization "...a continuous process of societal restructuring that is periodically accelerated to produce a significant recomposition of space-time-being in their concrete forms, a change in the nature and experience of modernity that arises primarily from the historical and geographical dynamics of modes of production." (1989, p.27) Taking modernization not to be restricted to a *determinative inner logic of capitalism* but stressing its uneven character in space and time, Soja emphasizes that "...on occasion, in the ever-accumulating past, it has become systemically synchronic, affecting all predominantly capitalist societies simultaneously." (Ibid.)

But, what are the implications of this synchronicity?

32 The Latin American Structuralist School began with the works of Raul Prebisch and was strengthened within ECLA since the 1950's. In the late 1960's, given several Latin American countries' economic growth, new versions were developed partially merging Marxist paradigms, more specifically, the theory of imperialism, becoming known as *dependencista school*.

4.2 (Post)Modernity & the third world: fragments from Brasil & India

Moments of crisis and restructuring at a global level have also been moments of transformation in third world countries. Third world intellectuals in both the center and the periphery have argued that those are the particular moments when the possibilities of breaking away from external control become stronger, allowing for progress, for the development of internal forces through the formation and strengthening of new social groups, new political alliances, and the weakening of previous dominant groups and alliances, both internally and internationally.³³ Those moments of crisis and restructuring - and Soja names this current period of restructuring the fourth significant one in capitalism - have allowed parts of the third world to show signs of a push forward, even if not representing an emancipation.

The exhaustion of Modernism, in Lyotardian terms, carries in it the exhaustion of Progressism. If we accept the failure of modernization as a valid strategy to attain the ideals set forward by European Modernism, how do we redefine Developmentalism in relation to that exhaustion?

An extension of the above argumentation suggests the corollary that the *exhaustion of Developmentalism* is the third world equivalent to the exhaustion of Progressism in the core. However, if the exhaustion of Progressism appears as a contemporary debate over the costs of achieved utopia, over the *expenses* of unlimited progress, the picture seems much less clear when it comes to Developmentalism. If utopia was never achieved, how can its dream fade away? The search for autonomous development and emancipation persists as the unattainable project, and in this sense, both development(progress) and modernity tend to survive as incomplete projects among third world societies.

It is in this sense that the dependencista approach represented an attempt to bring forward a third world perspective - an avant-garde, in those terms - on international relations. Opposing (as Foucault also does) the concepts of modernity and modernization as resulting from linear and historicist *diffusions* from the center towards the periphery, dependency approaches stressed the synchronicity (or spatiality, as Soja emphasizes it in regard to Wallerstein's works), the necessary relationships which are embedded in the global process of

³³ Recently, Gordon (1988), in a rather provocative paper, argued that the economic growth today observed in third world countries, particularly in the NIC's, is nothing comparable to that of the 1930's and 40's, Depression and War years.

capitalist expansion since bourgeois hegemony was established. Accepting economic growth (Western 'greatness') and critically analyzing its limits (as opposed to development) in the peripheral context, dependencistas tried to incorporate both the meta-narratives and their particular manifestations.³⁴ Perhaps, one of their main contributions was to state plainly the impossibility of autonomous development within *late* capitalism, apparently an accepted truth, in our days.

However, those moments of restructuring and crisis have also been moments when autonomous projects of modernity have appeared as a re-shaping force in third world countries. Historically, those have been moments when internal interests have been strengthened against external forces and their internal counterparts allowing for substantial changes in the politico-economic and socio-cultural scene in those peripheral countries.³⁵

In all cases, restructuring (and crisis) seems to open room for both self-reflexive practices and attempts to push the limits of the insertion of third world peoples into the international scene and dominant paradigms. We could say of both a classical and a radical modern perspectives pervading third world people's attempts to join the dominant project of modernity, as defined within the *core*. In this context, the difference between modernity and postmodernity becomes particularly blurred in the third world.³⁶ In the Lyotardian sense, the radical attitude is a necessary ingredient in third world's (post)modernism. The questioning of meta-narratives is by definition part of the third world's everyday life, given that the core oriented meta-narratives systematically have ignored the third world people as subjects of history.³⁷

34 It is difficult to talk of *dependencistas*, as the label encompasses too many different approaches. Here, we refer to third world authors such as Cardoso & Faletto, dos Santos, Marini, Amin, Emmanuel and others, who tried regional analysis within the broad framework of the theory of imperialism. For a critique of *core* mis-interpretation of dependency theory, see Cardoso (1977).

35 This broad statement seems to find expression in Brazil, in various critical moments, from the Republic Proclamation by the Comtean and liberal military forces, in 1889 (a period of intense crisis in the center) to Vargas' revolution in 1930, Goulart's rise in early 1960's and Lula's Workers Party (PT) surprising political strengthening of today.

36 In a sense, we could also argue that postmodernism itself contains, and distills, a certain *third-worldness* that has been constantly brought into the *core*, particularly after the sixties, as Jameson stresses. Examples could be brought from all fields, being art and music the most obvious ones.

37 It is interesting to note that third world intellectuals, themselves, have most times fallen into the same trap, looking for the determination of their own history in what they *lack*, in relation to the first world.

On the other hand, the Western *classical modernity*, taken to be the *positive* aspect of modernity, can only be appropriated by third-world peoples in its self-reflexive and critical manifestation, grounded on the life-world as Habermas wants it. Spivak and Shattuck, in their debate over the *great works* to be used in education in the USA,³⁸ talk about the *pieties* of the Western culture, the one-dimensional expressions of the *greatness* of Western civilization. They stress that those *pieties* are to be incorporated in the world's (first, second and third) history, but from a third world perspective, this can only be done in a critical and self-reflective way, not as crystallized forms of domination. In other words, when talking about Enlightenment and Western culture, we must also discuss slavery and genocide, those two *ugly words*.

In this sense, Habermas's classical modernity becomes very close to Lyotard's radical modernity. The unrepresentable, the sublime, are necessary parts of the third world's perspective at the Western project as a whole, given the third world's particular insertion in that history as *having no history*, as people not able (or allowed) to constitute themselves as authoritative subjects of their own emancipation, of their self-invention. The one-sided presentation of the *pieties*, of the *beauty* of a civilization (the *beautiful*, as Lyotard accuses Habermas of doing), has no use in both classical or radical modern projects.

In addition, an attitude of constant incredibility towards Western grand narratives also derives from third world people's need to re-define themselves as subjects of history. It seems rather easy to doubt meta-narratives from which one has been excluded. If the West suffers from excessive *heroization*, in Foucault's terms, third-world people strives to recognize and construct their *heroes*, both in the present and the past.

In conclusion, we can attempt to better understand possible (post)modern attitudes in the third world. If a third world perspective demands a critical attitude towards modernity (a radically modern perspective of constant criticism), in large part, this stems from the need to resolve the peculiar nature in which modernity has presented itself for third-world peoples, i.e., the need for self-invention, for gaining subjectivity in a historical process which has denied them subjectivity - to become subjects, as well as objects, of history. However, to be both subject and object, i.e. the object of

38 The debate between Gayatri Spivak and Roger Shattuck also included J. Pareles, E.D.Hirsch, J.Kaliski, and was mediated by Jack Hitt, the editor of Harper's Magazine (Sept. 1989, pp.43-52).

knowledge and the subject that knows, is a distinction of modernity (as Foucault has shown). Does this mean that as third-world peoples can finally be modern - emerge as conscious subjects - they experience the type of classical modernity described by Baudelaire, Habermas, Berman?

The answer is no. The attitudes towards modernity for third-world peoples (those who are now becoming subjects of history) must be understood within the way in which Modernity became internalized, i.e., it must be understood from the perspective of the subaltern. Hence, we must grapple with the uneven and often *irrational* responses to modernity as new subjects find their space within the grand-narratives. What are the possibilities?

First, we can identify the *anti-modern* as an attitude that criticizes the modernist vision in its entirety. However, we must also recognize that "the modernist dislike for modernity is an unique feature and mark of modernity" (Trilling & Gay, in Nandy, 1987:114). Thus the anti-modern attitude is internal to modernity itself.

Second, we can identify the *critical-modern*. In contrast to the anti-modern, the critical-modern attitude "appears to oppose the dominant implications of post-Enlightenment European thought at one level and yet, at the same time, seems to accept that domination at another" (Chatterjee, 1986: 37). In the third world, the critical-modern appropriates the western model, while criticizing the domination of the west; accepts the dominant paradigms without acknowledging the roots of the domination, therefore most times internalizing the domination schemes.³⁹ Nehru is a good example from India.⁴⁰ Whereas Nehru objected British imperialism and domination, he remained wedded to the ideas of the (1) nation-state (political representation), (2) bureaucracy (status and efficiency), (3) modern sciences (ethos), and (4) capitalist industrialization (pros-

39 One of the most forceful works about these relations of domination and oppression and about the processes of liberation of both oppressor and oppressed is, again, the work of Paulo Freire.

40 During his term as prime-minister (1947-1963), Nehru and the Congress Party attempted to install an *autonomous* fordist regime of accumulation. Its installment required a four-part adoption of ideas basic of European Enlightenment (see text). Although Nehru preached state socialism (idea itself emerging from a western narrative) what he promoted was in essence a regime of capital accumulation built on dominant class alliances between the landed elites, state bureaucrats at the national industrial base, and the large Indian houses that grew under the patronage of the British colonial government from the turn of the century.

perity).⁴¹ Hence the critical-modern attitude is a hallmark of modernity in the third world, it being common among third-world elites.

Finally we can identify a third attitude and call it either the *non-modern* or *critical-traditionalist*. This attitude is distinguished from the other two in its unclear and seemingly *irrational* (to the modern man) relationship to modernity. At one level, it appears anti-modern in that it critiques the basis of modern western culture, i.e., modern scientific rationality, nation-state system, and so on. However, it is distinct from the anti-modern in that the attitude does not arise from within modernity itself - it is an external critique.⁴² The non-modern attitude has no clear or fixed relationship to the modern attitude (be it critical or not). However, the non-modern appears modern in the Foucaultian sense in that it demands a critical ontology and is based in active self-invention. Hence, the non-modern must search for him/herself within the traditions that be - not the traditions of past, but the traditions of present. In a Foucaultian sense, it seeks the modernity of tradition. It is an acceptance, not denial, of both the past and present: cultural imperialism and global capitalism. It doesn't treat modernity as external, but seeks to recognize and finally come to terms with the internalization of modernity in oneself - and on that basis, it seeks for collective re-education and resistance (as Fanon's and Freire's oppressed). By accepting the present, it also rejects the revivalism of traditions. The non-modern is critical of both traditional and modern cultures, as it doesn't see the necessary dichotomy between the two.⁴³

41 Vargas (1930-45; 1950-54), and Kubitschek (1955-60) can both be considered critical moderns, as they embraced western paradigms within a nationalistic framework (quite strict in Vargas's case and, given his suicidal, also quite dramatic). Attempts to develop rather autonomous regimes of accumulation characterize both governments, although Kubitschek's *peripheral fordism* (Lipietz, 1988) has also been seen as a *treason* which opened the doors for foreign capital's economic control in contemporary Brazil (Oliveira, 1982).

42 Note, however, that one does not have to be of the East or the South in order to be non-modern. Blake, Emerson, Thoreau, Ruskin and Tolstoy are better known external critics of modernity in the West.

43 Gandhi is one example of a non-modern and as such remains a highly problematic figure in Indian history. At the one hand, modern Indians (of the Nehru variety) have celebrated him for spirituality and his *tradition of traditions*. On the other hand, they have found his critique of western civilization hard to digest. When asked by a foreign journalist what he thought of the West, Gandhi cunningly responded with no hesitation: it's a good idea. He was critical of both traditional and modern forms of oppression: he wanted to reorder the hierarchy of skills and de-legitimize the Brahmanic division of labor, at the same time that he opposed British Imperialism. In Brazil, most obvious examples stem from the Arts and Literature. The 1920's *anthropophagic* Modern Movement attempted to *digest*

Our questionings have shed some light into some issues but do not answer our questions about the contemporary possibilities of modernity in the other world - the third. Instead, it adds questions which can only be investigated at a different level from that inquired in this paper. In fact, it became clear for us, after pursuing our initial questions about crisis, modernity, and development, that answers to the questions we are posing today will only derive from locally grounded investigations of the new identities being forged as new (third world) subjects arise in contemporary history. The analysis of specific histories and geographies should be the next step, if we are to go beyond mere fragments of our times and places.

The hegemony of western culture of high-modernism necessarily produces anti-modern and critical-modern responses in both the east and the west, the north and the south. However, the crisis of modernism has also afforded new opportunities. Particularly, it has created space for the non-modern attitude - an intrinsically radical modern attitude of constant criticism. That should strengthen third world peoples.

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