DOES MAN HAVE NEEDS?
A critical inquiry and a program

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Introduction

One of the most sophisticated presentations of the Marxian theory of needs is to be found in a work by Agnes Heller (1916). Taking her point of departure in the process of production, Heller states that any societal relation and any societal product is man's objectification (op. cit. p.40). Man produces objects as the outcome of purposive activity. He transforms his intentions and ideas into objects (and societal relations as well as institutions are in the context considered to be objects). The word "object" means in German "Gegenstand". It can be translated into "something which stands opposite "or" against" man, separated from him, but produced by him cognitively as well as materially. The products of this process of objectification then express man's *purposes,* his *intentions* and *goals.* In this specific sense we can talk about "humanized objects". Since, however, man in turn is influenced by the objects, societal relations and institution he has produced himself, we can in this specific sense also talk about "objectified human beings".

Heller's central thesis can be formulated in the following way: Human needs are created in the process of objectification. Man, born into society, is "directed" and "controlled" by the very objects - produced by man - in shaping new needs. "The objects 'bring about' the needs, and the needs bring about the objects (p.40). The process of human self-creation is in reality the process of creation of needs, Heller adds (p.41) in discussing Marx's theory of 'genesis'. Furthermore in her phenomenological analysis Heller maintains that needs are "simultaneously passions and capacities..... and thus *capacities are themselves needs. "* The capacity for objectifying activity "is thus one of the greatest needs of man" (op. cit. p.42).[1] So far the central thesis concerning the role of needs in the process of man's self-creation.

In distinction to animal instinctive behaviour, Heller maintains that "the highest object of human need is the other person. In other words: the measure in which man has become the highest object of need for other men determines the level of humanisation of human needs (op cit. p.41).

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Let me now reformulate the last mentioned quotations: "The highest *goal* of human *action* is the other person. In other words: the measure in which man has become the highest *goal* for other men's *actions* determines the level of humanization of human *action*. In our reformulation of Heller's assertions we have substituted the terms "need" and "object of need" by the terms "goal" and "action". In doing so we have, according to my opinion, meaningfully reproduced her ideas. In other words, what Heller wants to say can be said in an equivalent way be referring to "actions" as well as to "goals". Furthermore the sentence could be shortened still more and given a Kantean formulation: "The degree of man's humanization can be measured by the extent he treats other as goals and not as means".

The aim of this article is to show that our attempt at a reformulation is not a matter of terminology, but implies deepgoing consequences of a theoretical and epistemological kind. It also presupposes a different idea concerning the "nature of man's nature".

An interesting question due to these reformulations is the following: Is it possible that the word "need" has limited explanatory value and therefore is redundant? If we answer "yes", is it redundant in this specific context, in which we speak about human actions or is it redundant in general? If we answer "yes" to either of the two alternatives, another question arises: Since the word "need" is used in motivational contexts and can be thought of as redundant for contexts in which we speak about human action are therefore also other motivational terms like "instincts", "drives", "driving forces" ect. redundant? Assume, we find the whole terminology, i.e. the vocabulary of motivation, redundant could we then make another step and ask whether man at all *has* something, which we can call "needs", "drives", "motives?

The central argument of this article will be the following: 1. For a theory of human action - as distinguished from a theory of behaviour - the use of traditional motivational terms is redundant. 2. The terminology or vocabulary of motivation, however is usual in common sense language. Therefore we ought to look at the functions which this vocabulary serves in common sense language. 3. The fact, that we in common sense language *talk about* "needs", "drives", "motives" does not justify a claim that needs, drives, motives exist "objectively" as factors within the human organism, for example as driving forces for human action.

The idea of human needs as objective factors in viewed as a central part of a special type of *naturalist* psychology. There will be given several reasons to reject this type of psychology and the ontologi on which it is based.

2. The vocabulary of human motives

In an article by C. W. Mills (1963) the following thesis is presented: "As against the inferential conception of motives as subjective 'springs' of action, motives may be considered as typical vocabularies having ascertainable functions in delimited societal situations" (p.439). Mills adds that human actors do vocalize and impute motives to themselves and to others. Therefore the question becomes, under which conditions we ascribe to us and others motives. Furthermore, if we analyze the *language of motivation* and its functions in a rank of social situations we may shift our attention from motivational psychology to the sociology of language and of knowledge. "To *explain* behavior by referring it to an inferred and 'abstract' motive is one thing. To *analyze* the observable *lingual mechanisms* of motive imputation and avowal, as they function in conduct is quite another" (ibid. my ital.).

Mills introduces here a distinction of importance for my reasoning. One thing is to explain human action as a consequence of "inner, driving forces". This is what motivational psychology and most social psychological theories try to attempt. Quite another thing is to maintain that we in common sense language as well as in scientific languages use a motivational vocabulary. In this case our task becomes the explanation of the functions of this vocabulary, the situations in which it is used and its eventual social class specifity. In doing this we concentrate on problems of epistemology, of the sociology of language and of knowledge; only in second hand we are concerned whith problems of social psychology.

The ascription of motives, needs and drives occurs in the context of describing, analyzing and explaining human action. "As a word, *a motive tends to be one which it to the actor and to other members of a situation, an unquestioned answer to questions concerning social and lingual conduct"* (C.W. Mills op.cit. p.443). In this context Mills quotes Max Weber for which motive gives contextual meaning to the reason for a man's conduct.

Motivational vocabularies or terminologies perform three basic functttions in common sense discourse. 1) They are used in answering question concerning the reasons of human action. In other words we use a motivational terminologi when we try to *explain* own or others' actions. One example is crime. In order to find the criminal who commited a crime the police often asks for the *motive* of his acts. Crimes without motives seem difficult to understand. But if the police finds one or several motives they think they may localize the criminal. In this case we may speak of a person's *reason* to act. "He was *driven* be revenge" or "he could not control his *need* for destructive acts" etc. Not always do we use motivational concepts in explaining problematic human actions. We may often in explaining a person's actions give *his reasons* for doing something in terms of pur-

poses and goals. In this context it is not important whether the reasons we ascribe to others are the "real reasons" for his actions or not, i.e. whether we give a correct or false explanation. It is neither important whether a person in explaining his action presents the "real reasons" or whether he wants to deceive us or whether he may deceive himself. So far it is sufficient to say that the motivational vocabulary is used in order to explain one's own or other's questioned actions.

This idea has been further developed by Scott and Lyman (1968). They introduce the notion of "account". An account is according to their definition "a statement made by a social actor to explain unanticipated or untoward behavior - whether that behavior is his own or that of others, and whether the proximate cause of the statement arises from the actor himself or from someone else (op. cit. p.469). They distinguish between two types of accounts, namely excuses and justifications. Excuses are accounts in which the speaker renounces responsibility for the action being questioned. Justifications, on the other hand, are accounts in which the actor accepts the resonsibilities for his action, but denies that he had any negative intentions by acting in the way he did.

Among the various types of excuses, the authors mention two of interest in this context. One, which they call "defeasibility", is an attempt to take recourse into excuses which refer to motivational aspects. A person may say that he acted against his "will", implying that force within himself "drove him to act as he did. The complementary excuse is that a person did not do what he wanted. Hence doing what one does not want and not doing what one wants due to uncontrollable motivitional forces, are examples of a reified position. Reification (see about the concept J. Israel 1976 and 1979) then is in this context the subjective experience of one's action either being controlled by forces outside the individual e.g. by the invisible hand of the market) or by forces inside himself (needs, instincts, drives).

The second type of excuses are references to biological drives over which the individual has no control, e.g. strong sexual demands. In both cases responsibility is rejected by reference to motivational forces.

The explanation of human action in terms of individual motives as needs, drives or instincts has pervaded psychological thinking from Freud to Maslow. It has spread into areas like perception by introducing the distinction between "functional" and "structural" factors in explaining perceptual processes. Functional factors are viewed as being located within the motivational apparatus of the individual. Structural factors refer to characteristics of the perceived objects, interacting with cognitive processes in the individual. The laws of Gestalt psychology are examples of a structural explanation. The theoretical approach by Bruner, Postman etc., are axamples of an explanation of perception in terms of motivational forces (see L. Postman 1963).

The use of a motivational terminology in psychology is closely related to a certain conception of what constitutes science and scientific research. We will discuss that later.

2. A second function of the motivational vocabulary is as discussed the legitimation and justification of human action. If I ask somebody to stop smoking, referring to the risk for lung-cancer, he may answer, that "he has a *need* for smoking and that he for that reason cannot stop smoking." What he probably wants to say is, that he wants to continue to smoke. But instead of taking the responsibility for his actions, he refers to something which he believes is outside his control and conscious decision-making. Again in court rooms motivational failors may be used in order to justify a criminal act. A person, who due to "inner" motivational factors commits a crime may not be responsible for his sections and therefore free from punishment.

3. A third function of the motivational vocabulary is the control and manipulation of others' actions. Politicians may tell their voters that their political aim is to guarantee "the satisfaction of the electorate's basic *needs* for social security" etc. In appealing to "objectively" existing factors of basic importance attempts for controlling others' actions are made. Another area in which ascription of motives are used to control action is child-upbringing. Children are not only influenced to act according to parents' suggestions but told to develop their own *need* to act as the parents want them to act.

In addition ot these three functions of motivational vocabularies and their identification in specific situation, a task of the sociology of knowledge, is to investigate changes in these vocabularies over historical periods and relate them to developments in psychology, social science and ethics. "What is needed is to take all these *terminologies* of motivation and locate them as *vocabularies* of motive in historic epochs and specified situations. Motives are of no value apart from the delimited societal situations for which they are appropriate vocabularies" (C.W. Mills op. cit. p.452).

3. Reasons for actions

In our previous analysis we mentioned that the actor himself in explaining actions wants to give *his reason* for doing as he did. When we talk of a person's reason we can at least use two models. One is connected to our discussion. It assumes that reasons given refer to motivational factors, which exist objectively in the organism of the person and wich *cause* action. Action in this case is seen as the external expression caused by internal motivational factors.

A *second* model looks at reasons given for action in terms of *purposive activity*. Man has certain intentions and purposes directed towards certain

goals. He then makes up certain strategies for reaching them. Reasons for action may then be explained in terms of purposes for the very action and for using certain means for reaching certain goals. Behind such a teleological model oftenly assumptions concerning rational action, implying that man uses the most effective and most economic means for reaching his goals. At the same time he usually follows social norms and rules in choosing means and ends. We will later on discuss more in detail an approach based upon intentional, purposive and goal-directed action.

There is, however another problem which I want to touch. As mentioned people may sometimes give *their reasons* for acting and deliberately conceal certain aspects (a doctor e.g. may say that his reasons for working as he does, is to mitigate suffering, whereas the *real reason* may be pecuniar). Concealing motives here may be due to the fact that a person can give many reasons for his actions, but mentions only one. A *reason* for that may be more *reasons* (hence we may have *reasons* for giving certain *reasons*). If we however say that the one reason he gave was faked and that there is a *real reason* we already imply a certain theory of motivation by using the expression "real reason". One such theory may maintain that some reasons may be hold unconsciously and nevertheless cause actions. In fact psychoanalysts sometimes maintain that unconscious motives are real, whereas those motives of which the person is conscious, are "only" rationalizations. These and similar theories have lead psychologists to differentiate between an explanation in terms of *his reasons* and explanations in terms of *The reason*. The "his-reason explanation" is usual in common sense discourse and fullfills the three functions mentioned before (of explaining, justifying and controling). It does not, however, be restricted to common sense discourse. "The-reason-explanation" on the other hand, is specific for certain types of scientific discourse. "The point is that to speak of *the* reason why a person does something is different in that it is a way of calling attention to the law or assumed law that a given case actually falls under" (R.S. Peters, 1963, p.8).

4. The model of man presupposed

Traditional naturalistic psychology views man as a biological organism and/or a mechanism and is interested in the forces, which sets this organism-mechanism into motion. Analogous to notions in classical physics it looks for driving forces which cause man's behavior. It therefore talks about needs, drives, instincts and other *forces* which motivate man's behavior.

We look at men as an acting being. This means we do not need to explain is what may *prevent* him from acting. We distinguish between action and behavior. Behavior is traditionally viewed as a *response* to external or

internal stimulation. Hence in this model, man predominantly is a passive object, receiving impulses or stimuli and reacting to them. In other words, man is perceived as a reacting and not as an acting being.

As a user of language man is viewed as an alting being, since to use language is acting: Man as a user of language, acts in and through his speech. When speaking he finds himself always in concrete situations in a historically limited and given setting. The concrete situations are of social and of physical nature.

It should be pointed out, however, that though all speech is acting, not all actions are speech acts. In order, however, that a person can act in a *meaningful* way he must be able to describe his actions, even if such descriptions are vague. But descriptions are speech act and any attempts to explain a description are themselves descriptions and hence speech acts. Furthermore in order to *speak* about "needs", "actions" or whatever we can think of, we obviously must have a language and be able to use it in a correct, i.e. meaningful and non-contradictory way. To have a language, however, or - which is equivalent - to be a user of language means to be able to make a great number of correct statements about ourselves and our environment. When we say that we consider man as a user of language we mean that he is capable of setting forward correct statements. This in addition means that he has knowledge, which cannot be disputed. (See N.O. Bernsen, 1978, J. Israel, 1979b, N. Prætorius, 1978, P. Zinkernagel, 1962, 1978.)

As an acting language using subject man has to choose and to select preferences with regard to the goals of his actions and with regard to the means by which goals can be reached. Means and goals can be arranged in a hierarchy in which one goal becomes a mean for further goals.

Choices are made with reference to possible actions or action-possibilities. We therefore speak of intentions as choices for possible ways of acting. The notion of "possibility of action" implies notions of constraints against actions due to our physical surroundings and due to social rules. The two kinds of constraints define the situation in which an actor finds himself.

Acting means to relate oneself to other human beings, to the surrounding world and to oneself. Relating oneself to other persons means to *interact*. Interaction in turn presupposes language. Language in turn presupposes intersubjectivity of mutual understanding. This intersubjectivity has to be presupposed and is realized in man's speech acts every time he follows the rules of language and use of language. Basic rules of our language - our common sense or everyday language - indicate *relations* between expressions which we cannot use independently of each other without our language becoming meaningless or contradictory (In J. Israel, 1979b these rules are discussed at length). One example of such a rule is: We cannot speak meaningfully about a person without speaking about a language

user. Another rule is that we cannot speak meaningfully about action without speaking about intention. We cannot speak meaningfully about possibility of actions without speaking about physical and social constraints etc.

As a consequence of this reasoning we define language as a system of instituionalized logical rules, indicating relations between expression which we cannot use independently of each other if we want to speak in a meaningful and non-contradictory way. Previously, however we have defined language as the speech acts of a person who finds himself in a concrete situation. These two explications presuppose each other. We cannot speak correctly without following these logical rules and we cannot express these rules except in concrete speech acts.

Human action can be expressed in various degrees of intensity. We use e.g. various ways of intonation in our speech acts. Intensity of actions refers to emotions indicating "being involved in something" (A. Heller, 1980) i.e., in one's actions, its goals and its means. In addition we can differentiate between various modes of involvement like joy or anger.

5. Constraints and barriers against action

The ambitions of motivational psychology are explaining the *causes* of human action. Usually one does not in this context talk about "action" but about "behaviour". In this case motivational psychology can be viewed as an attempt to counteract behaviouristic theory and its mechanical model of man. For behaviourism behaviour is a *response* to stimuli, external to or internal in the organism. Man is not viewed as spontaneously acting, but only as *reacting*. Motivational psychology then tries to locate the cause of behaviour in the individual and hence to view him as an active and acting and not only reacting being. But is it really necessary to explain why human beings act? Is it not a human condition that man is active and acting? In fact it could be so by definition. In any case we do not need to explain why man acts. What we need to explain is what in general prevents him from acting and specifically what prevents him to act in accordance with specified goals. We can identify five types of barriers and constraints against human action. Only the first one prevents action in general. The other four types prevent action in accordance with specified goals.

1. The first level of constraints comprises the physical aspects of reality. I cannot jump out of the window with the intention to fly. I have to accept the law of gravity (though man has developed instruments to overcome this barrier).

2. The second level are those constraints which are inherent in the structure of society. A capitalist in a capitalist society cannot produce without profits. As long as he *intends* to be a capitalist, he has to accept

the constraints, set up by the very structure of society. But unlike the constraints on the first level, he can make a conscious decision to abstain from being a capitalist and doing something else. These constraints therefore are only effective as long as a person decides to follow the rules of the social game.

3. The third level comprises the constraints set up by organisations and social groups. I have borrowed an example from a description of "invisible pedagogy" (B. Berstein, 1975, p.116). Bernstein describes the constraints of this educational approach by the following characteristics: "1) Where the control of the teacher over the child is implicit rather than explicit. 2) Where, ideally the teacher aaranges the *context* which the child is expected to re-arrange and explore. 3) Where within the arranged context, the child apparently has wide powers over what he selects, over how he structures, and over the time-scale of his activities. 4) Where the child apparently regulates his own movements and social relationships. 5) Where there is a reduced emphasis upon the transmission and aquisition of skills. 6) Where the criteria for evaluating the pedagogy are multiple and diffuse and not so easily measured." First of all, constraints on this level may not always be made explicit, for example in terms of unambiguously formulated rules and norms. Instead they may form an invisible frame within which the person has a certain degree of freedom of choice and decision-making, as long as he does not surpass the frame. Third, as Bernstein points out, this type of pedagogy is class-related. It is made to fit the demands as well as the types of control of middle class parents.

As a consequence we postulate that on this level of constraints a differential analysis has to take into account underlying assumptions and for example relate them to class-specific conditions. On this and the before mentioned level the analysis of constraints and barriers against actions has to be carried out within a *sociological* frame of analysis. Hence a theory of constraints unlike a theory of motivation, which only takes into account psychological factors, is more comprehensive. Therefore it is more suited to fit a dialectical theory using the category of totality (see J. Israel, 1979b).

4. The fourth level of constraints comprises those which enclose social interaction, e.g. in face-to-face relations.

This level of analysis is of special importance if one wants to develop a *relational* theory of interaction. A traditional theory of interaction tries to explain interaction in terms of characteristics *inherent* in the person as well as in terms of motivational forces. If e.g. a person in an interaction situation exhibits aggressive behavior, this is usually explained in terms of a permanent characteristic - called aggressivenes - as trigged off by motivational factors, e.g. frustration. This places the origins and causes of behavior within the subject. A relational theory of interaction of the other hand assumes that a person p acts in relation to another person q in a cer-

tain situation *s,* such that we in common sense language speak of aggres-
siveness. The difference to traditional theory is that *p's* actions are a way
of relating himself to another, i.e. is something which occurs *between p*
and *q.* In addition, it takes into account the specific situation of action. If,
for example, a patient in a mental hospital expresses paranoic tendencies
in relation to the psychiatrist, then this according to the relational view-
point is not a tendency within the patient. It is a way of relating to the
psychiatrist, which may be determined as much by the actions of the psy-
chiatrist as by the specific situation: the hospital and its power hierarchy.
It is obvious that a relational theory then has far-reaching practical conse-
quences. In terms of conceptualization action is not *caused by motives
and personality traits or characteristics within* the person (small ghosts
within the machine, to use Ryle's famous metaphor - 1963). Action lead-
ing to reaction and hence interaction is located *between* active subjects,
finding themselves in - sometimes subjectively defined, sometimes objecti-
vely existing - situations.[3]

5. The fifth and last level of constraints and barriers are those which the
subject himself sets up for his own actions. According to modern psycho-
therapy - e.g. as developed in the frame of gestalttherapy (C. Hatcher & P.
Himelstein 1976) - an individual may create problems for himself by being
split through setting up two different and opposed or contradicting cour-
ses of action. "My obsessional analysand is both telling me and not telling
me exiting things. He is both interrupting and protesting his interruptions.
He is claiming some of his actions and disclaiming others" (R. Schaffer,
1976, p.136). In the mechanistic language of motivational psychology
such conflicting actions may be explained in terms of "conflicting impul-
ses" inside the person.

In the language of action conflicts of this type can be analyzed in terms
of conflicting *intentions,* or in terms of having two different - opposed or
contradicting - *goals* within the same *situation* or trying to use two differ-
ent means, e.g. by oscillating between them, in order to reach one goal.
Hence a theory of actions seems to be able to locate conflicts at the level
of intentions as well as on the level of means and of goals.

A theory of constraints on this level furthermore has to take into
account other types of splits, e.g. between intentions of actions as expres-
sed consciously and emotional modes of acting being in disagreement
with conscious intentions. It must take into account the level of awareness
of the actor in regard to his goals, in his ways of relating to others - e.g. his
attempts to play manipulating games and the way he judges himself and
his actions etc.

In summary then, the fourth and fifth level of constraints has to be
conceptualized in terms of a socialpsychological theory. Since, as mentio-
ned before the second and the third level has to be conceptualized in
terms of a sociological theory the reductionist fallacy may be avoided as

well as its opposite, the tendency to explain socialpsychological phenomena by means of a sociological theory.

In other words, a theory of human action has to include at least two levels. On the sociological level it has to deal with societal phenomena and to use generic concepts. On the socialpsychological level it has to deal with interactional phenomena and to use individual concepts. Between these levels there has to be conceptualized a third mediating level, relating the societal to the socialpsychological. On the societal level the central generic concept is "praxis", referring to the societal processes of producing, transforming and transcending the given. The central concept on the socialpsychological level is "action". The task of a comprehending theory then is to relate praxis, as defined here, to action.[4] This also implies the development of a theory which relates the five levels of constraints to each other.

As a final remark, we maintain that the analysis of constraints and barriers against actions and the goals of actions has one additional advantage as compared to a motivational theory. Motivational concepts as drives, needs which are not anchored in physiological changes can explain behaviour only a posteriori.[5] We can elaborate necessary conditions for actions first after the act itself. If we, however, analyze existing constraints and barriers we may direct our interests forwards: towards means to overcome and transcend barriers. Such a theory then does not only take into account possible changes, but may take into account revolutionary possible changes, i.e. those changes which transcend the constraints set up on the second level by the very structure of the social system. Such a theory is a *critical* theory since "it denotes reflection on a system of *constraints* which are humanly produced: distorting pressures to which individuals, or a group of individuals, or the human race as a whole, succumb in their process of selv-formation" (P. Connerton, 1976, p.18). As the quoted author points out, critique in this sense has its roots in Hegelian philosophy.

6. Methodological problems

Psychologists using the "the-reason-explanation" adhere usually to a nomothetic tradition, i.e. a tradition which subsumes individual cases under general laws, for example by accepting the covering law model of positivistically oriented science (C.G. Hempel & P. Oppenheim. See also G.H. von Wright, 1971). The-reason-explanation then often is an explanation in terms of "needs", "drives" or other driving motivational forces, accomplished within the framework of a nomothetic and/or covering law methodology.

Furthermore, the tradition of motivational psychology points at a na-

turalistic bias. Needs, drives are viewed as *objective* factors - in experimental language as independent variables - *causing* behavior or action. They are comparable to the forces in natural science, i.e. classical physics. Motivational forces, viewed as natural forces, are postulated to be independent of the will, the intentions, the beliefs and ideas etc., of man. They *cause* his willfull actions, his intentions and other psychological phenomena.

A theory claiming to identify causal factors ought at least to be able to present one *sufficient* condition for the resultant effect. In physiology it is possible to identify sufficient conditions. The level of sugar in the blood is a sufficient conditions to explain contractions in the muscles of the stomach. If we ignore physiological conditions and turn to "purely" psychological conditions there exists the following difficulty. We may be able to give *necessary* conditions for something to happen, but rarely, if at all, sufficient conditions. Hence to take a trivial example, a religeous *need* may be claimed as a necessary condition for going to church, but it could not be a sufficient one. If we try to treat it as a sufficient condition our reasoning becomes circular: Every time a person goes to church, he has a religeous need. How do we know? Because he goes to church.[6]

If we want to speak about conditions *causing* something and accept the rule that we in this case ought to be able to present at least one sufficient condition, then we can rule out "needs", "drives", unrelated to observable physiological changes, as such conditions. The concept of need then ought to be restricted to the explanation of physiological "driving forces" like the level of blood sugar. In this case, however the term "need" becomes redundant. We can say that the level of blood sugar causes contractions in the muscles of the stomach and therefore we have a *need* for food. But we also can say "therefore are we hungry and eat".

The conclusion is that the explanatory value of motivational concepts unrelated to physiological changes is low in the case of *causal* explanation. If we however abandon *causal* explanations in terms of needs and drives then these terms become redundant. What can we place in stead of a motivational language? *A theory of human action and a theory of constraints.*

In summarizing, most motivational theories have a naturalistic bias: They assume that motivational factors are objective in the sense that they exist independently of human action as causal or determining factors. Hence, in addition to being *naturalistic* these theories are *deterministic,* and *mechanistic* as well as *dualistic.* The last two characteristics shall be briefly analyzed. A mechanistic theory treats its objects as mechanism and tries to apply the mode of explanation used in classical physics, e.g. in mechanics. There may also be used organismic models as in biology. Usually motivational theories are a mixture of both, having in common the idea of a functioning mechanism.

Psychoanalysis and its language offers an illuminating example. "Freud, Hartmann, and others deliverately used the language of forces, energies,

functions, structures, apparatus and principles to establish and develop psychoanalysis along the lines of a physicalistic psychobiology" (R. Schafer, 1976, p.104). The same author maintains that the concept of action, if used at all, refers in psychoanalytic theory merely to motoric activity or to "acting-out". In these theories one speaks also of "psychological *mechanism*", like "mechanisms of defence". Furthermore the person itself is thought of as a mechanism or organism, rather than as a human being being able to use language in a *meaningful* way of expression and communication. In fact concepts like "meaning", "intention", "reason" do not fit into this naturalistic approach. "In line with this strategy, reason becomes forces, emphases become energies, activity becomes function, thoughts become representations, affects become discharges or signals, deeds become resultants, and particular ways of struggling with the inevitable diversity of intentions, feelings and situations become structures, mechanisms, and adaptions," (R. Schafer, op. cit. p.103.)[7]

So far for the mechanistic-organismic aspects of motivational theories and explanations in terms of needs, drives and driving forces.

The dualistic character of the discussed theories is anchored in the ontology presented by Descartes under the impression of the new development in mechanics. Descartes introduced two substances *res extensa,* i.e. an object with extension in space and *res cognitans,* i.e. an object with a cognitive substance. Bodies, extended in space, cannot think and minds which can think have no extension in space. The mind-body dualism has been maintained, even if one does not necessarily use the obsolete concept of "substance". The motivational theories, to which we refer have implicitly and sometimes explicitly taken over this dualism, "Drives" and "needs" are located within the body, whereas the resultant of these driving forces have mental qualities. Furthermore, not only are body and mind separated in a dualistic manner, related to each other in an external, e.g. causal way. Mind itself has sometimes been furthermore separated from the human being as a thinglike object. Expressions like "I am out of my mind" or "the idea entered my mind" are examples of the reification the concept has undergone. "All such locutions state or imply that there is a subject or agent who exists or can exist apart from his or her mind. Accordingly, the subject can observe mind, comment on it, put it to work, inhabit it, be betrayed by it, limit its scope, and so on. This way of thinking (which, as we have seen, characterizes Freudian metapsychology) has many implications". (R. Schafer op.cit. p.132.)

We want now to present an alternative model to the deterministic-mechanical-dualistic one of a naturalist orientation. Instead of deterministic explanations, we opt for *teleological* and *intentional* orientations. Instead of a mechanistic view, we opt for a *relational* view. Instead of a dualictic view we opt for a *holistic* view.

I. Teleological - intentional approaches do not aim at explaining beha-
viour but at understanding actions and their meaning. A teleological ap-
proach does therefore not speak about the *causes* of actions and does not
make reference to objectified causal factors or independent variables. In
teleological approaches one tries to understand the meaning of an action
by pointing at the future. Therefore one tries to elaborate goals and pur-
poses of actions. One may give *reasons* for action not in terms of motiva-
tional concepts. (They refer to conditions in the organism which *cause* be-
haviour.) Reasons may be given in terms of intentions and purposes,
which refer to the future. Intended - purposive actions can be formalized
in terms of *practical inference* or syllogism, having the following schema
(von Wright, 1971, p.96):

A intends to bring about p

A considers that he cannot bring about p unless he does a

There A sets himself to do a

The logic of practical inference, von Wright (op. cit.) maintains, provi-
des the science of man with a useful tool, namely "an explanation model
in its own right which is a definite alternative to the subsumptions-theore-
tic covering law model" (ibid. p.27).

II The *relational* approach, substituting a mechanistic one, takes as its
unit of analysis *relations*. Man relates himself in various and innumerable
ways to his environment to other persons, as well as to groups and to the
non-human environment. By relating himself he attributes meaning to the
actions by which he relates himself, as well as to the goals of his actions.
These goals - human beings as well as things - can be described and/or con-
ceptualized in various and innumerable ways. Therefore a person is unable
to give total or absolute descriptions. But the partial descriptions he gives,
confer on his actions and its goals, a specific meaning. But in order to de-
scribe something *specifically*, one has to have implicitly a *general* notion
of the very same object and reversed (for an extensive analysis of this pro-
blem see J. Israel 1979b, p.98ff.). Finally the partial descriptions we give
can be placed within the frame of a *totality* in order to understand interre-
lationships and manyfolded determining characteristics (J. Israel op. cit.)

III. A *holistic* view takes its point of departure in the last mentioned
thesis. A holistic approach negates within an epistemological context dua-
listic epistemological theories as well as monistic, either of a reductionist
or an idealist kind. The holistic approach, favored here, is based upon the
analysis of language. We cannot for example speak meaningfully about a
person without implying a body and a consciousness (P.F. Strawson,
1964). (We cannot say that my friend visited me and this time brought his
body with him and that we had a lively discussion, but he had no states of
consciousness whatsoever.) We can speak about a person in *different* lan-
guages e.g. in the language of physiology or psychology or sociology or
theology or poetry. But in order to speak in *different* languages, we must

presuppose that we are talking about the *same* phenomen - namely a person. The body-mind dualism is based on the fallacy that we could talk about a person without implying consciousness (when we use e.g. the language of physics or physiology) or implying a body (when we use e.g. the language of psychology or of sociology).

In an analogous way we cannot *speak* about reality without having a language and we cannot have a language without - in the last run - speaking about reality. However we cannot reduce reality to language or language to reality. They are different but inseparately united in a totality.

Based upon this epistemological approach we can talk about totality in ontological and methodological contexts in somewhat different ways (see J. Israel 1980a).

7. Some remarks on action

The next step in our project is the development of a theory of action. Different approaches can be found: 1) one which is based upon analytic philosophy and the philosophy of language, 2) another being based upon phenomenology, 3) a third based upon hermeneutics and 4) finally one on marxist dialectics.

Some of the problems connected with the development of a theory of action will be indicated. One is the clarification of different terms used as "act", "action" and "activity". A second problem is concerned with the analysis of action. Action implies change. Hence a theory of action has to be related to a theory of change. With regard to change one has to distinguish between change occuring within a totality and leaving its structure as it is and change in terms of transcendence (Aufhebung), in which existing structural constraints are surmounted. It seems obvious that there are intimate connections between a theory of change and a theory of constraints as outlined before.

A third problem concerns different types of action. One type of action leads to the production or accomplishment of something, e.g. the production of an object. Another type of action is such that the very activity is its goal (see R. Bubner, 1976 who both makes and overstresses this distinction).

The two types of actions can be described in the following way, using examples: 1) I *(actor)* have decided *(intention)* to finish *(action)* this article *(goal)* by having it typed *(means* being itself an action). The article is written in order to stimulate discussion *(purpose)*.

2) During the writing *(action)* I *(actor)* experienced the writing being pleasurable (being a *goal* in itself). The experience of pleasure was something unforeseen (second purpose).

This short description indicates that acting in order to produce some-

is not incompatible with acting for its own sake. In fact one could postu-
late that the separation of action in order or accomplish something from
action for its own sake is alienation when the main goal is the production
of something

When action is interaction we can also differentiate between two types.
One is an action where the other person is made into *means* or *used* as
means for carrying out the action or reaching its goal. The purpose is in
this case the exploitation of the other. The second type is an action where
the other is the very goal of the activity and where the actor at the same
time acts for the sake of the activity as e.g. in loving. Since interaction is a
mutual affair we can differentiate between situations where both actors
use each other as means or as goals and situations where there is a discre-
pancy between the two actors.

When we talk about action as producing something we also can diffe-
rentiate between those action where a person accomplishes something by
doing it and those actions where he accomplishes the goal by omitting ac-
tion, e.g. a physician who does not give a medicine to a patient, a police-
man who does not intervene in a brawl, a capitalist who does not sell his
commodities in order to create a shortage, which in turn increases prices
etc.

The concept used in the description of action are: actor, intention, acti-
vity, means, goals and purpose. In this context it may be valuable to say a
few words about the relation between the goal and the purpose. In the ex-
ample given above, the goal was the article written and the purpose stimu-
lating discussion. Hence the purpose is a reason which we attribute to our
action, provided the goal is reached. We may have several purposes with
our action, some of which we may declare publicily some not, some which
we are aware of and some which we may try to keep out of our conscious-
nes. We also must distinguish between the intention we have with an ac-
tion and its purpose. The intention is what we want to do, when deciding
between different action possibilities, but it is not the reason for doing it.
However it does not make sense to talk about action talking about pur-
pose and without talking about intention.

Another problem is the fact that the term "intention" has been used in
so many different contexts. In analytic philosophy the discussion concer-
ning intention and intentionality has persued the goal of analyzing the logi-
cal properties of language in which expressions including "intention" are
used. In phenomenology - e.g. by Husserl - intention has been used as a
psychological concept, as a phenomenon to be explained. (See D. Carr,
1975).)

These remarks conclude this article, since it must be concluded someti-
mes. The problems raised have to be discussed in another context.

FOOTNOTES

[1] It is interesting that Heller here talks about "needs being capacities". In both cases we imply that there is something inside the human organism, namely something which can be identified as a need and/or a capacity.

I have in another context (1979b, 1980) tried to show that a dialectical theory requires a *relational* approach. This means that one has to abandon the idea of something which can be identified to exist *within* the person in favour of identifying it as something *between* persons. This will be discussed later on in this article.

[2] As an example of the change in vocabulary I may refer to a book by Karl Kautsky published in 1906. There he speaks of *social drives* as opposed to *drives* of selfpreservation and procreation, comparing man's behavior to that of animals. "A series of drives" he says "from the preconditions for the development of any type of society". Among these drives he mentions are altruims, courage, fidelity, discipline etc. (The quotation is from O. Bauer, 1970.) Kautsky's terminology seems strange to us, but we ought to remember it was used at the same time as S. Freud developed his drive and instinct theories. It indicates the historically limited use of concepts.

[3] One of the difficulties in a relational approach, the fact that people repeat their actions in different situations and in regard to different persons can be explained in terms of the "double-bind-thesis", i.e. in terms of linguistically induced constraints (see J. Israel, 1980).

[4] This article is part of a larger project to develop a marxist socialpsychology which does not, as usually attempted, try to create a synthesis between marxism and psychoanalysis. Such a synthesis creates a multitude of theoretical and methatheoretical difficulties. A first outline of the project is to be published in a coming anthology ("Das Project einer marxistischen Sozialpsychologie"/in print/).

[5] This seems to hold for causal relations in general. "Causal explanations normally point to the past. 'This happened *because* that had occured' is their typical form in language" (von Wright 1971, p.83). It is also pointed out that "teological explanations point to the future. 'This happened, *in order* that that should occur'"(ibid.).

Causal connections are "in the simplest case" (ibid.) a relationship of *sufficient* conditionship. Teleological relations however are of *necessary* conditionship.

Hence the use of teleological explanation in regard to human action avoids some of the problems of causality and determinism. Bertrand Russel once wrote: "The law of causality, I believe, like much that passes muster among philosophers, is a relic of a bygone age, surviving, like the monarchy, only because it is erroneously supposed to do no harm" (quoted after von Wright op. cit. p.35).

[6] If *a* is a causing factor and *b* an effect factor, the logical expression for a necessary condition is "b ⊃ a", i.e. if *b* is present then *a* has been present also. A sufficient condition, however is expressed as "a ⊃ b", if *a* so *b*. We can say: "if people go to church they have a religeous need." But we cannot say: "if they have a religeous need they go to church" - they may do other things.

To shoot oneself in the head may be a necessary condition for suicide. It cannot be a sufficient one because not every time somebody commits suicide he uses guns.

[7] Paul Ricoeur (1970) has made a strong case against psychoanalysis to perceive itself as a naturalisric theory. Psychoanalysis is not an empirical science, but hermeneutical he argues. It deals with interpretations and hence ought to abandon explanation in favour of understanding.

[8] According to an interesting analysis by K. Burke (1962) the analysis of action demands five concepts being connected to five problems: "what is done (the act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agent), how he did it (agency) and

why (purpose)" K. Burke, 1962, XV).

"Agency" here refers to "means" and "scene" can be translated into "situations". Still there seems to be missing two aspects, having to do with the initiation and the outcome of action. For that reason I like to add the notions of "intention" and of "goal".

Burke uses his concepts in a dialectical way: "We have also likened the terms to the fingers, which in their extremities are distinct from one another, but merge in the palm of the hand. If you would go from one finger to another without a leap, you need but trace the tendon down into the palm of the hand, and then trace a new course along another tendon" (K. Burke op. cot. p.XXII).

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