

Contemporary Sociological Theories

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What is it about?

- ▶ C – what is contemporary?
- ▶ S – what is sociological?
- ▶ T – what is theory?

Classical/Contemporary

- ▶ Classical social theory as a response to the emerging modernity. Contemporary social theory as a response to the crisis of modernity.
 - Theorizing “the social”: How to reconcile the vision of the social world as emerging out of the actions of free individuals and the vision of the social world as an organized, ordered system? (Seidman, 1998, 105)
 - Theorizing “rupture”: the “search for a principle of integration which would be capable of reconciling the contradictions of modernity and imposing unity on a disordered and fragmented world” (Delanty 2000, 29).
 - Theorizing modernity (including theorizing theory). Theory between “science,” “imagination,” and “social projects.”

Theorizing the social

- ▶ The end of “society”: transformation of social structures, disintegration and deregulation (neither values, nor coercion).
- ▶ The end of “society”? Criticism of Parsons:
 - overemphasized mechanisms maintaining social order;
 - oversocialized conception of an individual;
 - “equilibrium” as an artificial conception of the social world;
 - lack of stability and disorder are not pathologies of the social system;
 - interrelatedness is not natural but achieved by structures of power and domination.

Theorizing “rupture”: the end of history?

- ▶ Classical theory under the “spell of Plato”: to arrest change; from theorizing rupture to: “there is no rupture.”
- ▶ Post-industrial society: from production to consumption and knowledge. Conflict is shifting from economy to culture and knowledge, to the depoliticized and privatized issues.
- ▶ End of history: social change is indeterminate, societies do not pass from one stage to another, historical evolution is a myth. Post-industrial society = post-historical, de-modernized society. (Delanty, *Social Theory*, 126-7)

Theorizing theory

- ▶ Criticism of modern “narrative” (theory) as a “representation that arrests ambiguity and controls the proliferation of meaning by imposing a standard and standpoint of interpretation that is taken to be fixed and independent of the time it represents” (Ashley in Roseneau).

But is there a classical-contemporary cleavage?

- ▶ We continue to play with largely the same pieces, and try to put together the puzzle of society, only we for most part do not believe that there is a design our pieces shall be fitting in, and the pieces themselves have been largely problematized.

Mapping theory: Larry Ray

But no clear hierarchy:

- ▶ Parsons: hierarchy of “energy distribution”: AGIL, and of “informational control”: LIGA.
- ▶ Contemporary: rather “fields” than “subsystems” – ambiguous inside and disorderly related to other fields. Possibility of an array of social theories of heterogeneous and non-fixed character. Many possible, temporary hierarchies if at all.

Mapping contemporary theory: Richard Münch.

But is there a classical-contemporary cleavage?

- ▶ The inevitability of myth?
“It is precisely this sense of the instability...of the world, that introduces myth into social theory...Every historical period needs a narrative that defines its past in terms of the present, and suggests a future that is fundamentally different, and typically ‘even better,’ than contemporary time. For this reason there is always an eschatology, not merely an epistemology, in theorizing about social change.” (Alexander, Modern..., 9-10)

Mapping contemporary theory: Jeffrey Alexander

- ▶ Four periods in postwar social thought with corresponding myths/ideologies.
 - Modernization theory and romantic liberalism. (WWII – 1960s)
 - Antimodernization theory and heroic radicalism. (1960s – 1970s)
 - Postmodern theory and comic detachment. (1980s)
 - Neo-modernization theory and the combination of previous mythological narratives. (1990s)

Modernization paradigm

- ▶ Out of the crisis and “bifurcating social change.”
 - ▶ Deflationary acceptance of this world as the only possible one (the end of heroic narratives and great narratives of change).
 - ▶ Realism: limitation, restraint, “complexity,” “skepticism.”
 - ▶ Romanticism: progress, gradual improvement, universalization.
 - ▶ Individualism: society centered on the self, against collective subjects, authenticity (e.g. Riesman’s “inner-directed man,” Goffman’s role distance, backstage vs. front stage).
- ▶ “The decisive fact in modernization theory’s defeat...was the destruction of its ideological, discursive, and mythological core. The challenge that finally could not be met was existential. It emerged from the new social movements that were increasingly viewed in terms of collective emancipation...” (Alexander, *Modern...*, 21)

Antimodernization paradigm

- ▶ “Reality problems”: poverty, conflicts, dictatorship, diversity.
- ▶ Retreat from “convergence” to “independent pathways.”
- ▶ Back to revolution, class, conflict, power.
- ▶ From “binding social structures” to the “liquid, unformed, and negotiated character of everyday life.”
- ▶ Changing binary code: modernity = traditionalism, repression, impoverishment.
- ▶ New inflated, heroic narratives of a collective struggle for a better world.

Postmodernization paradigm

- ▶ Dissipation of radical social movements (demands institutionalized or blocked).
- ▶ Conservative backlash, materialism, end of heroism.
- ▶ Postmodern myth as the “successor ideology to radical social theory, animated by the failure of reality to unfold in a manner that was consistent with the expectations

generated by that antimodernization creed." (Alexander, Modern, 24)

- ▶ Reinterpretation of the defeat as historical necessity.
- ▶ Against modernism and against antimodernist heroic narratives: double inversion.
- ▶ Detachment (comic?).

Neomodernization paradigm

- ▶ Victory of the neo-liberal right. Defeat of communism: the end of an alternative. Capitalist transformation of backward economies.
- ▶ The synthesis of modern romanticism and anti-modern heroism (emancipatory narrative of the market, democracy, freedom)

How Poles contributed to social theory

- ▶ "The melodrama of social good triumphing...over social evil...has populated the symbolic canvas of the late twentieth-century West with heroes and conquests of truly world-historical scope. This drama started with the epochal struggle of Lech Walesa, and what seemed to be virtually the entire Polish nation against Poland's coercive party state." (Alexander, Modern..., 33)

Alexander revised

- ▶ Anti-modernization paradigm.
 - The social is what people think it is. Social theory as an exploration of how society emerges out of interactions and negotiations of meaning between individuals.
 - The social is not what people think it is. Social theory as a critical undermining of dominant narratives on behalf of the emancipatory narrative.
- ▶ Post-modernization paradigm: there is no social. Social theory as deconstruction of narratives, the social as simulacrum.
- ▶ Neo-modernization paradigm: the social is what it is. Social theory as the exploration of the objective mechanisms of social life and their reflexive implementation.
 - The return of the social and of history. The "cultural turn." Globalization and de-territorialization of the social.

Mapping contemporary theory

Some features of contemporary theory

- ▶ Revival of the "subjectivist" part of the Weberian legacy: new developments in Symbolic Interactionism and phenomenological sociology;
- ▶ Revival of Marxism: serious and not quite;
- ▶ "New sociologies" (existential, hermeneutical, etc.);

- ▶ “Neo-sociologies” (re-established dialogue with one’s own tradition: Neofunctionalism, neo-Marxism);
- ▶ Interdisciplinary dialogue: blurred genres;
- ▶ New perspectives: feminist, gay/lesbian, post-colonial;

Some features of contemporary theory

- ▶ Anti-theoretical movement: back to life (ethnomethodology), deconstruction of totalizing narratives (tricky!);
- ▶ “Substantivism” (from social theory to theories of particular social spheres);
- ▶ Simultaneity and increased inter-theoretical communication;
- ▶ “Problem-swap” (functionalism—change, conflict—structure);
- ▶ Ecclecticism;
- ▶ “Back to certitude” and mainstream backlash

Symbolic Interactionism (SI)

“Double temporality” or intellectual necrophilia?

- ▶ SI authors participate in “narrative exercises that perpetuate the myth of SI. They keep our prophets alive. This means that we continually read our actions in the present in light of these reconstructed histories of the past...We map the present into the past. This gives interactionist text a curious sense of temporality. We rely on Mead to tell us about life in the postmodern moment, or we use Simmel’s theory of the dyad, formulated in the early 1900s, to tell us about postmodern relational life. (Denzin, 160)

Double temporality of Symbolic Interactionism

- ▶ Chicago School and the problem of subjective responses to modernization process and to the ‘situation of a newcomer’. SI as the sociology of men and women who build together their worlds out of scratch.
- ▶ SI in 1960s and 1970s: sociology as anti-Sociology; anti-theoretical orientation: society as lived in the here and now, society as a permanently changing reality, theory as ‘change-killer’. Not ‘Why?’ But ‘How?’ SI as a ‘direct examination of the empirical world’ (Blumer), as a sociology of ‘actual’ life.

SI as theory

- ▶ But: theoretical potential of SI as the sociology of ‘epiphanic experiences’ (the acts of creation of the social world in which an order emerges out of

interactions).

- ▶ “The Social” as a transient and permanently negotiated order that momentarily emerges out of human encounters in which their participants mutually interpret each other’s actions, give meaning to situation in which they are and construct their own actions out of these interpretations and meanings.

What is symbolic about interaction?

- ▶ An example of the interactionist definition of symbol (Peter M. Hall): ‘Symbols are the means by which people orient themselves to the world, to others, and to themselves. They facilitate the process of social integration because they serve to define the world, channel thought processes, motivate actions, justify interests, and coordinate activities.’

Why symbols?

- ▶ With a little help of Mircea Eliade: symbols are signs, which express a nostalgia for an alternative, have an abundance of meaning, and perform an uniting function. They transcend the present because they refer “beyond themselves” to other spheres of meaning. They join the particular with the “universal” and thus help to understand the former.

Eliade on images/symbols

- ▶ ‘...images express the nostalgia for a mythicised past transformed into an archetype, and this “past” signifies not only regrets for a vanished time but countless other meanings; it expresses all that might have been but was not, the sadness of all existence which *is* only by ceasing to be something else; regrets that one does not live in the country or in the times evoked by the song (whatever the local or historical colouring may be—the Russia of the balalaikas, the gorgeous East, the Haiti of the films, the life of the American millionaire, the exotic prince, etc.)—in short, the longing for something *altogether different* from the present instant; something in fact inaccessible or irretrievably lost: “Paradise” itself...[Images] express more than the subject who has experienced them could convey in words...Such images bring men together...more effectively and more genuinely than any analytical language.’ Mircea Eliade (1961) *Images and Symbols*. Studies in Religious Symbolism.

Symbols in Interactionism

- ▶ Interactionist nostalgia: secularized and oriented towards future;
- ▶ The abundance of meaning: a quality of ‘any phase or aspect of the action of a creature’ that enables that phase or aspect to

'serve to the other creatures as a sign for the action as a whole'

Uniting function of symbols

- ▶ A kind of communication should be established between the bygone past and the new present of individuals to help them to preserve a sort of basic identity necessary to learn new professional and practical identities.
- ▶ A kind of communication should be established between different individuals, of extremely different backgrounds, to help them to understand other's actions, to design their own, and to adjust and change them according to the understanding of the partners in interaction.
- ▶ A kind of communication should be established between different aspects of our action turning them into a coherent semantics which enables a part of our action to stand for the whole of it to the other partners of interaction.

What is interactionist about symbolism?

- ▶ **George Herbert Mead:** from gesture and verbal gestures (language) to significant symbols : mutually understood gestures; gestures which become symbolized in the process of interpretation of meaning.
- ▶ Interpretation of meaning: a process of interaction between the elements of the Self: *I* and *Me*.
- ▶ Generalized Other: 'the organized community or social group which gives to the individual his unity of self.'
- ▶ Mutual understanding as learned in role-taking with the help of the 'generalized other': social influence on the self makes interpersonal communication possible. Individuals share the same interpretations and this makes an action meaningful to them.

Herbert Blumer and voluntaristic interpretation of Mead's legacy

- ▶ Blumer as a 'negativist:' what human behavior is not (it is not a result of psychological factors or social-structural factors). It is a result of an individual production of meanings, which takes place in the interaction with other people. Symbolic interaction as an 'activity in which human beings interpret each other's gestures and act on the basis of the meaning yielded by that interpretation.'

Three premises of SI

- ▶ Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.
- ▶ The meaning of such things derives from the social interaction

that one has with one's fellows.

- ▶ The meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretation process.

A philosophical excursion

- ▶ Wittgenstein: "Every sign by itself seems dead. What gives it life? – In use it is alive. Is life breathed into it there? – Or is the use its life?"
Philosophical Investigations (1953)
- ▶ Blumer: "The meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing."
Symbolic Interactionism. Perspective and Method (1969)

Interactionist reduction or an epiphanic experience

- ▶ All social processes and entities can be reduced to meaningful interpersonal behavior or to "acting units."
- ▶ Society as symbolic interaction.

Blumer's problem: the context of an interaction

- ▶ SI between 'culture' and 'structure.' Or: where does the meaning come from?
- ▶ Blumer: 'People ...do not act toward culture, social structure or the like; they act toward situations.' On the other hand, social structures shape situations and supply 'fixed set of symbols which people use in interpreting their situations.' Even though, action is always constructed, never released.

Erving Goffman on the 'situation vs. culture/structure' dilemma

- ▶ 'Theatre' (*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 1956)
'Social life is conceived as composed of performances in which various routines, or patterns of activity, are enacted.' (Don Martindale) Scenarios and performances. Backstage and front stage regions. People cooperate in a way, which is similar to the conspiracy of the actor and the audience 'to save the show.'

Goffman

- ▶ 'Institution' (*Asylums* 1961) Dialectics of incarceration and freedom in total institutions as a metaphor for social life.

Imitation, 'Mocking,' subverting, reproducing, building alternatives.

Goffman

- ▶ 'Stigmatization' (*Stigma* 1963) Certain labels are objectified through permanent use and are commonly accepted as definitions and self-definitions. 'Sedimentation' of meaning which depends on the temporality and rigidity of interaction.

Goffman

- ▶ 'Ritualization' (*Interaction Ritual* 1967) An interaction is structured by repeatable marking elements, often of a bodily character.

Goffman

- ▶ 'Framing' (*Frame Analysis* 1974) Social life as consisting of a set of frames ('principles of organization which govern events...and our subjective involvement in them'), which we employ using the procedures of 'keying' (utilizing conventions established in one area of social life while acting in other areas) and 'fabrication' (when we deliberately use frames to deceive others and ourselves).

Goffman

- ▶ 'Loose-coupling' (*The Interaction Order* 1983) There exists a 'loose coupling' between the interaction order (the organization of interaction which arises 'from the fact of people being physically present together in the same place, within range of one another's observation and communication') and social structure. Knowing the location of interacting partners in social structure we may expect certain interaction order to emerge but what in fact does emerge may well be against all our expectations.

Goffman: loose coupling

- ▶ 'In general, then, ... what one finds, in modern societies at least, is a nonexclusive linkage - a "loose coupling"- between interactional practices and social structures..., a gearing as it

were of various structures into interactional cogs. Or, if you will, a set of transformation rules, or a membrane selecting how various externally relevant social distinctions will be managed within the interaction.'

Victor Turner's theory of symbolic action

- ▶ Human action consists of sequences, some of them are regulated by a "program", some other are not. Those not regulated = "liminal" moments, when actors are released from the normative regulations and binding definitions. "In this gap between ordered worlds almost everything can happen" Sabotage of "the program", construction of alternative programs, broadening the sphere of choice between programs. Metaphors as the source of creativity. "Social fields" – spheres of competing programs defining an area of available types of action. (*Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Actions in Human Society*, 1975)

Continuations and recent developments.

- ▶ Towards new methodologies (continuation of Manford Kuhn and Iowa School). Extreme: SI as a documentaries maker. (Carl Couch)
- ▶ Towards semiotics. Extreme: SI as a linguist. (Harvey Sacks)
- ▶ Problem swap: towards macro phenomena. Extreme: SI as a 'plain' sociologist. (Norman Denzin)
- ▶ Inspiring other sociological perspectives. Extreme: SI disappears and the school leads a posthumous life in other sociological orientations. (Giddens, Habermas)

Continuations...

- ▶ Radically 'anti-sociological' turn: an analysis of society as an emergent phenomenon grounded in the local narratives of how people are doing things together. In extreme form: a dead end where a symbolic interactionist turns into an interaction partner. (Ethnomethodology)
- ▶ Continuation of the classical agenda in new problem areas: feminism, mass media, urban problems, HIV, ageing. (Jack Douglas, John Lofland)
- ▶ Towards the study of conflict and deviance: away from Goffman's world of a 'man in grey flannel suit'
- ▶ Towards 'self-sufficiency': reading and re-reading its own tradition, 'mapping the present into the past.' Extreme: SI as a historian of his own discipline. (Patricia T. Clough)

Norman K. Denzin: "macro SI" or mainstream theory?

- ▶ "Notes on the Criminogenic Hypothesis: A Case Study of the American

Liquor Industry," Am. Soc. Rev. 1977, vol. 42.

- ▶ The concept of organization: "network of social relationships," of longer duration than the lives of people involved, which is "negotiated" and "differentially constrains its members." Provides an "interactive order" for the drinking phenomenon.
- ▶ Five tiers of liquor industry (acting units): distillers, distributors, retailers, the law, drinkers.

- ▶ The role of history:
 - Prohibition: concentration of production (4 large distillers),
 - "Impression management" and propaganda to change the image of drinking.
 - ▶ Dissociation from crime,
 - ▶ Drinking socially approved: "moderation,"
 - ▶ Tax-paying, governmental control,
 - ▶ Organizational mediation (distributors) to "protect customer."

- ▶ Relations within tiers and between them
 - Illusory formal structures, primacy of informal, "negotiated" ones;
 - Group solidarity and identity-building within tiers. Competition.
 - Between tiers: bargaining, negotiating, alliances;
 - Alienation from the law as a unifying factor.

Peter M. Hall: a SI analysis of politics

- ▶ Private area of politics: "backstage," bargaining, caucus, unofficial language.
- ▶ Public area of politics: political impression management. To achieve "control over the conduct of others...by influencing the definition of the situation in which all are involved." To get others to share one's reality.
- ▶ Political culture as the context of PIM.

- ▶ Political impression management:
 - Control of information flow (backstage behaviors; but: thinning line separating front and back regions)
 - Symbolic mobilization of support: "front-stage performances where symbols...are used to strengthen or maintain the position of the political actor(s)."

- ▶ Symbols differ depending on the audience. (Why political speeches on TV are boring?)
- ▶ Political performance is not a rational debate.

- ▶ “[T]he aim of the performers is to revitalize their supporters, persuade the partials and in-betweens, neutralize and undermine the remainder of the in-betweens and partial opponents and attack the strong opponents. Counter to the general image of rational and open civic discussion, the political actor does not attempt to persuade his opposition to change their position.”

Symbols in mobilization of support

- ▶ Ideology
- ▶ Creation of political character
- ▶ Definition of the issue
- ▶ Managing discontent

Ideology

- ▶ A form of symbolic belief system, the function of which is to “turn listeners into believers and believers into actors.”
- ▶ Building commitment to a new social cosmology.
- ▶ Creating single identity.
- ▶ “Community” out of society.

Political character: to establish an identity of a politician

- ▶ Integrating content, tone, and appearance.
- ▶ To make difference (from others).
- ▶ To connect the self with the past, presence and future (temporal consistency).
- ▶ To identify with the sacred things of the society.
- ▶ To create an identity for the opponent.
- ▶ To avoid an image of a power-thirsty.
- ▶ To be “with the people” and “above the people.” (Why presentation of self by a politician should not be perfect?)

Definition of the issue

- ▶ How to deal with problems: to define their context.
- ▶ To change actors or to change theater?
- ▶ To personalize issues.
- ▶ To label actors deviant to destroy the issue they represent.

Managing discontent

- ▶ Isolate dissenters.
- ▶ Dissenters are not right but "misinformed."
- ▶ The ideology of "one family."
- ▶ "It is your problem as well."

Phenomenological sociology.

- ▶ Phenomenology as "de-socialization" (Kurt Wolff). Husserl's project (*Ideas*): bracketing of culture; "to go back to things" - phenomenological reduction to reveal the way in which things appear to consciousness. Against commonsense.
- ▶ Phenomenology as "re-socialization" (Husserl, *The Crisis of the European Sciences...*). Bracketing of scientific theories and philosophical conceptualizations; "to go back to lifeworld" (Lebenswelt). Reduction to the pre-scientific world which is the source of meaning in social life.

Maurice Natanson: PS as „an epiphany of the familiar.“

- ▶ Consciousness makes realities because it constitutes meanings.
- ▶ Sedimentation of meaning: meanings get sedimented as people make and share worlds together. Sedimentation allows people to find some similarities and common points in their otherwise idiosyncratic experiences.
- ▶ Sedimentation leads to the establishment of "finite provinces" = different worlds of experience, which together make up our "life world," the home of our consciousness.

Natanson: horizon and enclaves.

- ▶ Horizon: delineates the area of possible experiences of an object into which our incomplete experience has been placed. (Assumes that an individual experience is partial, incomplete, and points beyond itself to other experiences that may complement it.)

- ▶ Enclaves: places in which "normal" does not apply (which cannot be made meaningful within a particular "province"). For example "marginality" or "stranger." Enclaves emerge when horizons bump into one another.

Alfred Schutz.

- ▶ **Life-world** (*Lebenswelt*): world experienced by us as real in our natural attitude;
- ▶ **Natural attitude**: selective attitude of our consciousness which selects from our everyday knowledge these aspects which are important to us with respect to our system of relevance;
- ▶ **Everyday knowledge**: knowledge passed to us in the process of socialization or acquired through experience, presenting us the typical aspects of reality;
- ▶ **System of relevance**: our interests, integrated into the system of plans; decide which elements of everyday knowledge will be selected to define situation and put our knowledge in question;

Schutz's response to "Blumer's problem."

- ▶ "Intersubjectivity" instead of "interacting subjectivities."
- ▶ Practice. People think in the context of their actions.
- ▶ Common knowledge as a foundation of intersubjectivity.
 - Structures of distance and familiarity ("knowledge of acquaintance" and "knowledge about");
 - Translation of perspectives (role-taking);
 - Social sources of knowledge (socialization);
- ▶ To share knowledge = to share intersubjective world.

"Natural attitude" as a universal feature of everyday knowledge.

- ▶ The characteristics of natural attitude:
 - The world as taken-for-granted until further notice;
 - Idealization "and so forth and so on";
 - Idealization "I can do it again"
- ▶ When our knowledge doesn't work, the world is not taken for granted any longer: "gestalt-switch" – to move between and within particular realms of knowledge ("limited provinces of meaning") in search for new knowledge and revision of the old.

"Natural attitude" → "thinking as usual."

- ▶ "Thinking as usual" – similar to Scheler's relatively natural conception of the world. When "thinking as usual" is possible?
 - Stability of life (present-future relation)
 - Continuity in time: past – present relation (builds trust in knowledge)

handed down)

- "Knowledge about"" to know something is in most cases enough
- "Others think the same": intersubjectivity

"Limited provinces of meaning."

- ▶ Segmentation of the world (the world as given in knowledge): the world divided into segments; gradation of our knowledge of particular segments. Concentric model.

Intersubjectivity in practice.

- ▶ we "know" what will happen in the everyday life, because "the validity of anticipations of this kind is founded on the assumption that some or all of my fellow-men will find in their stock of knowledge at hand typically similar elements, and that these will determine the motives of their action: (Schutz 1976, Tiresias, CPII, 282).

The role of culture.

- ▶ "Cultural pattern of group life" – group identity.
- ▶ Culture maintains self-evident character of everyday knowledge: "...it is the function of the cultural pattern to eliminate troublesome inquires by offering ready-made directions for use, to replace truth hard to attain by comfortable truisms, and to substitute the self-explanatory for the questionable." (Stranger. CPII, 95)

"Alerted attitude"

- ▶ To share world – possible because of the general attitude of "alert": "those who are on alert share common world, those asleep are turned to their private worlds."

Schutz's responses: a summary.

- ▶ Intersubjectivity.
 - The role of practice.
 - Commonsense knowledge.
 - Natural attitude.
 - Thinking as usual.
- ▶ Segmentation of the world → limited provinces of meaning.

- ▶ Cultural pattern of group life.
- ▶ Alerted attitude.

Ethnomethodology: Harold Garfinkel.

- ▶ The place of ethnomethodology in contemporary social theory.
- ▶ Ethnomethodology and interactionism.
 - Deconstruction of an individual: "the topic of ethnomethodology will not allow a study of individuals 'coming together to interact.'" (Hilbert 1992, 194)
 - Deconstruction of symbols: "EM is not in the business of interpreting signs. It is not an interpretive enterprise. Enacted local practices are not texts which symbolize "meanings" or events. They are in detail identical with themselves, and not representative of something else. The witnessably recurrent details of ordinary everyday practice are constitutive of their own reality. They are studied in their unmediated details and not as signed enterprises."

What EM is?

- ▶ 'Ethnomethodology, then, is the study of the methods people use for producing recognizable social orders. "Ethno" refers to members of a social or cultural group...and "method" refers to the things members routinely do to create and recreate the various recognizable social actions and social practices. "Ology" as in the word "sociology" implies the study of, or the logic of, these methods. Thus Ethnomethodology means the study of members' methods for producing recognizable social orders.' Rawls: *Editor's Introduction*. In: Garfinkel: *Ethnomethodology's Program. Working Out Durkheim's Aphorism*.

EM as a foundational challenge.

- ▶ ethnomethodological respecification: which practices better exhibit human "society"? What orders a society is to be found not in the human sciences but in their (order and society) "achievements."
- ▶ ethnomethodological localization: where is the order? The 'phenomena of social order consist of lived, immediate, unmediated, congregational practices in their display, in their witnessed recognition, in their intelligibility and their accountability of immortal ordinary Things in the world.' (Garfinkel, EP, 68)

EM as knowledge of the objective reality of social facts.

- ▶ "According to Garfinkel, the result of Ethnomethodological studies is the fulfillment of Durkheim's promise that the objective reality of social facts is sociology's fundamental principle. Where Garfinkel parts company from Durkheim is in replacing the assumption that objective reality is the result of conforming with institutionalized forms of constraint, with the proposal that social facts are orderly endogenous products of local orders, as the achievements of the immortal ordinary society." Rawls: *Editor's Introduction*. In: Garfinkel: *Ethnomethodology's Program. Working Out Durkheim's Aphorism*.

Garfinkel's response to Blumer's problem.

- ▶ "Society...does not depend on the tendencies of individuals to more or less comply with social norms. Society is immortal in that the patterned orderliness of situations outlives the particular persons who staff them." (Rawls, 24)
 - "Scene." More important than population. "Any population coming on a particular scene could only recognizably reproduce it by recognizably producing just those practices that identify it as a scene of a particular sort." (Ibid.)
 - "Membership" = "members' methods" and they are social: "In the spirit of Durkheim, they transcend anyone's 'individuality'." (Hilbert, 194)

In consequence,

- ▶ "With the notion of membership, sociologists do not need structure to account for social constraint. Ethnomethods are social practices whereby members orient to a presupposed social-structural order, reifying and reproducing it in the course of their activity and *imposing its reality on each other as they go.*" (Hilbert, 194)

Critical theory.

A "theory that is self-conscious about its historicity, its place in dialogue and among cultures, its irreducibility to facts, and its engagement in the practical world." (Calhoun) Two-level conception of reality: there exists an "underlying order that cannot be found in any of the surface characteristics of its objects." (Calhoun 1995, 11)

Criticism of what? Early Frankfurt School.

- ▶ **In political economy:** Criticism of the societal integration in the form of centralized administrative domination and bureaucratic planning of the post-liberal state capitalism. (Friedrich Pollock)
- ▶ **In psychology:** Criticism of socialization and family. Why individuals submit without resistance to a centrally administered system of domination? Authoritarian personality. (Theodor W. Adorno, Erich Fromm, Wilhelm Reich)
- ▶ **In theory of culture:** Criticism of culture as functional in the reproduction of domination. The emergence of "culture industry." (Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin)

FS late period.

- ▶ Criticism of "domination": an individual's goals and means of attaining them are

prescribed to him/her and performed as something prescribed. Domination over one's self, over the labor and products achieved by the dominated people, over nature: science and technology.

- ▶ Criticism of the destructive potential of human reason: instrumental rationality. "Dialectic of Enlightenment": criticism of the ambivalent nature of reason. Reason as emancipation vs. reason as domination and instrumentalization.
- ▶ Criticism of "identity theory" (a belief in a basic unity which exists behind the apparent opposition), stress on conflict and difference. ("Negative Dialectic")

Jürgen Habermas

- ▶ A theory with a practical intention: self-emancipation of people from domination; self-understanding of social groups capable of transforming society. Critical theory must unmask the particular interests and disclose the fundamental interest of mankind. In the theory of knowledge, critical theory provides self-reflection for self-understanding and communication, against instrumental reason which has dominated modern thought.

Knowledge and Human Interests (1968/1971)

- ▶ Knowledge as historically rooted and interest-bound. Humans as tool-making and language-using animals → an interest in controlling objectified processes; an interest in maintaining communication, an interest in emancipation (an interest in the reflexive appropriation of human life).

Types of action. *Theory of Communicative Action (1981/1984)*

- ▶ teleological-strategic-instrumental; rationality as a successful means-end calculation; claim for efficiency, (not) thematized in the empirical discourse;
- ▶ dramaturgical-expressive; rationality as authenticity; claim for truthfulness, thematized in the therapeutic (aesthetic) discourse;
- ▶ normative-social; rationality as conformity of behavior with shared norms and values, or with a moral interest common to all; claim for rightness, thematized in the practical (political) discourse;
- ▶ communicative: "occurs when two or more persons expressly seek to reach voluntary agreement on their situation for the sake of cooperating" (Ingram).

Tasks of CT

- ▶ Critical theory as a critique of distorted communication.

Emancipation: unmasking domination and transcending distorted communication. In search of the lack of constraint; e.g. ideal speech situation.

System vs. Life-world.

- ▶ **System:** material reproduction through strategic action, integration of activities according to the economic and political goals through market and bureaucratic constraints.
- ▶ **Lifeworld:** symbolic reproduction through communicative action, maintaining individual and social identities by referring to shared values and negotiable agreements.
- ▶ System and lifeworld as two modalities of society. Lifeworld as the area of communicative action. Lifeworld as culturally transmitted and linguistically organized stock of interpretive patterns.
- ▶ Colonization of the lifeworld: the incursion of the "teleological-strategic-rational" complex into the domain that is "constitutively dependent on processes of communicatively reaching understanding." (David Held)
- ▶ The need of "uncoupling" life-world and system. Legal institutions: mediation; negotiated and legally secured social justice

Between functionalism and hermeneutics.

- ▶ "Ideological illusions can be diagnosed only when existing forms of social integration are understood as compromises between lifeworld and system. Functionalist theories, which reduce integration to adaptation, interpret cultural ideals as mechanisms for steering behavior...Conversely, hermeneutic theories which reduce integration to consensus are incapable of grasping how the ideals of freedom and equality underwriting civil and democratic rights are vitiated by the constraints of political and economic domination." (Ingram, 129)

Habermas and Modernity.

- ▶ Modernity is an unfinished project and the "terrorism of reason." "The totalitarian impulse to subordinate and assimilate dissident subcultures to the dominant scientific culture" (Ingram), is the result of the lack of accomplishment of Modernity, not of Modernity itself; it is an aberration of Modernity. Postmodernists claim, however, that to be blamed is "the rational demand for unity, purity, objectivity, universality and ultimacy" (Ingram) which constitutes the essence of Modernity.

How to save modernity?

- ▶ Habermas believes that there is some sort of social ideal, conceptualized by him in various ways, some kind of social solidarity (unity, mutual understanding, agreement, equilibrium), which resists "assimilation to the instrumental rationality of economy and bureaucracy" (Ingram). It does, however, exist in a hidden way

and in order to secure for it an influence on social life we should be thinking of turning the process of modernization into "non-capitalist directions" to achieve an ideal of lifeworld developing its institutions "in a way currently inhibited by the autonomous systemic dynamics of the economic and administrative system" (Habermas, *Modernity: An Unfinished Project*). The program of an appropriation of expert cultures: reconnection of modern culture with an everyday sphere of praxis.

Mechanisms of lifeworld's defense

- ▶ "Ideal speech situations"
- ▶ Legal institutions: mediation; negotiated and legally secured social justice
- ▶ Appropriation of expert cultures: reconnection of modern culture with an everyday sphere of praxis.
- ▶ Social movements: decolonization of lifeworld. The "withdrawal of system-integration mechanisms from some aspects of symbolic reproduction; the replacement of (some) normatively secured contexts by communicatively achieved ones; the development of new participatory-democratic institutions which would regulate markets, bureaucracies and technologies." (Ray, *Rethinking Critical Theory*)

Postmodern criticism of Habermas.

- ▶ Lyotard's definition of postmodern attitude as being incredulous towards metanarratives. "From Lyotard's point of view, Habermas is offering one more metanarrative, a more general and abstract 'narrative of emancipation' than the Freudian and Marxian metanarratives." (Rorty) Habermas: the Hidden Ideal is the standard preserved from the corruption of all standards and thus enabling us to tell the difference between theory and ideology, rational and irrational, desired and undesired. Lyotard: it is a metanarrative among others; there is no chance to carry out rational social critique and theory is just a brand of ideology.

Habermas' reaction.

- ▶ The concept of the young conservatism. Postmodern approach is an escapism, which seeks only a convenient hiding place in the spheres of art or individual self-creation, which were prepared by Modernity itself. By not taking responsibility for the direction of Modernity's development, postmodernists paradoxically accept Modernity as it is, with all its "pathologies."

Summary of the conflict (Rorty)

- ▶ "Anything that Habermas will count as retaining a 'theoretical approach' will be counted by incredulous Lyotard as a 'metanarrative.' Anything that abandons such

an approach will be counted by Habermas as 'neoconservative,' because it drops the notions which have been used to justify the various reforms which have marked the history of Western democracies since the Enlightenment...So we find French critics of Habermas ready to abandon liberal politics in order to avoid universalistic philosophy, and Habermas trying to hang on to universalistic philosophy, with all its problems, in order to support liberal politics."

Feminist critique of Habermas

- ▶ Against the distinction between symbolic reproduction and material reproduction, which confines women to the symbolic sphere and confirms their subordinated status. As a matter of fact, any activity has its material as well as symbolic aspect and they cannot be discussed without reference to one another.
- ▶ Against the distinction between socially integrated and system integrated action where power belongs entirely to the sphere of the "system." As a matter of fact, there are spheres of life that are integrated by both contexts (e.g. household) and one should rather speak of different forms of power: domestic-patriarchal vs. bureaucratic-patriarchal.
- ▶ Against the distinction between system and the lifeworld. As a matter of fact, gendered roles integrate family with the state and the official economy, what actually confirms women's dependent status in both public and private spheres. (Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices*)

Post-Marxist critique of Habermas

- ▶ Authoritative: Habermas defends privileged status of his own thought: epistemological (his thought as rational theory), practical (his thought as "guiding," as "therapy" which enlightens "the political unconscious").
- ▶ Homogenizing: Habermas neglects "the heterogeneity of the disparate language games which constitute historical experience."
- ▶ Inconsistent: Habermas attempts to challenge the oppression of Modernity by using the aspect of modernity, which contributed to that oppression. Habermas "is caught up in the very system of oppression which he contests." Habermas' theory lacks real radicalism.
- ▶ Conservative: Not the postmodernists but Habermas and Marxists are conservative: they reproduce the system of oppression, they are blind to the real radicalism, they believe in petrified structures of reality in which things "are what they are," without ambiguity. (Thomas Docherty, *After Theory*)

Mapping Critical Theory

- ▶ Frankfurt School and its problematic continuation: Habermas.
- ▶ Conflict theory (Early: Dahrendorf, Coser, later: Collins, Bourdieu).
- ▶ Post-Marxism
 - Andre Gorz (*Farewell to the Working Class*). Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (*Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*). New social movements instead of the old Marxist agenda of conflict. Criticism of hegemonic practices. Rejection of the deterministic and essentialist elements of classical Marxism
- ▶ Feminism (Gay, Lesbian, Trans, Queer).
 - From victims of patriarchy to positive womanhood.
 - Postmodern deconstruction of "woman."
 - J. Butler: gender as performance.

Mapping Critical Theory

- ▶ New Social Movements
 - A. Touraine: social movements in post-industrial society. A social or merely cultural alternative?

- Zald & Mc Carthy: Resource Mobilization Theory. Efficiency vs. death of revolutionary spirit.
- ▶ Marx-inspired Postmodernism: Jameson, Harvey.
- ▶ Axel Honneth and recognition theory: between politics of identity and politics of redistribution.
- ▶ Postcolonial theory: "Orient" as an exoticised fiction revealing the repressed elements of Western culture.

Neofunctionalism

- ▶ "Scientific movements" rather than schools in theory;
- ▶ Growth of science as a conflict of tradition
- ▶ Relativization: scientific success measured in relation to one's own or to a competing tradition;
- ▶ Scientific development: charismatic establishment of tradition, elaboration—proliferation—revision, destruction/reconstruction ("sensitivity shift", delegitimation).

Jeffrey Alexander on theory

- ▶ Theories: "multilayered impersonal worlds that create the conditions of agreement." These "worlds" are impersonal, universal, consensual. Agreement as organized theoretically around competing traditions and empirically around competing research programs. (*General Theory in the Postpositivist Mode*)

Development of sociology

- ▶ WWII—1960s: charismatic establishment, elaboration, proliferation.
- ▶ 1960s—1970s: sensitivity shift, attempts at destruction, institutionalization of the multiparadigmatic status of sociology.
- ▶ 1980s→: sensitivity shift, reconstruction, change of a political climate, synthetic theorizing

Fields of reconstruction and continuation

- ▶ Action: normative elements vs. material factors.
- ▶ Order: pre-established social order vs. contingency, voluntarism, interactional creativity.
- ▶ Equilibrium: adaptation vs. conflict and tension.

- ▶ Ideology: Parsonian liberalism vs. utopian/conservative elitism.

Culture – society relation (Alexander)

- ▶ Cultural specification: particular groups differently “specify” the cultural pattern, but their specifications are not in conflict with one another (“sharing culture”).
- ▶ Cultural refraction: different interest refracted through the same cultural lenses → antagonistic subcultures, but commonality does exist.
- ▶ Cultural columnization: fundamental antagonism in social system and disintegration of cultural system. No horizontal integration between “closed” cultures.

Sociology of social change (Paul B. Colomy)

- ▶ First criticism of functionalism → differentiation theory (Parsons, Smelser, Bellah, Eisenstadt): from multifunctional institutions to specialized units.
- ▶ Second criticism (lack of concrete) → differentiation theory develops in three directions:
 - empirical: studying concrete departures from “master trend” (de-differentiation, uneven differentiation, incomplete differentiation);
 - activist: studying how concrete groups affect the process of change, what is the role of power, conflict and contingency in structural differentiation;
 - an open approach to the effects of differentiation: not only greater efficiency and reintegration.

Richard Münch: neofunctionalist theory of structuration

- ▶ Structuration theory as an attempt to combine the objectivist and subjectivist approaches to social action: action is shaped by structure, structure is made by actions (“duality of structure”).

Four basic theories of structure and action

- ▶ Economic theory: production and reproduction of social structure is a result of actors’ economic calculations. Whenever social structures are produced and reproduced, it goes in the direction of providing higher profits for all actors involved.

Four basic theories of structure and action

- ▶ Conflict theory: production and reproduction of social structures is a result of the struggle for political power. Whenever social structures are produced and reproduced, it goes in the direction of giving privileged positions to those who

have accumulated more power than others.

Four basic theories of structure and action

- ▶ Normative-phenomenological theory (classical functionalism and phenomenological sociology together): production and reproduction of social structures is a result of the perpetuation of a given (traditional) life-world praxis.

Whenever social structures are produced and reproduced, it goes in the direction of maintaining a given tradition in practical action.

Four basic theories of structure and action

- ▶ Rational discourse theory (e.g. Habermas): production and reproduction of social structures is a result of the attempts to claim discursive legitimation.

Whenever social structures are produced and reproduced, it goes in the direction of raising more and more the question of their legitimacy and of approaching universally valid ideas.

Frame of reference of Münch's theory

- ▶ Action is oriented to symbols and their interpretations.
- ▶ Complexity of symbolic world.
 - High: many possible ends of an action; many interdependent symbols.
 - Low: limited number of possible ends; simpler symbolic interdependencies.
- ▶ Contingency of action.
 - High: many alternative ways of acting.
 - Low: limited number of ways of acting ("interpretations").

Laws describing the production and reproduction of structures.

- ▶ **The Law of Economic Achievement:** The more social structures are produced and reproduced via economic action, competition and exchange, the higher will be their rate of change and the more their transformation will proceed in the direction of serving those actors who are the most able to economically achieve in the market.

Laws describing the production and reproduction of

structures.

- ▶ **The Law of Discursive Generalization:** The more social structures are produced and reproduced via cultural action, the more their transformation will proceed in the direction of a closer consistency with general ideas, which involves increasing pressure from legitimacy demands.

Laws describing the production and reproduction of structures.

- ▶ **The Law of Political Accumulation:** The more social structures are produced and reproduced via political action, conflict and domination, the more their transformation will proceed in the direction of serving those actors who are the most able to accumulate power and dominate in conflict.

Laws describing the production and reproduction of structures.

- ▶ **The Law of Associational Inertia:** The more social structures are produced and reproduced via the close association of actors in a community, the more their transformation will proceed in the direction of maintaining the traditionally given structures.

The origins of postmodernism/postmodernity.

- ▶ pomo as an aesthetic style;
- ▶ pomo as an intellectual movement: from poststructuralism to deconstruction;
- ▶ pomo as a historical period.

Aesthetic style

- ▶ Denying linearity;
- ▶ Beyond utility principle;
- ▶ Eclecticism;
- ▶ Pastiche;
- ▶ Playing with conventions

Intellectual movement

- ▶ From Structuralism to deconstruction.
- ▶ Structuralism: language is central ; world as a system of signs – a logical structure to be discovered or uncovered; the rejection of subject; the centrality of the relation: signifier – signified; history as a reconfiguration of signs.

Poststructuralism – deconstruction.

- ▶ Rejection of the structuralist vision of relatively closed, stable structures, where the sign was dominated by the signified. Instead: signifier in relation with other signifiers, the signified deconstructed into the signifiers. (Delanty 2000: 139)

Deconstructing narratives in the era of simulation.

- ▶ Deconstruction: a method of textual interpretation, emphasizing the impossibility of *closure*. The impossibility of closure: end of the belief in meaning as a closed and fixed system. Meaning is in the state of flux and is marked by an endless play of difference: at any given time meaning suggests, points out to something different than itself. *Differance* (Derrida): as a synthesis of differentiation and deferral. Our cognitive experience of being in the world is fundamentally generated as a dynamic and endless process of differentiation, in the course of which the arrival at a fixed, stable meaning is permanently deferred.

Deconstructing narratives in the era of simulation.

- ▶ Narrative: a “story” that gives meaning to a series or class of events to make them meaningful (possibly in a fixed and unequivocal way), coherent and related to actors. *Grand narrative* (Lyotard): a kind of story that underlies, gives legitimacy, and explains the particular choices a culture prescribes as possible courses of action. Grand narrative = metanarrative: provides a framework in which all other cultural narratives find their ground and acquire their meaning and legitimacy.

Deconstructing narratives in the era of simulation.

- ▶ Simulation (Baudrillard): disappearance of “the real”; models, signs (“simulacra”) refer to each other, not to any reality behind and thus replace “the real.” Rejection of the structuralist vision of a relatively stable structure constituted by the relation between the signifier and the signified. The signified replaced by an interplay between the signifiers.

Postmodernism as a new period in history.

- ▶ Early appearances of the term: Arnold Toynbee (1954), C. Wright Mills (1959). Postmodern period as a new social configuration that challenged "bourgeois society" by the rise of industrial working class and new social categories (professionals, intelligentsia). Questioning the idea of the freedom of reason because modern rationality did not mean increased freedom. Postmodernism as a way out of modernity and criticism of modernity: against uniformization of thought; against intensification of power, control, and fragmentation of life; against foundations and metanarratives; against radicalism.

Break-End-Death.

- ▶ Break in history (rupture).
- ▶ End of the Social.
- ▶ Death of resistance.

Break in history (rupture).

- ▶ Baudrillard: "contemporary social conditions had changed to such an extent that the categories used to describe previous social formations were no longer relevant or valid." "[W]e have *already* entered a new era of history in which power, discipline, sexuality and so on are *completely different* from what they were in the previous era, so that previous forms of power, sex and so on are 'dead' and the theories describing them are 'obsolete'." (Kellner 1989: 136)

End of the Social.

- ▶ The „category of the social...is in decline at the close of the twentieth century as a result of the rise of various kinds of symbolic orders which privilege not communication but significations, or ways of constructing reality by the mass media."
- ▶ Foucault: power relations have moved in the process of modernization into the reality of interpersonal interactions and communications.
- ▶ Baudrillard: in postmodernity power disappears together with social reality which has been replaced by hyperreality. Communication, crucial for modern society, developed media which eventually killed communication and replaced it with signification. "Reality show" instead of reality. (Delanty 1999: 111)

Death of resistance.

- ▶ Since power is dissolved and great social projects are deconstructed, any resistance to oppression is pointless. "On Baudrillard's account, such things as human suffering and institutions that produce suffering, like prisons, mental institutions, sexual repression and practices, and the

work place have no real significance; they are simply simulations without real power, efficacy or importance for the critical critic." (Kellner 1989:

However...

- ▶ We need both Baudrillard and Foucault to describe different varieties of oppression we are subjected to: "at times we still find ourselves victims of oppressive bureaucracies...; at other times we are confronted with the more subtle forms of disciplinary or normalizing power or the panoptic powers of surveillance which Foucault describes so well; and sometimes we find ourselves in the new situations which Baudrillard evokes, as when we are confronted with political or religious simulacra or with media signs which attempt to seduce us into purchases, normalized behavior, voting or whatever." (Kellner 1989: 142)

End of history.

- ▶ Postmodernity's "no-futures": the modern dissolved into variety of trajectories. Postmodernity as an endless present: from time to space? Perry Anderson: modernity works with a tension between social/historical forces and thus conceptualizes itself as a task to be accomplished, as a project. Postmodernity has no tension to work with: it operates with "the saturation of every pore of the world in the serum of capital."

Baudrillard.

- ▶ "It has all been done. The extreme limit of these possibilities has been reached. It has destroyed itself. It has deconstructed its entire universe. So all that are left are pieces. All that remains to be done is to play with the pieces. Playing with the pieces – that is postmodern." (Best & Kellner 1991: 128)

Is there anything to fight for?

- ▶ A new constellation allowing for the reconstitution of "I" and "we" (Lash and Urry);
- ▶ A shift from system to life-world and a return of "Gemeinschaft" type of a society, segmented into small units with decentralized power (Bartos, Maffesoli);
- ▶ A "glocal" society (Robertson);
- ▶ A dream of new beginning (Wolin);
- ▶ A chance for "small narratives" and micro-politics (Deleuze, Guattari);
- ▶ A "liberation of difference" (Vattimo).

In search of the lost society.

- ▶ Social theory and its missing subject.

Postmodern epistemologies.

- ▶ Discontinuity: social sciences "theorize its own evolution as discontinuous, catastrophic, non-rectifiable and paradoxical" (Lyotard);
- ▶ Eclecticism: an analogy with the postmodern art which is characterized by "dispersal and dissemination of artistic procedures, all working out of the ruins of the modernist edifice, raiding it for ideas, plundering its vocabulary and supplementing it with randomly chosen images and motifs from premodern and non-modern cultures as well as from contemporary mass culture" (Andreas Huyssen);

Postmodern epistemologies.

- ▶ Linguistic turn: "We are wrong to believe in facts; there are only signs. We are wrong to believe in truth; there are only interpretations" (Deleuze). Reality as a linguistic habit: the language of sociological theory does not refer to any "reality" but to the languages of other theories or discourses.
- ▶ Localization of truth: "knowledge has no final legitimacy outside of serving the goals envisioned by the collectivity" Lyotard: a statement is true when it illuminates the rules of speech that sustain the particular linguistic community.
- ▶ *Episteme* instead of facts: episteme gives facts the voice with which they speak=brings reality into existence (Derrida); reading as over-encoding, not deciphering (Barthes).

According to Foucault.

- ▶ POMO attitude as:

- Real acceptance of discontinuity and rejection of novelty.
- De-heroization of the present: *flaneur* instead of an activist.
- Genealogical approach: a critical ontology of self instead of inventing the self.

Cultural turn.

- ▶ As a result of postmodern simulation (Baudrillard): disappearance of the social; implosion of distinctions between classes, political ideologies, cultural forms. (Best & Kellner, 1991, 120-1)
- ▶ As a result of postmodern epistemologies: things exist in words.
- ▶ As a result of postmodern attitude (Foucault): focus on identity

Modern identity.

- ▶ "Identity is the creation of constancy over time, that very bringing of the past into conjunction with an anticipated future.

In all societies the maintenance of personal identity, and its connection to wider social identities, is a prime requisite of ontological security." (Giddens 1994: 80)

Postmodern identity.

- ▶ "One thinks of identity whenever one is not sure of where one belongs; that is, one is not sure how to place oneself among the evident variety of behavioural styles and patterns, and how to make sure that people around would accept this placement as right and proper, so that both sides would know how to go on in each other's presence." (Bauman 1995. *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality*. 82)

Globalization and identity-building.

- ▶ Stratification of identity production (Castells): growing distance between global centers of power and local centers of identity production: reflexivity as a luxury only those who participate in the global network can afford.
- ▶ Deterritorialization: globalization of "primordial" features of identity; global accessibility of identities previously limited to local contexts; from automatism of tradition reproduced in personal relations between members of relatively closed groups to individual acts of autoidentification in the loose networks of mass-mediated links between dispersed people and groups. From ethnicities to "ethnoscapes" (Appadurai)

Globalization: de-differentiation or redefinition of difference?

- ▶ Globalization as de-differentiation: "[H]umankind in some respects becomes a 'we', facing problems and opportunities where there are no 'others'." (Giddens 1991: 27)
- ▶ Redefinition of difference: not pre-given but procesual: „The social articulation of difference...is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation." (Bhabha 1994: 2-3) → Back to history.

Back to society.

- ▶ "What is theoretically innovative, and politically crucial, is to think beyond narratives of ordinary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural difference. These 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating

strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself." (Bhabha 1994: 2) „Society“ as an idea which is a correlate of the process of self-identification.

State/society as „repatriation of difference.“

- ▶ `The globalization of culture is not the same as its homogenization, but globalization involves the use of a variety of instruments of homogenization (armaments, advertising techniques, language hegemonies, clothing styles and the like), which are absorbed into local political and cultural economies, only to be repatriated as heterogeneous dialogues of national sovereignty, free enterprise, fundamentalism, etc... In general, the state has become the arbiter of this *repatriation of difference.*" (Appadurai 2000: 237)

Society as a result of [cultural] mediation.

- ▶ The sphere of the social as "various *mediations* that place people into `social' relations with one another – mediations that may not make them companions but that, in one way or another, make them interdependent members of each other's worlds." (Sewell 2005)

Forms of collective identities (Castells).

- ▶ **Legitimizing identity.** Leads to civil society (in the sense of all institutions which reproduce the rationalizations of structural domination).
- ▶ **Resistance identity.** Leads to communes or communities. Ethnic nationalisms, religious and territorial community; the exclusion of the excluders by the excluded.
- ▶ **Project identity.** Leads to subject. Collective beings give individuals a meaning for their existence and aim at reorganizing society as a condition of the existence of their projected identity. (E.g. Touraine)

Legitimizing identity.

- ▶ "...introduced by the dominant institutions of society to extend and rationalize their domination *vis a vis* social actors." Castells 1997)
- ▶ Examples: Sennett's theory of authority and domination, various theories of nationalism.

Resistance identity.

- ▶ "...generated by those actors that are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society..."
- ▶ Examples: Calhoun, the emergence of identity politics. (*Social Theory and Politics of Identity*, 1994)

Project identity.

- ▶ "...when social actors, on the basis of whichever cultural material are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure."
- ▶ Examples: feminist movement from resistance to restructuring the reproduction of sexuality.