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1. DIALECTIC OF EMANCIPATION: EMANCIPATION IN POLITICAL THEORY

1.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to map out the landscape of emancipation as a field of knowledge in existing political theory, with a particular focus on the work of Karl Marx and responses to Marx in the Marxist tradition and poststructuralism. I scrutinize the concepts of emancipation, power, domination and resistance as developed by European critical theorists including Antonio Gramsci, the Frankfurt School (Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Jürgen Habermas in particular) and poststructuralists, especially Michel Foucault who critically engaged with Marx's philosophy. Critical theorists in Europe shared similar concerns regarding their respective social and historical conditions, and the normative visions they inherited from Marx. All of them to various degrees envisioned different forms of emancipation as a response to forms of domination in their societies. Yet this chapter argues that the visions of emancipation they proposed often constitute new forms of domination. Drawing on the thought of Michel Foucault, I argue that domination and emancipation are intimately related to each other; their relationship is circular and dialectical.

In addition, I discuss how some of these critical theorists developed their thought by exploring the intersections between philosophy and the social, economic and cultural dynamics of their time, rather than by remaining within a traditional field of philosophy. Although all of the theorists I review in this chapter received rigorous academic training in philosophy, they took different career trajectories as they developed their philosophical reflection on modernity. Some of them, such as Marx, Marcuse, and Habermas, kept their strong belief in reason and rationality as a unique trait of human beings – central ideas of the modern European philosophical tradition – and as a source of human emancipatory potential. Other theorists such as Gramsci were more nuanced, while Adorno, Horkheimer, and Foucault were radically critical of the belief in human emancipation through reason and rational thinking that permeated modern European intellectual traditions. They questioned and critically examined conventional understandings of the interrelated ideas of enlightenment, emancipation, reason, and progress by distancing themselves from existing methods and sources in philosophy. To some extent, the originality and innovation found in the works of Gramsci, Adorno,

Horkeimer, and Foucault derives from their unconventional approach to sources in traditional philosophy.

Although the modern history of the idea of emancipation I review in this chapter includes many of the most sophisticated and insightful discussions of the idea of emancipation in the field of political theory, it has some shortcomings: there is a clear absence of non-European and non-textual forms of political thought. In other words, it is supposed to be *a* history of modern European (textual) thought about emancipation in the orbit of Marx, yet the field usually proceeds as if it is *the* general history of the idea of emancipation. Although I am fully aware of the potential contributions and significance of the non-European Marxist thought such as that from Japan, and non-textual forms of philosophical expression such as film, it is nevertheless true that leading scholars in the field of political theory have ignored non-European thinkers and the non-textual forms of philosophical expression which I will discuss later.⁶ If political theorists are willing to recognize the importance of European critical thought – for example Marx’s philosophical reflection on the political economy of modern capitalist societies, Gramsci’s analysis of everyday practices, Adorno and Horkheimer’s literary, cultural and social criticism, or Foucault’s historical analysis of non-canonical and forgotten texts – they should be more open to non-conventional sites of inquiry, such as non-European thought and non-textual media. An encounter with non-European and non-textual forms of political philosophy would enrich the existing field of political theory, and produce new sites and senses of political thought.

1.2. Karl Marx

Marx’s normative interests and his vision of human emancipation are well documented in his earlier philosophical writings. Lamenting the neglect of practice by philosophers, Marx famously notes, “the philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it” (Marx [1845] 2000d, 173). As Michael Löwy (2003) suggests, Marx developed his theory of revolution – a philosophy of praxis seeking the self-emancipation of the proletariat – in his early writings, and this becomes a central theme of his political thought. Löwy argues that Marx developed his theoretical

⁶ There has been growing attention among scholars in the field of political theory to non-American or non-European thought in recent decades. Scholars draw on a variety of theoretical resources as alternatives. For the recent treatment of Kyoto School philosophy as political philosophy, see Goto-Jones (2005a; 2008a). For the postcolonial critiques of conventional IR theory, see Gruffydd Jones (2006b), Hobson (2012), Shilliam (2011). For the recent survey on emerging Chinese political thought and its challenges in IR theory, see Schneider (2014).

foundation in the historical context of the social struggles in Europe in the 1840s, particularly his actual experience of the labor movement in France, as well as his critical engagement with Hegel's philosophy and the work of contemporary liberal philosophers, the Young Hegelians such as Ludwig Feuerbach and Bruno Bauer. Stimulating an interest in emancipation, Marx's philosophy influenced many social and political theorists, particularly the critical theorists of the Frankfurt School. As Martin Jay (1996, 259) suggests, the Frankfurt School detached itself from an orthodox Marxist theory of ideology and implicitly located Marx in the Enlightenment tradition. It is therefore worth examining the notions of emancipation and domination in his work.

Marx's philosophical writings about emancipation from the early 1840s developed out of his critical reflection on Hegelian philosophy. In "On the Jewish Question" ([1843] 2000a) for example, Marx criticized Bruno Bauer's essay on Jewish emancipation and discussed the differences between political and human emancipation. Bauer suggested that the emancipation of Jews as well as Christians in Germany could be achieved through the abolition of religions, since it is religion that separates Jews from Christians. Although Marx agreed with Bauer's liberal idea of political emancipation as a "great progress," he complained that Bauer confused political emancipation with human emancipation. For Marx, the extension of civil rights and political liberalism was not the "final form of human emancipation" since an individual remains abstract and alienated in egoistic bourgeois civil society ([1843] 2000a, 54). Instead, Marx proposed universal emancipation as non-alienated humanity. Marx notes that

All emancipation is bringing back man's [*sic*] world and his relationships to man himself. Political emancipation is the reduction of man, on the one hand to a member of civil society, an egoistic and independent individual, on the other hand to a citizen, a moral person. The actual individual man must take the abstract citizen back into himself and, as an individual man in his empirical life, in his individual work and individual relationships become a species-being; man must recognize his own force as social forces, organize them, and thus no longer separate social forces from himself in the form of political forces. Only when this has been achieved will human emancipation be completed. (Marx [1843] 2000a, 62)⁷

For Marx, genuine human emancipation involved taking back the *species-being* or *common essence* of human beings through which they connect with one another in their everyday life and work, overcoming their separation or alienation in civil society. Although, this was "essentially...a radical critique of 'modern civil society,' that is, of *bourgeois society* (in the present sense of the world) as

⁷ [*Sic*] is inserted here to mark the non-gender neutral writing.

a whole, in all its philosophical presuppositions, its political structures and its economic foundations” (Löwy 2003, 52), Marx’s idea of human emancipation was vague and abstract at this point. Marx attempted to integrate some of the socio-historical context of bourgeois society into his philosophical reflection, yet he was only able to discuss human emancipation with the vocabulary of Hegelian philosophy, with an abstract conception of human and species-being.

It was in another philosophical work, “Toward the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law: Introduction” ([1843] 2000b) that Marx for the first time identified the proletariat as the subject of human emancipation. According to Marx, the proletariat experiences “the concentrated irrationality of society ... its emancipation is at the same time the emancipation of society as a whole” (Giddens 1971, 8). Marx comments that

[The real possibility of a German emancipation lies] in the formation of a class with radical chains ... of a social group that is the dissolution of all social groups, of a sphere that has a universal character because of its universal sufferings and lays claim to no particular right, because it is the object of no particular injustice but of injustice in general. This class can no longer lay claim to a historical status, but only to a human one ... In a word, it [the proletariat] is the complete loss of humanity and thus can only recover itself by a complete redemption of humanity. This dissolution of society, as a particular class, is the proletariat. (Marx [1843] 2000b, 81)

A few years later, in *The Communist Manifesto* ([1848] 2000f), Marx more explicitly described emancipation as the creation of a new social order called communism, aiming to free the proletariat from the exploitation and domination they experience in capitalist society. Marx envisioned that through this process, the new society becomes truly human. Marx later devoted his career to understanding the social structures of capitalism and the ways in which it shaped society. Accordingly, his field of focus shifted from philosophy to political economy, away from the philosophical context and towards the actual socio-historical context. Marx observed two inter-related forms of domination under capitalism: *alienation* and *class domination*.

The first form of domination in modern capitalist society – alienation – causes material things to dominate and devalue human beings on a large scale. Marx applied the philosophical notion of alienation that Hegel and Feuerbach had earlier developed to the actual socio-historical context of wageworkers in *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* ([1844] 2000c). In Marx’s analysis of alienation, workers are alienated from themselves or lose themselves in four ways (Marx [1844] 2000c, 85–95).

Firstly, workers are alienated from the product they produce since they do not have any control over it. The product of labor is owned by others, exchanged and controlled by the operation of the

market. “Labour does not only produce commodities; it produces itself and the labourer as a commodity and that to the extent to which it produces commodities in general” (ibid., 86). Secondly, workers are not only alienated from the product, the result of their production, but also from the act of production. “The alienation of the object of labour is only the résumé of the alienation, the externalization in the activity of labour itself” (ibid., 88). Marx called this phenomenon *objectification* (*Vergegenständlichung*); that is, the assimilation of workers (as subjects) by their products (objects). Workers become slaves to the product and their own work. Thirdly, workers are alienated from their *species-being* (*Gattungswesen*): the unique human attribute that distinguishes human life from that of the animals. Marx considered a species-being as a “universal and therefore free being” (Marx [1844] 2000c, 89). Yet, once workers are alienated from their labor, their labor is not their own free activity any more and becomes a mere means for their physical existence. Alienated labor “makes the species-being of man, both nature and the intellectual faculties of his species, into a being that is alien to him, into a means of his individual existence. It alienates from man his own body, nature exterior to him, and his intellectual being, his human essence” (ibid., 91). Marx considered alienation of a human from his species-being in a modern capitalist society to be focused through the class structure and the proletariat experience (Giddens 1971, 14). Fourthly, the workers’ alienated situation is also applied to their relations to other humans. “What is valid for the relationship of a man to his work, of the product of his work and himself, is also valid for the relationship of man to other men and of their labour and the objects of their labour” (Marx [1844] 2000c, 91).

Although the notion of alienation developed in the *Manuscripts* continues to be important in his mature works, Marx dropped the word alienation from his subsequent work (Giddens 1971, 9). This can be explained by “his desire to separate his own position decisively from abstract philosophy” and his belief that “alienation must be studied as an historical phenomenon, which can only be understood in terms of the development of specific social formations,” and not as an abstract philosophical concept, as it was treated by the German philosophers (Löwy 2003, 19). Chapter 6 discusses the psychological aspect of alienation and its relation to the emancipation of individuals through the anime *Evangelion*.

The second form of domination – class domination – exists in every society, according to Marx. In the first section of *The Communist Manifesto* ([1848] 2000f), he explained the history of society in terms of the means of production and class struggle. Marx argued that the modern form of class structure – the antagonism of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat – became simpler and more universalized through the development of modern capitalist society. He observes that

The unceasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and

individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes ... Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product. (Marx [1848] 2000f, 252–253)

Moreover, Marx ([1846] 2000e) regarded class domination as existing not only in economic and material relationships but also in social and intellectual relationships. He argued that the dominant class with economic power is able to disseminate ideas which legitimize and naturalize its position of dominance in society. Marx contended that

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. (Marx [1846] 2000e, 192)

Thus, Marx regarded the economic relation as the most crucial element in the social structure, and believed that the changes in the economic structure lead to changes in other realms in society. According to his materialist conception of history, the dynamics of economic development within the capitalist system create the very condition for social changes. Alienation and class domination on a mass scale are the consequence of modern capitalist development.

At the same time though, alienation and class domination are a driving force for communist revolutions. In addition, Marx also believed that the contradictions and conflicts of the capitalist system unite the proletariat as a revolutionary class, first at the local level and later at the national and international level. In his vision, revolutionary movements create the active consciousness necessary to transform society through revolutionary practices, and eventually achieve human emancipation. In other words, Marx regarded the new social order of communism as predicated on the historical development of capitalism.⁸

⁸ The shape of this new social order, however, remains unclear in Marx's works (Giddens 1971, 60). Marx vaguely addressed his vision of the future society as the society that abolishes the division of labor and private property in *German Ideology* (Marx [1846] 2000e, 207) as follows: "Within communist society, the only society in which the original and free development of individuals ceases to be a mere phrase, this development is determined precisely by the connection of individuals, a connection which consists partly in

In summary, for Marx, the social structure of capitalism causes two types of domination: alienation and class domination; emancipation is to create a new social order, communism. In communist society, the division of labor and private property will be abolished, and exploitation over the proletariat will be overcome, which will eventually free all human beings from all domination under capitalism. In the new stage of development, human beings recover their alienated selves and species-being in the truly human society. The new social order is generated through the historical development of capitalism itself. Although Marx identified the proletariat as the subject of human emancipation in his reflection of socio-historical contexts, his inquiry and approach into the idea of emancipation in early writings was profoundly influenced by Hegelian philosophy. Concepts such as man, species-being or alienation are inevitably very abstract. His intellectual shift from philosophy to political economy was a response to the limitations of contemporary German philosophy for understanding the historical development of modern capitalist society and overcoming the alienation and exploitation of the proletariat and the modern individual.

The Russian revolution of 1917 and the German revolution of 1918 led many young intellectuals and activists to believe at one point that bourgeois capitalist society was destined to collapse, and to embrace Marxism. Yet, many of Marx's followers became pessimistic about the establishment of the communist society after witnessing the failure of European proletarian revolutions in the early 1920s and the rise of Fascism in the 1930s. They therefore tried to explain why Marx's prediction of proletarian revolution in Europe had failed to come about, and to contemplate what the alternatives might be.

Some of Marx's followers began to rethink or challenge orthodox Marxism, the dominant version of Marxism at that time, which emphasizes the analysis of economic and scientific dimensions of society and looks at the historical development of society in purely economic terms. Orthodox Marxists follow Marx's model of modern society as a dual structure consisting of two types of operations: the level of material production and economic relations (or the *base*) on the one hand, and the level that includes the political, legal, and cultural dimensions of society (or the *superstructure*) on the other.⁹ They advocate Marx's view that economics (the base) is the most

the economic prerequisites and partly in the necessary solidarity of the free development of all, and finally, in the universal character of the activity of individuals on the basis of the existing productive forces.”

⁹ The base of a society according to Marx consists of two parts: the means of production and the relations of production. The means of production are basically all nonhuman elements that are used to produce machines, factories, land, or materials. The relations of production refer to the application of the means of production. Together they constitute of the base that shapes the overarching superstructure. This represents the various relationships in a society and the way in which the actors in a society respond to each other. The

crucial dimension of social structure and the driving force behind social change. Thus, for Marx and orthodox Marxists, changing capitalist society requires replacing the economic base of capitalism with communism by the way of proletarian revolutions, while for more philosophically oriented thinkers, this kind of economic determinism lapses into dogmatic economic reductionism.

This view was challenged by a group of critical theorists who consider the relationship between base and superstructure to be a dynamic and interactive one. These two levels interact with and have an impact on each other in society, rather than economics determining all other non-economic dimensions of society. Among those thinkers, Georg Lukács, Karl Korsch and Antonio Gramsci were pioneers who attempted to develop a new critical interpretation of Marxism with the Hegelian dialectical method as their *philosophy of praxis* (Kellner 1989, 11). Those theorists were aware of the importance of subjectivity, culture and action in order to make radical political change possible. In what follows I first look at Gramsci's concept of hegemony, and then discuss the thoughts of Marcuse, Adorno, Horkheimer and Habermas, before elaborating Foucault's thinking. I also briefly discuss their approaches to philosophy.

1.3. Antonio Gramsci

Gramsci tried to provide an account of why socialist revolutions succeeded in Russia but failed in the liberal-democratic, capitalist societies in Western Europe. According to Gramsci, societies in Russia and in Western Europe have developed and operated differently, and therefore different kinds of revolutionary actions and strategies must be taken in Western Europe. Gramsci's comparison of the East and the West, the relationships between state and civil society, and discussion of different revolutionary strategies are at the heart of Gramsci's political thought throughout the Notebook (Anderson 1976, 7–8). Gramsci placed great importance on analyzing society, civil society in particular, and the ways in which power relations operate in civil society.

In Gramsci's account, Western Europe, compared with Russia under the pre-revolutionary Tsarist regime, generates a much more complex social and political structure. Gramsci (1971, 238) noted that "In the East the state was everything, civil society was primordial and gelatinous; in the West, there was a proper relation between state and civil society, and when the state trembled a sturdy structure of civil society was at once revealed." In Russia in the early twentieth century, the social and political structure was less developed. For example, the level of material productivity was low, the agrarian economy still existed, and the ruling class's hegemony over society was weak

superstructure again maintains and legitimizes the base. For the more detailed discussion on the idea of base and superstructure in Marxism, see for example Rigby (1998).

and shattered. Moreover, there were few intermediaries between the authorities and revolutionary forces. With these factors combined, the Bolsheviks' sudden direct attacks on the existing regime were very successful in Russia. Gramsci called this type of war a *war of manoeuvre*, a frontal assault (Jones 2006, 30–32). In Western Europe however, social and political structures are much more complex. Various other political institutions and organizations (e.g. political parties, private companies, trade unions etc.) are operating in addition to the two camps of governmental authorities and revolutionary forces. As a consequence, Gramsci predicted that that revolutionary struggles would take a longer period of time, and that revolutionary forces should resort to an alternative strategy. Gramsci referred to this type of war as a *war of position* (Jones 2006, 30–32).

In a war of position, revolutionary opponents should only attack selected old ruling elites, co-opted with some other social groups into a new ruling coalition, and fight for social hegemony against existing regimes in various terrains of civil society. In Gramsci's words, "[a] war of position is not, in reality constituted simply by the actual trenches, but by the whole organizational and industrial system of the territory which lies to the rear of the army in the field" (Gramsci 1971, 243).

Gramsci's illustration of the war of position leads us to his theory of *hegemony*, one of the central concepts in his political thought. Gramsci borrowed the idea of hegemony from Russian political and intellectual contexts such as Lenin's writings and political slogans that announced the proletariat's hegemony in labor movements (Jones 2006). His theory of hegemony is innovative in the sense that he employed the term hegemony, which originally meant the leading role of the proletariat and peasantry in socialist revolutions in Russia, to explain not only the relationship between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, but also the social order of bourgeois capitalist societies in Western Europe (Anderson 1976). As we have seen earlier, Gramsci regarded the study of civil society and the mechanism of social hegemony as crucial to understanding how socialist revolutions succeeded in one society (Russia) but not the others (Germany and Italy). In one passage, Gramsci elaborated the term hegemony that is comprised of two elements: "The one that can be called 'civil society,' that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called 'private,' and that of 'political society' or 'the State'" (Gramsci 1971, 12).¹⁰ He further noted that "these two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of 'hegemony' which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of 'direct domination' or command exercised through the State and 'juridical' government" (ibid.). Hegemony, in Gramsci's own words, is "the dual nature of Machiavelli's

¹⁰ According to Hoare and Nowell Smith, Gramsci's conception of civil society contains some inconsistencies and he did not offer a single wholly satisfactory conception of civil society or the State. For instance, "The State is elsewhere defined as 'political society' + 'civil society,' and elsewhere again as a balance between political society and civil society. In yet another passage, Gramsci stresses that 'in concrete reality, civil society and State are one and the same'" (Hoare and Nowell Smith in Gramsci 1971, 207–208).

Centaur – half-animal and half human. They are the levels of force and of consent, authority and hegemony, violence and civilization, of the individual moment and of the universal moment (‘Church’ and ‘State’), of agitation and of propaganda, of tactics and of strategy” (ibid., 169-170).

In this vein, hegemony is mediated and formed through civil society. It refers to a wide range of private institutions and organizations in capitalist society such as political parties, schools, families, churches, mass media, trade unions, companies, laws, as well as culture. In other words, civil society is a matter of people’s everyday life. To understand the mechanism of hegemony in civil society, Gramsci analyzed various aspects of people’s everyday life: culture, science, language, art, literature, theatre, education and so forth. These subjects are the object of study and “well integrated in Gramsci’s central idea of hegemony and political praxis” (Salamini 2014, 12). I will return to Gramsci’s conception of everydayness and its philosophical significance in Chapter 2. The point to be stressed here is that hegemony involves the control of ideas (a form of ideological domination) that operates in civil society both to protect the authority of the dominant group on the one hand, and to challenge the existing social order and generate a transformative social process on the other. For Gramsci, hegemony is unlike the form of power that governments or the ruling class exert through direct domination or direct force against subaltern people,¹¹ but rather the moral and intellectual leadership operating in civil society, emerging from various social processes with the active complicity of subaltern people (Jones 2006, 49–52).

Therefore for Gramsci, subordinate social groups are controlled not only in terms of material production and economic relations but also by the dominant ideology, as Marx argued. More importantly, the control of ideas or the maintenance of social hegemony is only achieved with the spontaneous consent of those people through their lived experiences. Thus social hegemony is a process in which power operates mutually, rather than operating in only one direction from the dominant social group to the subalterns. Raymond Williams (1977, 110) nicely summarizes Gramsci’s concept of hegemony as follows:

¹¹ In the Oxford Dictionary of English, the adjective *subaltern* refers to “of lower status” (Stevenson 2010). Gramsci seems to have used the term in his prison writings as a code word for any social group subject to social hegemony (i.e. the working class or the proletariat, peasants) to avoid prison censorship (Buchanan 2010b). Some scholars such as Joseph A. Buttigieg (2013), however, argue against such a narrow definition as a substitute of the working class or proletariat in Gramsci’s writings. According to Buttigieg, the term appears in Gramsci’s pre-prison writing and letters too, and Gramsci was well aware of the heterogeneous nature of subaltern people as he always refers to them as the plural (ibid., 36).

Hegemony is then not only the articulate upper level of ‘ideology’, nor are its forms of control only those ordinarily seen as ‘manipulation’ or ‘indoctrination’. It is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of our living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meaning and values – constitutive and constituting – which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is, that is to say, in the strongest sense a ‘culture’, but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes.

Hegemony penetrates into people’s everyday life and is a dynamic rather than static process. The dominant social group therefore has to make an effort to maintain their hegemonic social control in civil society even after they take control of society. In the meantime, if subordinate social groups want to challenge the existing social order, their struggles must be conducted in civil society. Moreover, Gramsci (1971) argued that control or leadership in civil society comes before control of governmental power. Gramsci wrote that

A social group can, indeed must, already exercise “leadership” before winning governmental power (this is indeed one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power); it subsequently becomes dominant when it exercises power, but even if it holds it firmly in its grasp, it must continue to “lead” as well. (ibid., 57-58)

Thus, according to Gramsci, examining civil society or people’s everyday life is crucial because it is a terrain of political struggle for social hegemony. To understand the operation of hegemony, intellectuals must analyze concrete everyday social and cultural practices, which mediate and shape people’s thought and worldviews. Indeed, methodologically Gramsci was much more open to alternative approaches to philosophy than traditional philosophers. Just as Marx responded critically to Hegel’s methodological limitations and abstract philosophy of history, Gramsci also linked philosophy, history and politics in a new way. For Gramsci, “the philosophy of praxis is a philosophy of history, a theory and methodology of history with practical intentions, that of directing all forces of society, intellectual and material, to change the world” (Salamini 2014, 179). Gramsci recognized the importance of everyday social and cultural practices as the object of philosophy, history and politics and the loci of social struggles. The materials he dealt with go far beyond the narrow confines of European textual philosophy. Although Gramsci rarely looked at the

materials from beyond Europe and America, he would have recognized the significance of cultural products from non-European countries, which shape and reshape people's thoughts and worldviews in both local and global contexts. Chapter 2 will look at how Gramsci would have concurred with his Japanese contemporary Tosaka Jun, and discuss the significance of their thought and method in considering popular culture, including anime, as a valid source of political thought today.

1.4. The First Generation of the Frankfurt School

Gramsci and his contemporaries were not the only scholars who sought to develop Marx's work in a philosophically sophisticated way. A group of intellectuals called the Frankfurt School joined this endeavor. The members of the Frankfurt School conducted a series of social studies and developed multidisciplinary social theory at the Institute for Social Research through the 1920s and the 1930s first in Germany and later in the United States. Under the directorship of Max Horkheimer, those associated with the School developed a new philosophical mode of inquiry now known as Critical Theory.¹² They sought to preserve Marx's spirit to some extent, but also to break with some tenets of Marx's account of emancipation, providing a broader normative vision of universal emancipation. In Douglas Kellner's (1989, 1) word, their work is "a critique of domination and theory of liberation."

Gramsci's shift in focus from material production and economic relations (or the base) to the superstructure resonated with Herbert Marcuse who argued that an antirevolutionary consciousness was prevalent among the majority of the working class because they were integrated into advanced capitalist society. According to Marcuse (1972, 79–80), "the oppressive rule of the established language and images over the mind and body of man [*sic*]" has reached "a population which has introjected the needs and values of their masters and managers and made them their own, thus reproducing the established system in their minds, their consciousness, their senses and instincts." What is at stake in the resistance is therefore a "qualitative leap," which "involves a radical transformation of the needs and aspirations themselves, cultural as well as material; of consciousness and sensibility; of the work process as well as leisure" (*ibid.*, 16-17). As Marcuse noted, neither "the extension of satisfaction within the existing universe of needs" or "the shift of satisfaction from one (lower) level to a higher one" are sufficient in the socialist revolution (*ibid.*,16).

¹² For the historical development of the Frankfurt School, see Held (1980) and Kellner (1989).

Here Marcuse proposed a new form of subjectivity, a new subject of radical reconstruction, or a “new type of man,” who is different from “the human subject of class society in his very nature” (ibid., 64). Marcuse notes that

The development of a radical, nonconformist sensibility assumes vital political importance in view of the unprecedented extent of social control perfected by advanced capitalism: a control which reaches down into the instinctual and physiological level of existence. Conversely, resistance and rebellion, too, tend to activate and operate on this level (ibid., 62-63).

What is required here is an “emancipation of the senses” (Marcuse 1972, 64). Human emancipation is built on the human *sensibility*. “The individual emancipation of the senses is supposed to be the beginning, even the foundation, of *universal* liberation, the free society is to take roots in new instinctual needs” (ibid., 72, emphasis in the original). On this aspect, the political struggle is drawn into “the realm of nonmaterial needs” and “the physiological dimension of existence: the realm of nature” (ibid., 129).

Importantly though, Marcuse did not oppose reason. He was not anti-intellectual, even though he believed in the senses as the common ground of human emancipation. According to Marcuse, “the instinctual rebellion will have become a political force only when it is accompanied and guided by the rebellion of reason”...The rebels need to succeed in subjecting their new sensibility to “the rigorous discipline of the mind (*die Anstrengung des Begriffs*)” (ibid., 131). “The revolution is nothing without its own rationality” (ibid., 132). Marcuse’s sympathy towards reason and rationality distinguishes him from his colleagues in the Frankfurt School such as Adorno and Horkheimer.

One of the most significant developments of Critical Theory was the shift from the intellectual project of producing multidisciplinary social theory to that of a new philosophical critique of scientific positivism (Kellner 1989). This philosophical turn in Critical Theory is found in Horkheimer’s work. In his essay “Traditional and Critical Theory” ([1937] 2002a), Horkheimer attempted to clarify the project of Critical Theory through the critique of traditional theory, which he associates with scientific positivism (which Horkheimer calls *instrumental reason*) and its application to social science.

According to Horkheimer, traditional theory tends to be deductive and to privilege science and mathematics. In natural science, subject and object are strictly separated and the external world is to be analyzed in an objective manner. Yet, Horkheimer argued, this scientific activity is itself a part of the social practice that constitutes capitalism and bourgeois society and is manifested in particular in the relationship between science, technology, and production (Peoples 2009, 9). Consequently, knowledge becomes instrumental, and scientific thought only serves to maintain the

existing system of social domination, rather than changing the current form of domination. As Horkheimer ([1937] 2002a, 196) notes that “The scholar and his science are incorporated into the apparatus of society; his achievements are a factor in the conservation and continuous renewal of the existing state of affairs, no matter what fine names he gives to what he does.”

Critical Theory, by contrast, challenges the foundations of traditional theory and the social contexts in which they are embedded. Rather than legitimating or consolidating the existing social system, Critical Theory aims to trace the contradictions in contemporary society, which may open up the possibility of transcending it and its forms of domination. Critical Theory is “an essential element in historical effort to create a world which satisfied the needs and powers of men...[and] its goal is man’s emancipation from slavery” (Horkheimer [1937] 2002b, 246). Accordingly Horkheimer called Critical Theory a “transformative activity” ([1937] 2002a, 232) and “critical activity” ([1937] 2002a, 206 n14). As Horkheimer notes,

The aim of this [critical] activity is not simply to eliminate one or other abuse, for it regards such abuses as necessarily connected with the way in which the social structure is organized. Although it itself emerges from the social structure, its purpose is not, either in its conscious intention, or in its objective significance, the better functioning of any element in the structure. On the contrary, it is suspicious of the very categories of better, useful, appropriate, productive, and valuable, as these are understood in the present order, and refuses to take them as nonscientific presuppositions about which one can do nothing (Horkheimer [1937] 2002a, 206–207).

Initially Horkheimer believed that the emancipatory thrust of Critical Theory would mean it could contribute to developing consciousness in the masses about existing social contradictions and transforming class society (Held 1980, 195). However, in the socio-historical context marked by the rise of fascism in Europe in the 1930s, Horkheimer’s optimistic view on emancipation turned into a pessimistic view of the system of domination behind those developments. In the 1940s, Horkheimer co-authored the book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* ([1944] 1997) with his colleague Theodore Adorno. Together they developed Critical Theory in a more philosophical direction, radicalizing Horkheimer’s critique of science and instrumental reason by examining the concept of enlightenment in European history.¹³ Adorno and Horkheimer posed the central question of “why mankind [*sic*], instead of entering into a truly human condition, is sinking into a new kind of

¹³ Martin Jay (1996, 256) suggests that Horkheimer’s and Adorno’s critique of enlightenment thinking is radical in its “etymological” sense of going deep into the “roots of the problem,” criticizing the very foundation of European intellectual traditions in the socio-historical contexts.

barbarism” (ibid., xi). Witnessing the violence of fascism and capitalism, and the way in which knowledge becomes instrumental and loses its potential for social critique in modern society, the authors sought an answer in the very idea of enlightenment itself.¹⁴ They argued that we must locate the enlightenment not only in intellectual history, but also in actual life (ibid., xiv). Accordingly, Adorno and Horkheimer not only traced enlightenment thinking through analysis of European intellectual history but also through a broad critique of European and American social and cultural forms, from Homer to Hollywood, modern technological warfare and anti-Semitism.

To start with, the authors traced the historical development of the concept of enlightenment in European civilization in relations between human beings and nature. Enlightenment is generally understood as a “progressive thought” that “has always aimed at liberating men [*sic*] from fear and establishing their sovereignty” (Adorno and Horkheimer [1944] 1997, 3). The authors find a dialectical relation between emancipation and domination in the concept of enlightenment. They argue that the aim of enlightenment is to liberate human beings from the fear of external nature and to control nature. Human history through “renaissance, reformation, and bourgeois atheism” is a series of attempts to overcome fear. Yet “whenever new nations and classes more firmly repressed myth ... the subjugation of nature was made the absolute purpose of life within and without” (ibid., 31).

Thus, the very idea of enlightenment for human emancipation and progress is the process of domination and regression. Human control of nature is a form of domination over external and internal nature, and once human beings get closer to achieving this control, human interest is oriented towards the domination of other human beings. They note that “social freedom is inseparable from enlightened thought ... [however] the notion of this very way of [enlightenment] thinking ... already contains the seed of the reversal universally apparent today” (ibid., xiii).

In other words, the enlightenment project was first intended to dispel myths, overthrowing fantasy with knowledge, or more precisely, rational thinking. Nevertheless, the project itself has become the myth; knowledge itself becomes a fantasy. Adorno and Horkheimer sum this up in two theses: “Myth is already enlightenment; and enlightenment reverts to mythology” (ibid., xvi). Thus, in their view, myth and enlightenment are not opposites but dialectically mediated in European civilization and implicated in social domination. They note that

As the magical illusion fades away, the more relentlessly in the name of law repetition imprisons man in the cycle – that cycle whose objectification in the form of natural law he imagined will ensure his action as a free subject. The principle of immanence, the

¹⁴ Many scholars find an affinity between Adorno and Horkheimer’s critique of reason with Nietzsche and poststructuralists. See Wellmer (1991) for one example.

explanation of every event as repetition, that Enlightenment upholds against mythic imagination, is the principle of myth itself. (ibid., 12)

In enlightenment thinking, such as scientific knowledge and rational thinking, human beings produce knowledge through various scientific activities – the ceaseless processes of objectification, abstraction and rationalization of the external world. The external world becomes subject to human beings through these processes. At this stage, scientific knowledge returns to mythical imagination, with ideas such as the belief that human beings are free subjects, and it becomes a dogma. Then, the idea of enlightenment itself reverts to mythology. Moreover, human beings cannot conduct the enlightenment project without the power of progress.

Adaptation to the power of progress involves the progress of power, and each time anew brings about those degenerations which show not unsuccessful but successful progress to be its contrary. The curse of irresistible progress is resistible regression. (Adorno and Horkheimer [1944] 1997, 35–36)

In summary, Horkheimer initially developed Critical Theory to emancipate the masses from social domination under the existing modern social system based on scientific positivism, but later began with Adorno to criticize the very idea of progress and enlightenment. They revealed the self-destructive nature of enlightenment within enlightenment itself by illustrating the dialectical relations between enlightenment and myth, progress and regress, emancipation and domination. The existing system of domination through fascism, capitalism, and the cultural industries, which the authors had experienced, is indeed the antithesis of enlightenment. It seemed to them that there is no absolute emancipation as such but rather a ceaseless dialectical relation between emancipation and domination. Adorno and Horkheimer's criticism of modernity goes further than Marx's in the sense that it is "not just criticism of a particular method of production as the cause of suppression and human affliction, but criticism of a collective way of thinking and acting, of a mentality, of a system of suppression that threatens not only a class but the whole of human society, including exploited nature" (Klapwijk 2010, 16).

Adorno and Horkheimer convincingly demonstrated the limits of existing philosophical methods and provided an alternative approach to philosophy by tracing the idea of enlightenment through a wide range of materials: history, art, literature, and other social and cultural phenomena in Europe and America.¹⁵ The philosophical insights they offer into modern society highlight the

¹⁵ Adorno and Horkheimer ([1944] 1997, 120–167) took mass culture (i.e. popular music, jazz, radio, TV, Hollywood films) or what they collectively called the *cultural industry* seriously, and severely criticized the

significance of social and cultural criticism as a valuable method of philosophy. As Adorno and Horkheimer observed in their analysis, enlightenment and domination are intricately interwoven into everyday life or the history of the present, and history can no longer be understood in Hegelian or Marxist terms as a dialectical movement towards the realization of human emancipation and social progress. For Adorno and Horkheimer, enlightenment and reason – the prevalent ethos of modernity – must be critically examined within the context of social dynamics, rather than discussed in an isolated and abstract manner as traditional philosophers do.

1.5. Jürgen Habermas

In contrast to the radical critique of Horkheimer and Adorno against enlightenment and its rational basis, Habermas, the leading figure of the second generation of the Frankfurt School, rejected his predecessors' skepticism of rationality and defends a version of reason embedded in communication. Habermas attempted to reconstruct Critical Theory by reworking its epistemological foundation and the relation between knowledge and basic human interests in his book *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1972). He identified three essential human interests in knowledge production: technical, practical, and emancipatory interests, and developed the theory of cognitive interests.

According to Habermas (1972, 301–317), these different human interests guide the different types of knowledge – empirical-analytic sciences, historical-hermeneutic sciences, critically oriented sciences – within different methodological frameworks. The *technical interest* informs empirical-analytic sciences (i.e. natural sciences) and directs them towards the control of nature; the *practical interest* guides historical-hermeneutic science (i.e. humanities and social sciences such as history, sociology and cultural anthropology) in its attempts to understand and communicate; the *emancipatory interest* provides the foundation for critically-oriented sciences (i.e. critical theory), which liberate human beings from external and internal constraints (Edgar 2006, 10–17). Habermas therefore argues that knowledge is always produced to meet basic human interests in survival,

industry as another example of anti-enlightenment phenomena in modern capitalist society. According to them, the audience becomes passive and uncritical as the cultural products become more formulaic and repetitive through the standardization. Adorno (1991, 106) reiterates his earlier argument that cultural industry becomes “mass deception” and turns into another “anti-enlightenment” that prevents people from the “emancipation for which human beings are as ripe as the productive forces of the epoch permit.” Yet Horkheimer and Adorno’s wholesale rejection of scientific arguments and their monolithic understanding of mass culture have raised many criticisms. For example, Carroll (1998a, 70–89) rejects Adorno’s idea of passive spectatorship and argues for the possibility of active spectatorship as a number of mass cultural products can engage audiences’ imagination and reflection.

development, and self-realization. For him, these three interests are intimately linked with one another, and the emancipatory interest is “at the root of traditional theories” (Habermas 1972, 308). In Habermas’s view, human emancipatory interest is driven by reason, and this is already embedded in traditional theories – human knowledge of the natural and social environment – because the emancipatory interest constitutes reason.

Habermas further developed his emancipatory vision by redirecting his philosophical inquiry toward language in his works *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (1979) and the two-volume *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1984; 1987). Habermas (1979) criticized Marxist historical materialism – an account of social structure and historical change in terms of labor – and proposed that we should also study the role of language in society. For Habermas, linguistic communication is a fundamental element to human interaction, and hence it is also fundamental to all aspects of society. In his words, “the structures of linguistically established intersubjectivity – which can be examined prototypically in connection with elementary speech actions – are conditions of both social and personality systems” (Habermas 1979, 98). The emancipatory project of Critical Theory must therefore seek not only to reduce economic inequalities and class struggles but also to investigate “how human beings use language to create orderly societies and how they have developed the principle that good societies should express the will of their members” (Linklater 2005a, 130). Habermas (1979, 117) notes that

Holistic concepts such as productive activity and *Praxis* have to be resolved into the basic concepts of communicative action and purposive rational action in order to avoid confusing the two rationalization processes that determine social evolution; the rationalization of action takes effect not only on productive forces but also, and independently, on normative structures.

In *Theory of Communicative Action* (1984; 1987), Habermas proposed that there are two basic types of human action: *communicative action* and *strategic action*. In communicative action one aims to reach understanding and consensus with others through linguistic communication; while in strategic action one aims to achieve one’s goal through impersonal and strategic means, rather than direct linguistic communication. Habermas argues that communicative action is both fundamental and rational in nature because it depends on participants’ rationality to achieve consensus and this rationality is inherent to human beings. He notes that

If we assume that the human species maintains itself through the socially coordinated activities of its members and that this coordination has to be established through communication – and in certain central spheres through communication aimed at

reaching agreement – then the reproduction of the species also requires satisfying the condition of a rationality that is inherent in communicative action. (Habermas 1984, 1:397)

Habermas (1987) also defines two realms of social structure in which these two types of social action take place: the *lifeworld* and the *system*. On the one hand, the lifeworld refers to everyday social life where communicative action takes place.

The lifeworld is, so to speak, the transcendental site where speaker and hearer meet, where they can reciprocally raise claims that their utterances fit the world (objective, social or subjective), and where they can criticize and confirm those validity claims, settle their disagreements, and arrive at agreements. (Habermas 1987, 2:126)

On the other hand, the system refers to the large-scale systems of the capitalist economy and administrative state developed in modern society where strategic action takes place. Habermas identified two subsystems: money and power, and called them the “mechanism of steering media” in modern society (Habermas 1987, 2:165). “In modern societies, economic and bureaucratic spheres emerge in which social relations are regulated only via money and power. Norm-conformative attitudes and identity-forming social memberships are neither necessary nor possible in these spheres; they are made peripheral instead” (Habermas 1987, 2: 154).

Accordingly, Habermas (1987) describes the development of modern society as the “colonization of the lifeworld” by the system where communicative actions have been increasingly replaced and been disabled by strategic actions.

[In modern society,] the competition between forms of system and social integration would become more visible than previously. In the end, systemic mechanisms suppress forms of social integration even in those areas where a consensus-dependent coordination of action cannot be replaced... In these areas, the *mediatisation* of the lifeworld assumes the form of a *colonization*. (ibid., 196, emphasis in the original)

Thus, Habermas’s vision of human emancipation is in the locus of communication, and oriented towards the construction of communicative autonomy, or what he calls the *ideal speech situation* – unrestricted and non-hegemonic discussion, in which all participants are free from all constraints of domination to achieve mutual understanding (Habermas 2001). It is a “situation of absolutely uncoerced and unlimited discussion between completely free and equal human agents” (Geuss 1981, 65). Habermas (2001) has argued that all participants presuppose this condition in their every

speech to reach any rationally oriented agreement or true consensus. “The defining feature of the ideal speech situation is that any consensus attainable under its conditions can count per se as a rational consensus” (Habermas 2001, 97). Thus, for Habermas, human emancipation and the intention of the good life are already embedded in linguistic communication. “The conditions for ideal discourse are connected with conditions for an ideal form of life; they include linguistic conceptualizations of traditional ideas of freedom and justice” (McCarthy 1988, xvii).

In short, for Habermas, emancipation is to establish a universal communicative autonomy, in which any form of inequality, such as class, patriarchy, and ethnicity, is reduced. This universal communicative autonomy should embrace all civilizations and unify all human races. To achieve emancipation, Habermas (1990) reconstructed the Marxist idea of materialism by providing the *paradigm of communication*. To put Habermas’s core argument simply, Habermas contended that “there is something inherent in speech that acts, in effect, as a promissory note for the possibility of a better world” (Wyn Jones 2005, 224). Habermas however, has not offered any details about the nature of what a *good society* ought to be. What he offers is a commitment that all human beings are equally entitled to participate in making any decision that may affect them (Linklater 2005a, 131). In this vein, Habermas attempts to establish a minimal foundation, in which all human beings can agree on basic procedures of communicating their respective positions and, if possible, to reconcile competing claims. *Discourse ethics* are hence required in this context.¹⁶ Although Habermas’s theory has made an important contribution to the discussion of emancipation beyond traditional Marxist concerns of production and labor, it has also generated a wide range of criticisms. For example, Chantal Mouffe (2005) rejects Habermas’s vision of deliberative democracy and discourse theory of morality that is its theoretical ground. While Habermas and his followers understand the notion of the political as the space for the possibility of rational consensus such as a universal communicative autonomy, Mouffe sees the political as “a space of power, conflict and antagonism” (ibid., 9). Wyn Jones (2005, 225) argues that Habermas’s abstract theory about ideal dialogic procedures fails to give sufficient attention to the actual context in which communicative action takes place; interaction always occurs within specific social contexts that include people’s economic activities as well as their relationship with nature. Even though Habermas’s theory has some weaknesses, some theorists of International Relations draw on Habermas’ writings and theorize Habermas’s perspective on the emancipatory potential of speech into a normative program in world politics to realize unconstrained communication through institutions and practices in an increasingly cosmopolitan world. Andrew Linklater (2005b) endorses Habermas’s discourse ethics since it has the potential to open the way to civilizing political processes and building better political

¹⁶ Discourse ethics is a common norm existing within human communicative behaviors among different language games (Habermas 1990).

communities in world politics – to developing social arrangements in which members of societies can satisfy their needs without violence or harm to each other. Those theorists conceive emancipation as an “unfinished business” (Wyn Jones 1999, 78) or “philosophical anchorage” (Booth 1999, 43). To them, emancipation is a condition of becoming rather than a state of being; it is a process utopia rather than an end-point utopia (Booth 1999, 41). Nevertheless, critical theorists still avow that there is a universal moral standard and aim to build either “concrete utopias” (Wyn Jones 1999) or “universal kingdoms of ends” (Linklater 1990, 159), such as “autonomy” (Linklater 1990, 135) and “security” (Booth 1991). Chapter 5 explores the relationship between emancipation and security further through a discussion of *Psycho-Pass*.

1.6. Poststructuralists

Poststructuralists are highly suspicious of the possibility of an ideal speech situation based on the universal idea of reason and rationality. Parallel to Habermas, poststructuralists also redirect their philosophical inquiry toward language, and argue that linguistic practices are essential for us to make sense of the world. From the poststructuralist point of view, we all depend on language to comprehend the world, to express our thinking, and therefore social reality is always constituted through language or discourse. In Jacques Derrida’s (1976, 158) words, “there is nothing outside of the text.” At the same time, words that are used to describe a social reality can never be neutral, fixed and stable, but will always be open to reinterpretations. Poststructuralists see language as a connection of signs, and argue that we distinguish what a certain word means only in relation to other words. As Nash (2000, 29) notes,

A word as a mark on paper or a sound means nothing except in relation to what went before and what will come after it, both in space and time. Meaning is always different from itself, and also deferred in time; hence *différance* which means both “to differ” and “to defer” ... Because the meaning of a word depends on its difference from and similarity to others, it can never actually be present in the sign itself, whether written or spoken. It is always indeterminate, though the extent of this indeterminacy is itself a political matter.

In other words, the context gives meaning to a word/sign. The meaning of a sign can never be fixed permanently because the same sign could refer to different things in different contexts. Since the social reality is constructed by language and discourse, this opens a way to politics. As Laclau and Mouffe (1985, 170–171) argue, politics involves the competition of meanings, and a broad

array of discourses compete to define what is “true” within a particular aspect of society. Moreover, as there is an ongoing struggle between different discourses in society, truth itself is a “floating signifier” (ibid., 171). Paul Bowman (2007, 14) suggests that “[for] as long as the struggle persists, it will be immensely important to each side of the struggle to reiterate a certain meaning for these events, in order that, over time, and through the ‘regularity in dispersion’ of these reiterations, the meaning which best serves the cause will become consolidated and sedimented as ‘true’ in the mindset, or imaginary, of as many people as possible.” Thus for poststructuralists, power is the power to define the meaning of the words or signs and the “truth” of society. Habermas’ notion of an ideal speech situation becomes inevitably involved in power relations.

This consideration brings us to Michel Foucault and his genealogical project. Borrowing from Friedrich Nietzsche’s genealogy of morals, Foucault used a genealogical research method in his series of historical studies to investigate the networks of power relations and the complex relationships between power and knowledge.¹⁷ Foucault critically analyzed the ways in which ideas, knowledge and discourses about human body such as madness or sexuality have been shaped over centuries by bodies of texts – not only academic texts of the human sciences but also non-canonical texts – as well as non-discursive social practices.

The genealogical approach takes a very different stance to historiography. While traditional historians tend to see the passage of time as “logical flow of causally connected events” and try to explain the logic or essence of history that forms part of a larger pattern or meaning to it (McNay 1994, 88); Genealogists, by contrast, reject such an approach to writing history and the notion of truths outside their context. They rather attempt to investigate the hidden structures and values behind certain ideas, discourses, and knowledge by tracing the uneven, contingent nature of the historical records. In this view, “the historical processes that give rise to the emergence of events are in fact discontinuous, divergent and governed by chance” (ibid., 89). From a genealogical point of view, there is no universal truths, but only the fabrication of truths through constant struggles between different power formations in society that attempt to impose and maintain their ideas.

Foucault’s genealogical work makes it possible to reconsider the conception of power by analyzing the networks of power relations in modern context and offers an alternative conception of power. Foucault (1980b) opposed the traditional understanding of modern power in social and political theory as negative and repressive in nature, and embedded in macrostructures such as ruling classes (i.e. the economic model) or the state (i.e. the juridical model). His primary target, the juridical model, analyzes power in terms of the state, and especially the law, and sees the state possess power over its subjects and impose order on them through the domination and control.

¹⁷ This section briefly reviews Foucault’s earlier work on power, while Chapter 5 looks at some of his later work on governmentality and its relation to the issue of security through *Psycho-Pass*.

Foucault does not deny that the state or the law is important, but he argues that we need to extend beyond the limit of the state for two reasons when looking at relations of power and analyzing power: the state is far from being able to cover the whole field of actual power relations; and the state can only operate on the basis of already existing power relations (Foucault 1980a, 122).

Foucault (1980a, 119) posed a question: “If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it?” He is more interested in taking an alternative approach to understanding power, particularly relations of power that is “more empirical, more directly related to our present situation, and which implies more relations between theory and practice” (Foucault 1982, 780). For Foucault, power is a productive network and a set of relations.

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault 1980a, 119)

Foucault proposed a new analytic of power to examine the constitutive and microphysical aspects of power. Power is constitutive in the sense that it shapes particular types of bodies and minds; forms knowledge, and produces discourse. Moreover, power is dispersed everywhere since it is exercised from innumerable points, rather than from a single political centre of the state or the ruling class. In his definition, power is “a multiple and mobile field of force relations wherein far-reaching, but never completely stable effects of domination are produced” (Foucault 1978, 102).

In *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Foucault examined how a new type of productive power has emerged in modern Europe since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. New knowledge, technologies, techniques and practices of surveillance have been developed and dispersed across societies in order to control people's behaviors. Human behaviors become the object of study. Using these new techniques and knowledge, modern institutions (e.g. prisons, schools, hospitals and armies) are able to manage people less violently and more efficiently. Power and knowledge are deeply intertwined across modern European societies.

Power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same power relations ... power-knowledge, the processes and struggles that traverse it and of

which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domain of knowledge.
(Foucault 1977, 27–28)

Foucault (1977) takes Jeremy Bentham's panopticon as an example to explain his notion of power and how power functions through modern disciplinary technologies and practices. Bentham originally designed the panopticon as a tool for securing individual freedom from physical coercion. As Greg Elmer (2012, 24) notes, for Bentham, the panopticon "served as a form of autonomy, a newfound freedom for the prison's managers," as well as for the prisoners who "were also liberated from more overtly coercive forms of institutional violence." Unlike Bentham, Foucault saw the panopticon as a modern form of disciplinary power shaping the autonomous self-regulated subject. It is a refined form of control and domination, not liberation as the individual internalizes the mechanism of control.

According to Foucault, Bentham's design of the panopticon places the prisoners in a situation where they are being consciously, continuously, and permanently observed. Power becomes *visible* and *unverifiable*.

Visible: the inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon. Unverifiable: the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at any one moment; but he must be sure that he may always be so.
(Foucault 1977, 201)

As a consequence, power, instead of being "possessed as a thing or transferred as a property" (ibid., 177), is in effect dispersed and exercised "in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes, in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up" (ibid., 202). In Foucault's view, the panopticon is a "laboratory of power" that can experiment with modern disciplinary techniques in order to govern both the self and others more efficiently and sophisticatedly (ibid., 204).

The Panopticon may even provide an apparatus for supervising its own mechanisms. In this central tower, the director may spy on all the employees that he has under his orders: nurses, doctors, foremen, teachers, warders; he will be able to judge them continuously, alter their behaviour, impose upon them the methods he thinks best; and it will even be possible to observe the director himself [*sic*] ... enclosed as he is in the middle of this architectural mechanism, is not the director's own fate entirely bound up with it? (Foucault 1977, 204)

Thus for Foucault (1984), modern forms of reason and rationality are a subject of power, and positively shaped and formed within power relations. Reason therefore becomes the source and the construct of domination. The bodies of knowledge built on reason and rational thinking reproduce dominant political and social arrangements. In this sense, Foucault opposed the idea that progress would be reached through the accumulation of knowledge. As Foucault notes,

Humanity does not gradually progress from combat to combat until it arrives at universal reciprocity, where the rule of law finally replaces warfare; humanity installs each of its violences in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination. (Foucault 1984, 85)

In other words, the production of knowledge – something supposedly at the heart of emancipatory projects – can be understood as an effect of power relations and linked to the processes of domination. For Foucault, knowledge is inextricably intertwined with power relations, and the relationship between knowledge and power is circular. In McNay's (1994, 108) words, "all knowledge is the effect of a specific regime of power" and "forms of knowledge constitute the social reality which they describe and analyse." For Foucault, knowledge – social sciences and the fields that study human behaviors in particular (i.e. psychiatry, sociology, criminology and so forth) – is never neutral and objective as it has intimate relationship with power, and in fact emerges within power relations. The effects of the power-knowledge complex are relayed through different discourses such as medical, legal, academic, psychiatric ones (ibid.). These forms of knowledge constitute the subject and shape the social reality that they describe and analyze. We can see a sharp contrast between Habermas and Foucault when considering the relations between knowledge and emancipation. According to Susen (2009, 88), while Habermas sees "a will to reason" as human nature and argues that a will to reason is "a will to emancipation," Nietzsche and Foucault see "a will to power" as a fundamental element of human nature.

Moreover, according to Foucault, although power is diffused throughout the social field constituting subjectivities, knowledge, and individual pleasures, this does not mean that no kind of resistance is possible; as soon as there is a power relation there is the possibility of resistance (Foucault 1988a, 123). Resistance here refers to challenging the existing subjectivity of the individual. As the subject is produced within power relations, liberation accordingly signifies a renunciation of the subject. Foucault therefore called for the deconstruction of the subject and sees this as a key political tactic (Foucault 1980a, 117). Foucault tries to remind us, everything is dangerous, even resistance in the name of "emancipation" (Linklater 2005a, 124). When one thinks of successful resistance, the dissolution of an old subjectivity, one merely produces a new

subjectivity, another form of domination. Domination and emancipation are accordingly intimately related to each other; their relationship is dialectical.

In summary, Foucault rejects the enlightenment assumption that European civilization is the outcome of reasoning and the development toward universal truths. Foucault regards knowledge as an anti-emancipatory force, and understands the connection between knowledge and power as being conducive to building a dystopia (as imagined in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*) rather than a utopia. Foucault also opposes Marxist understandings of knowledge, as Marxism views knowledge as a force for emancipation. There is no objective truth toward human emancipation, rather the effect of power and knowledge produces and determines what the truth is.

1.7. Conclusion: The Modern (European) History of Emancipation as Transcendence/Another Discourse

In short, in Foucault's understanding, power is neither something that is merely acquired, seized by larger socio-political structures such as the state or the ruling class, nor is it solely centered in them as the state apparatus for social control. Instead, power is a ubiquitous, constitutive force working to produce various things: ideas, discourse, knowledge, and particular types of bodies and minds and so forth. Control is accordingly achieved not through direct repression but through the microphysical and constitutive operation of power in modern Europe. Yet at the same time, resistance is also possible as power relations diffuse across society. The two analytical chapters in this thesis will explore further how anime illustrates Foucauldian notion of power in relation to domination and resistance (Chapter 4) and security (Chapter 5). The other two case studies (Chapter 6 and 7) discuss some of the alternative aspects of emancipation expressed in the selected anime that the privileged literature has not covered thoroughly.

As we have seen in this chapter, there is a rupture between the Frankfurt School and poststructuralists when considering the relation between knowledge and emancipation. While the critical theorists of the Frankfurt School such as Habermas see human knowledge of the natural and social environment, derived from reason, as the source of human emancipation, poststructuralists like Foucault see knowledge as an inseparable part of control and domination. Whereas Marcuse proposed a new form of subjectivity that requires an emancipation of the senses on which human emancipation is built, Foucault argued that the subject is always produced in discourses and subject to power relations. Poststructuralists are highly suspicious of the concept of emancipation. For Foucault, "there is no transcendence," liberation, or emancipation; "there is only an alternation of discourse: another truth, another power. Struggle produces a new domination" (Nederveen Pieterse 1992, 14).

In addition, although the modern history of the idea of emancipation briefly reviewed in this chapter is one of the most serious and sophisticated debates in the academic field of social and political theory, I called for attention to its shortcomings: this history is solely grounded on European texts about historical experiences of European societies, as if the modern European history of ideas is *the* history of ideas. With a few exceptions, there is a clear absence of non-European thinkers' thought or unconventional forms of political or philosophical expression such as those found in literature, custom, or popular culture, including non-textual materials. Neither are poststructuralists entirely free from those exclusions including the predilection for high theory, ethnocentrism, or exclusion of the Third World (Nederveen Pieterse 1992, 27). This tendency is apparent, for example when looking up the term emancipation in an encyclopedia of the field such as *Encyclopedia of Political Theory*. In the entry, we can only find the names of European theorists such as Marx and Habermas, or Max Weber and Sigmund Freud who influenced the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School (Kebede 2010). In addition to the ethnocentricity, another pressing methodological issue is the exclusion of the non-textual forms of political expression we look at further in Chapter 3. One wonders how we could pretend we are talking about emancipation in general if we are so narrowly and exclusively looking at the established philosophical and political texts written by European thinkers. Those texts by Marx, Marxists and poststructuralists in Europe are an informative and valuable component of the academic field of political theory, but it becomes a problem when these texts are treated as if they were the only source of knowledge about political ideas. One wonders if we could and should be more open to non-European thinkers' work and non-textual forms of political expression other than the philosophical treatise.¹⁸ As we see in the next chapter, there are other sophisticated sites of inquiry into philosophy and politics that have been developed by critical intellectuals in Europe and Japan. The next chapter discusses alternative approaches to philosophy and political thought taken by those intellectuals.

¹⁸ It is worth noting that area specialists and historians have contributed to intellectual history in many places outside of Europe, and these studies offer valuable insights when examining different projects of modernity, in which the idea of emancipation is central. For some examples from modern Japan, see Miyoshi and Harootunian (1989) and Sakai (1996) on critical reflections of modernity; Sakai and Isomae (2010) on the 1942 *Overcoming Modernity* symposium and the work of Kyoto School philosophers; Harootunian (2000a; 2000b) on intellectuals in Japan and Europe; and Calichman (2004) on post-war intellectual Takeuchi Yoshimi and his work on modernity and resistance.